

# The Ivy Leaf

Established in 1917 to honor those who serve

VOL. 2, NO. 13

MULTI-NATIONAL DIVISION - BAGHDAD

“STEADFAST AND LOYAL”

JUNE 9, 2008

Widowmakers fight off criminal attack while searching for cache

Pg. 8

TF XII maintainer fought for chance to come to Iraq

Pg. 11



Father's Day greetings from home

Pg. 16-19

Soldiers, Families connect via Town Hall meeting

Pg. 22

## This week in the Ivy Leaf

Commentary	2
Mission	4
Photo Feature	12-13
Soldier	14
Family	16
Entertainment Reviews	20
Team	22
Sports	23



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Mark Matthews, MND-B PAO

## Soldiers honor fallen heroes, comrades

Staff Sgt. David Cotti, a native of San Jose, Calif., who serves the bugle player with the 4th Infantry Division Band, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, plays “Taps” to conclude a Memorial Day ceremony in front of the MND-B headquarters building May 26. The ceremony was held to honor the fallen heroes of the U.S. military. Command Sgt. Maj. John Gioia recited the names of 75 MND-B heroes, who have paid the ultimate sacrifice since the 4th Infantry Division arrived in December 2007.

see **Ultimate Sacrifice** Pg. 12

## Daughters of Iraq begin training in NW Baghdad

**By 1st Lt. Agustin ValerioNunez**

1st Bn., 64th Armor Regt., 2nd BCT 101st Abn. Div.

BAGHDAD – The Soldiers of Company A, 1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment, found an ally in the Sons of Iraq (Abna al-Iraq) early on in their 15-month deployment.

As part of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Task Force Rogue Soldiers worked with the Sons of Iraq to thwart criminal activity in the Al Mansour district of northwest Baghdad for 13 months.

Now, the plan is to add women to the ranks.

Thirty-one women from the Adil and Jamia neighborhoods of northwest Baghdad began training May 17 to become part of the Daughters of Iraq.

The 10-day training program was held at the Joint Security Station in Adil. There, Soldiers incorporated hands-on in-

struction with classroom activities to teach the women basic military skills.

The women learned how to search rooms, how to handle Kalashnikov rifles and how to identify the threat of a suicide bomber.

The program was designed to provide the women the skills necessary to conduct operations alongside their Iraqi brethren.

After graduation, the women will use their new skills to shore up security at schools, checkpoints and government buildings.

The Daughters of Iraq will provide Iraqi Security Forces the ability to combat the increasing threat of females being used as suicide bombers.

“The Iraqi culture has some strict rules on how men should

treat women,” said Maj. Christopher Budihas, a plans officer with 1st Bn., 64th AR. “A lot of times they will not search women because of these cultural rules.”

The Daughters of Iraq presence at checkpoints will be an acknowledgement of these cultural rules.

They will also assist security forces with routine house searches, where it is not uncommon to find a house full of men, children and women.

Capt. John Dixon, commander of Co. A, said the goal is to search everyone and to do it within Iraqi cultural standards.

After graduation, the new recruits will work in Adil and Jamia.

Dixon also said TF Rogue hopes the success of the program will encourage more women to train and, in turn, double the amount of women in the program.

# So, which one is Memorial Day?



**Sgt. Jerome Bishop**

**By Sgt. Jerome Bishop**  
MND-B PAO

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Not long ago while I was sitting at my desk at work, a Soldier presented an interesting question, not because of what it was, but what made it interesting is why it was asked.

"So what's Memorial Day, again?" the Soldier asked.

This kind of disturbed me. As it turns out, the confusion came from the difference between Memorial Day and Veteran's Day. While both are federal holidays to remember our nation's service members past and present, only one commemorates the living.

The one that doesn't is May 26, the last Monday in May. That one would be Memorial Day. I just never thought I'd have to explain that to someone.

When Memorial Day comes around, a lot of thoughts rush to mind.

Memories of picnics with the Family, maybe catching the Indianapolis 500 Indy car race with a cold beverage in hand or enjoying the sun at a nearby public pool that just opened for the summer – all of which are easily recognizable traits of Memorial Day. All the while, the true meaning of Memorial Day remains hidden in the back of our mind – if it's even there at all.

Commemoration ceremonies and remembrances take place all over the United States on Memorial Day. We all know it's a holiday. It's a day off work, and it's got something to do with wars. Most people my age won't be seen at events like those. I know I've never been to my town's festivities – not often at least.

Four years ago, I would have been the last one to say I wanted to take time during the day commonly referred to as the beginning of summer to fill my head with sad memories of how too many of our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines, never made it home.

That was then.

Three years ago, I was about 60 km north of here on Logistical Support Area Anaconda near Balad for Memorial Day, and this year, I'm in Baghdad.

To me and a lot of other service members braving the sand, heat and bullets in Iraq, Memorial Day carries a new meaning – to remember not those service members we only knew by the name on their tombstone at Arlington, but the ones whom we've shared meals and laughs with while trying to make the best of discomfort.

I'm fortunate enough to say that I haven't lost a friend over here, but as my job takes me from unit to unit, the list of acquaintances grows – and more than a few might not make it home.

Three years ago, I knew Memorial Day would have a whole new meaning for me – and it truly does – because it could just as easily have been my name stretched across a banner for home town heroes lost in battle.

One day, I'm sure I'll hear that question again: "Which one is Memorial Day?" or something of the sort. Unlike most people, I'll have a unique story to tell – just as we all do.



## The Ivy Leaf

**Multi-National Division - Baghdad**  
Public Affairs Office

**Commanding General:**  
Maj. Gen. Jeffery Hammond

**Div. Command Sergeant Major:**  
Command Sgt. Maj. John Gioia

**Public Affairs Officer:**  
Lt. Col. Steve Stover

**Public Affairs Chief**  
Sgt. Maj. Eric Lobsinger

**Editor:**  
Sgt. Jason Thompson

### Staff Writers:

Sgt. Michael Molinaro  
Sgt. Mark Matthews  
Sgt. Jerome Bishop  
Spc. Aaron Rosencrans  
Spc. Walter Klein  
Spc. Angel Martinez  
Spc. Elvyn Nieves  
Pfc. April Campbell  
Pfc. Samantha Schutz

### Contributing Units:

1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.  
3rd BCT, 4th Inf. Div.  
2nd BCT, 101st Abn. Div.  
2nd SBCT, 25th Inf. Div.  
4th BCT, 10th Mtn. Div.  
Task Force XII  
18th MP Bde.  
926th Eng. Bde.  
1st Sustainment Bde.

The *Ivy Leaf* is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. Army. Contents of *The Ivy Leaf* are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of the Army, or the 4th Infantry Division.

The *Ivy Leaf* has a circulation of 10,000. The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the Department of the Army, the 4th Infantry Division, or *The Ivy Leaf*, of the products and services advertised.

All editorial content of *The Ivy Leaf* is prepared, edited, provided and approved by the Multi-National Division – Baghdad Public Affairs Office.

### Do you have a story to share?

The *Ivy Leaf* welcomes columns, commentaries, articles, letters and photos from readers.

Submissions should be sent to the Editor at [jason.thompson21@us.army.mil](mailto:jason.thompson21@us.army.mil) or the operations NCOIC at [guadalupe.stratman@us.army.mil](mailto:guadalupe.stratman@us.army.mil) and include author's name, rank, unit and contact information.

The *Ivy Leaf* reserves the right to edit submissions selected for the paper.

For further information on deadlines, questions, comments or a request to be on our distribution list, email the Editor or call VoIP 242-4093 or DSN (318) 847-1855.

# Ask Dr. Feel Good

MND-B surgeon's office



What's up Doc?

I have been here for five months and I have had the crud three times.

Every time I think I'm over it – here it comes again. I keep a bottle of Germ-X hand sanitizer handy. Is there anything that I can do to keep from getting the "Crud"?

Signed, Three times is not a charm

Dear Three times,

I hear you. We've all struggled since our arrival here. First, we need to figure out what the "crud" is that you're getting. Chances are that a lot of the symptoms you have are allergy related or just irritation from the dusty conditions, especially if your symptoms get better when the skies clear – time (wait out the dust storm) or simple allergy medications can help with that.

If you're getting recurrent viral infections then there are some common-sense things you can do to keep that from happening. Your Germ-X is good to use, but don't forget to wash your hands before you eat. Use hand sanitizer when you don't have access to soap and water, but it's always better to wash. The other thing for everyone to keep in mind is to cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze. Use the bend of your arm or a tissue rather than sneezing into your hands as it will stop more germs.

Respiratory viruses usually enter your body when you breathe in infected droplets but they can infect you by entering through your nose, mouth, and eyes. So keep that in mind and don't touch those areas unless your hands are clean.

What's up Doc?

I have read a few articles about the anthrax vaccine over the past few years. Some say that the anthrax vaccine is safe and some question it.

Is the anthrax vaccine really safe? Why do we have to get annual booster shots? What is the shot for anyway? I need to know so that I can ease my mind.

Signed, Hit me anthrax one more time

Dear Hit me,

The anthrax vaccine is absolutely safe. It has been licensed for use since the early 1970s and has a long safety track record. No other vaccine has been looked at as closely this one, so let your mind be at ease on that issue.

The vaccine is used to protect you against the bacterial disease called Anthrax. It's important to protect you from that because we know that Anthrax can be used as a biological weapon. If a person gets a lung infection from this bacterium, it is almost always fatal.

The vaccination is given as a series of shots so that your immune system develops a strong reaction to fight off the disease.

It takes repeat shots every year so that your immune response will stay strong enough to protect you.

Letters for Dr. Feel Good should be placed in the "Doc Box" located in the D-Main entrance, or email to [mndb\\_pad@mnd-b.army.mil](mailto:mndb_pad@mnd-b.army.mil).



# Word on the Street: What does Memorial Day mean to you?



**Sgt. Kavita Harry**  
Brooklyn, N.Y.  
administrative shop NCOIC  
HSC, DSTB, 4th Inf. Div.

“To me, Memorial Day is a day to remember all of our fallen Soldiers, to remember people in America, the

good things that they did and the ones who died trying to make a better life for the rest of us. I think it's a good thing for Soldiers to remember Family and loved ones and what they stand for.”



**Chief Warrant Officer 2 David Garcia**  
Pharr, Texas  
Human resources technician  
HSC, DSTB, 4th Inf. Div.

“It's a tribute to past friends and fallen comrades, and a way to remember all those who have given their lives to give me and all my Family and friends a chance to go further in this country.”

## News briefs

### IA seize weapons cache, find IEDs in northern Baghdad

MND-B PAO

BAGHDAD – Iraqi Army soldiers discovered six improvised-explosive devices and a weapons cache in northern Baghdad May 29.

Soldiers from the 3rd Brigade, 1st Iraqi Army Division, found six IEDs in the Sadr City district of Baghdad at approximately 8:30 a.m. Four of the IEDs were 155 mm rounds, and two were 120 mm rounds.

At approximately 11:35 a.m., soldiers with the 42nd Brigade, 11th Iraqi Army Division, seized a weapons cache in the Adhamiyah district of Baghdad. The weapons consisted of one rocket-propelled grenade and three RPG-7s.

“The Iraqi Army is dedicated to making the streets of the Sadr City area safe,” said Col. Allen Batschelet, Multi-National Division – Baghdad chief of staff. “With each cache taken off the streets of Baghdad, the Iraqi people are increasingly safe and secure.”

### Regulars, NPs find weapons cache

1st BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

FORWARD OPERATING BASE FALCON, Iraq – Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers and Iraqi National Policemen discovered a weapons cache May 28 at approximately 10:45 a.m. in the Aamel neighborhood of southern Baghdad.

Responding to a tip, Soldiers from Company A, 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, and policemen from the 2nd Battalion, 5th Brigade, 2nd NP Division, located 64 mortar rounds, 50 rockets, 14 pounds of plastic explosives, six rocket-propelled grenades, 3,000 7.62mm rounds of ammunition, four PKC machine guns, an M-1 rifle, four explosively formed penetrator copper plates, two sets of body armor, a smoke grenade canister, six spools of command wire, and an unknown amount of EFP components.

### Coalition Forces kill 10 criminals

4th BCT PAO, 10th Mtn. Div.

FORWARD OPERATING BASE LOYALTY, Iraq – Coalition Forces killed 10 Special Group criminals in the Fedaliyah neighborhood of the New Baghdad district in eastern Baghdad May 28.

Coalition Forces engaged the criminals after observing them emplace improvised-explosive devices. The criminals were also carrying illegal weapons.

“We will actively pursue terrorists and criminals wherever they live and hide,” said Maj. Joey Sullinger, spokesperson for 4th Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad. “We will defend ourselves and Iraqi citizens against terrorists and criminals who continue to attack innocent civilians.”



U.S. Army photo by Spc Dustin Weidman, 1st Bn., 21st Inf. Regt., 2nd SBCT, 25th Inf. Div.

### Complete team effort

BAGHDAD – Soldiers from Company B, 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment “Gimlets,” 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team “Warriors,” 25th Infantry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad plan their next move during a cordon and search in the Ibrahim Bin Ali area, northwest of Baghdad May 22. The Soldiers were searching for weapons caches as well as those responsible for emplacing improvised-explosive devices.

### Raiders find weapons caches

1st BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

FORWARD OPERATING BASE FALCON, Iraq – Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers discovered three weapons caches May 27-28 in the Rashid district of southern Baghdad.

At approximately 9:15 a.m., Soldiers from Company E, 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, MND-B, found two 57mm rockets, two rocket-propelled grenade rounds, five 60mm mortar rounds, one pound of homemade explosives and eight detonation fuses in the Shurta community.

Also in the Shurta community, Soldiers from Company C, 4th Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment, attached to the 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div., MND-B, uncovered a 107mm rocket and a 120mm anti-aircraft gun with tripod at approximately 8:45 p.m.

At approximately 3:30 p.m. May 28, Soldiers from Company E, 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div., MND-B, found an EFP hidden within a pile of concrete blocks in the Bayaa neighborhood.

“Significant finds like these hamper enemy activity by pressuring the enemy and keeping munitions off the streets,” said Maj. Dave Olson, 1st BCT Spokesman, 4th Inf. Div., MND-B. “The Raider Brigade and its attached units conduct daily patrols in the neighborhoods, or muhallas, to ensure that the citizens of the Rashid district are free to live in a safe and secure environment.”

### NPs seize substantial munitions cache

MND-B PAO

BAGHDAD – Iraqi National Policemen discovered a substantial munitions cache at approximately 12:55 a.m. in the Aamel area of Rashid May 28 in southeastern Baghdad.

NPs from the 2nd Battalion, 5th Brigade, 2nd NP Division seized 11 explosively-formed projectiles, 60 60mm mortar rounds, 40 80mm mortar rounds, 20 120mm mortar rounds, 100 pounds of military-grade C4 explosives, 50 pounds of homemade explosives, three rocket-propelled grenade launchers, 20 RPG rounds, two Dragonov

sniper rifles, a Dishka machine gun, 11 grenades, a rocket sled, a 180mm mortar base plate, a 60mm mortar base plate and an indeterminate number of artillery timers.

“Taking these weapons off the streets of Baghdad is a tremendous step in safeguarding the people of Baghdad,” said Lt. Col. Steve Stover, spokesman, Multi-National Division – Baghdad and the 4th Infantry Division.

“The National Police continue to demonstrate their professionalism in keeping the local populace safe and secure.”

### MND-B Soldiers conduct operations to increase safety in Baghdad

MND-B PAO

BAGHDAD – Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers seized weapons throughout Baghdad May 28 as they conducted operations to secure the area.

MND-B Soldiers serving with the 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, seized a 155 mm projectile round with a detonation cord attached, a 120 mm mortar round, and a bag of TNT northwest of Baghdad at approximately 11:28 a.m.

Later, Soldiers from 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, seized a six-inch EFP starter kit, two pounds of C4 explosives, a 120 mm mortar round, and a

155 mm artillery round in the West Rashid district of Baghdad.

Soldiers from 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), seized two 4-foot tubes and two 2-foot tubes with white powder, a mortar base, and three pressure plates in the Mansour district of Baghdad at approximately 1:15 p.m.

“Taking weapons and munitions off the streets of Baghdad and the surrounding areas saves lives,” said Lt. Col. Steve Stover, spokesman, MND-B and the 4th Infantry Division. “It’s a powerful message of how much we care about the welfare of the Iraqi people.”

# Iraqi citizens celebrate grand re-opening at Sarafiyah Bridge

## Rusafa-Karkh roadway bridge opens after reconstruction

**By Sgt. Jerome Bishop**  
MND-B PAO

BAGHDAD, Iraq – The promise of a prosperous future for Iraq took one more step closer to becoming a reality as the Sarafiyah Bridge, which links the Rusafa and Karkh districts of Baghdad, was reopened May 27 after being rebuilt.

Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki was present for the opening event, which featured live music, several speeches and a ribbon cutting on the bridge's road way.

The significance of the event wasn't limited only to the result of the bridges opening but also in how it came to be as it was the Government of Iraq that took the initiative to conduct the reconstruction.

"The reason I think this event was significant today is because it really shows the resilience of the GoI and their ability to repair this bridge, which was destroyed by an insurgent act, and to repair it and continue on with the rebuilding of Iraq and the betterment of Iraq," said Maj. Frank Garcia, a Carson City, Nev., native, who serves as the public affairs officer for the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Multi-National Division – Baghdad, which operates primarily out of the area where the bridge is located.

Now that the Sarafiyah Bridge is open, traffic can flow freely across. The local economy is expected to receive a boost since the flow of goods and services will be much easier, added Garcia.

"We didn't have a direct role in this; it was Iraqi-led, Iraqi-designed, and there were very few Coalition members there," Garcia said.

In addition to tangible, economic gains offered by the re-opening of the bridge, the ceremony also marked a more symbolic meaning.

"One side is Shi'a and the other side is Sunni, and there were very good relationships between them. The terrorists tried to send a message: 'We would like to cut the communication lines between these two main groups in Iraq;' but luckily, they didn't manage to do that," said Mohammed Asadi, a Baghdad native, who works as a media advisor for 2nd BCT, 101st Abn. Div.

"And they send the message back: 'Here we are, and we are together,'" he added.

The Sarafiyah Bridge, one of several bridges that cross the Tigris River in the Iraqi capital, was destroyed in a vehicle-borne improvised-explosive device attack April 12, 2007, that killed 10 Iraqis and injured at least 26 others.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jerome Bishop, MND-B PAO

Members of the Iraqi Color Guard stand ready to receive Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki for the May 27 re-opening of the Sarafiyah Bridge, which links the Rusafa and Karkh Districts of Baghdad. The Bridge, which was built by the British during the 1940s, was destroyed in a vehicle-borne improvised-explosive device attack April 12, 2007.



## 1st Sustainment Bde.

# Soldiers get first look at MRAP

By Sgt Jennifer Schweizer

1st Sust. Bde. PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – They're big – they're bad – and they're new. The Mine Resistant Ambush Protected armored vehicle is the Army's newest improvised-explosive device defense counter measure for Soldiers conducting logistical patrols throughout Multi-National Division – Baghdad.

Unfortunately, not much training, if any, is available for units scheduled to deploy at the present time even though this is the equipment Soldiers will most likely operate with once they arrive in theater.

Luckily, key members from the 10th Sustainment Brigade, which is scheduled to replace the 1st Sustainment Brigade later this year, were able to get their first look inside the vehicle during a leader reconnaissance trip here May 24.

"This is really good training for us", said Maj. Anthony Steoger, a Two Rivers, Wis., native, and the maintenance officer in charge for the 10th Sust. Bde. "Obviously, we do not have any of these back at Fort Drum, N.Y.," he continued.

The leaders were able to familiarize themselves with not only the vehicle itself but the electronic warfare equipment inside as well.

Chief Petty Officer Phil Palmer, a San Diego native, and the electronic warfare officer for the 165th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 1st Sust. Bde., took the leaders on a private tour inside the enormous transportation system while focusing on the electronic counter IED equipment.

The second part of their specialized tour covered maneuver capabilities and escape routes.

Providing guidance for this portion of instructions was Staff Sgt. James Horton, a Nice, Calif., native, and a truck commander from Battery B, 1st Battalion of the 206th Field Artillery also from the 165th CSSB, 1st Sust. Bde. Horton extended to stay in theater in order to help train Soldiers on the MRAP system.

Once the leaders head back to Fort Drum, they will be able to share this essential information with their unit in preparation for their future endeavor.

"These MRAPs are what's keeping our Soldiers safe out on the road," said Lt. Col. William Bailey, a Greensboro, N.C., native, and the officer in charge of support operations for the



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jennifer Schweizer, 1st Sust. Bde. PAO

Staff Sgt. James Horton (top right), a Nice, Calif., native, and truck commander from Battery B, 1st Battalion, 206th Field Artillery, 165th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade, in support of Multi-National Division – Baghdad, brings key leaders from the 10th Sustainment Brigade up to speed on the maneuver and escape capabilities of the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected armored vehicle here May 24.

10th Sust. Bde. "Getting to know this new-age equipment through 'training for dummies' is really good information," he laughed.

# Army Materiel Command leaders hear sustainment initiatives

By Sgt Jennifer Schweizer

1st Sust. Bde. PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Col. Kevin O'Connell, a Clinton, Md., native, the commander of the 1st Sustainment Brigade, along with key staff members, played host to some very senior leadership here May 22.

"Today was the most stars we've had in our conference room at one time ... nine stars," said O'Connell.

The list of guests included Gen. Benjamin Griffin, the commanding general of the US Army Materiel Command, Lt. Gen. Ann Dunwoody, the Army G-4, and Maj. Gen. Robert Radin, the commanding general of the Army Sustainment Command.

The generals were accompanied by Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey Mellinger, the senior enlisted leader for the Army Materiel Command, and Jeffrey Parsons, the executive director of Army Contracting Command – Provisional.

"It was great to have this august group of Army senior leaders able to come see us," said O'Connell. "They were very interested in the operations we are conducting in support of MNC-I. More importantly, (they) wanted to hear about our initiatives and issues."

The generals spend about an hour with the brigade team and were briefed on a wide variety of logistic topics. "We discussed Iraqi self-reliance, AMC support and the brigade's contracting coordination cell model, which in turn may be used as the template for other Army Sustainment Brigades," said Lt. Col. Hielke "Hike" Welling, a Hackettstown, N.J., native, and the officer-in-charge for support operations at the 1st Sust. Bde.

"We had a great discussion on contracting, which presents a very complex set of issues while deployed to Iraq, and all the 1st Sustainment Brigade Soldiers involved in the briefing did an awesome job," stated O'Connell. "As a result of our team's hard work and application of talent, in addition to providing world-class sustainment support to the warfighter, the brigade is helping shape the future of the Army in the contracting, financial management, human resources and Iraqi Security Force partnership arenas," concluded O'Connell.



U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Fowler, 1123rd T.C., 1st Sust. Bde.

Sgt. Aaron Peloquin (left), sticks Staff Sgt. Andy Graves (right), with a needle as he attempts to administer an IV here May 17. Peloquin is a Sherwood, Ark., native, and a Post Exchange/dining facility guard with the 1123rd Transportation Company, attached to 1st Squadron, 152nd Cavalry Regiment, a National Guard unit attached to the 165th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade. Graves, a Paragould, Ark., native, also with the 1123rd Trans. Co. works force protection in support of Multi-National Division – Baghdad.

# Arkansas National Guard Soldiers attend Combat Lifesaver class

By 1st Lt. Fowler

1123rd Trans. Co., 1st Sust. Bde.

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Saving lives is serious business, especially for Soldiers deployed in a combat zone. Five Soldiers with the 1123rd Transportation Company, an Arkansas National Guard unit attached to the 1st Squadron, 152nd Cavalry Regiment, 1st Sustainment Brigade, attended a combat lifesavers class at the "Easy Red" Troop Medical Clinic on Camp Taji May 14-17 in an effort to improve their emergency life-saving skills.

During the four-day class, each Soldier learned how to administer an intravenous correctly, treat a multitude of combat wounds and injuries, conduct a proper medical evacuation and more.

The Soldiers attending the class agreed that the information was important and that they had fun learning.

"Training is a lot more interesting when we can let our hair down," said Sgt. Richard Davis, a Searcy, Ark., native.

In order to complete the course, each Soldier had to pass a written test to determine if they retained the information covered in the class. They also had to successfully insert an IV into the arm of a fellow classmate.

"Sticking someone is a lot harder than it looks," said Spc. Jerry Gill, a Marion, Ark., native.

The National Guard Soldiers perform vital force protection duties on Camp Taji in support of Multi-National Division – Baghdad.

Armed with the knowledge and skills needed during a medical emergency, they now have the ability to leap into action, possibly making the difference between the life and death of a fellow Soldier.

1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div. 

# Uniform, standards, discipline

## Raider, 2-1 NP CSM take look at Iraqi NCO Corps

By Staff Sgt. Brent Williams

1st BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

FORWARD OPERATING BASE FALCON, Iraq – Deployed for a 15-month tour in support of Multi-National Division – Baghdad and Operation Iraqi Freedom, the senior command sergeant major of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, is interested in more than just inspecting Iraqi Security Forces and their checkpoints.

Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Bobb, the Raider BCT's senior noncommissioned officer, met with the Iraqi leaders and soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 1st Mechanized Brigade to take a look at the development of the Iraqi noncommissioned officer May 28.

Bobb met with Command Sgt. Maj. Husseh, the senior enlisted leader for the Iraqi National Police's 2nd Battalion, 1st Mechanized Brigade, to propose a new incentive for the Iraqi Ministry of Interior's only mechanized National Police unit.

The Raider BCT is establishing good working relations with the four ISF brigades responsible for maintaining security for the estimated 1.2 million Iraqis living in the Rashid district of southern Baghdad, said Bobb, a combat veteran with more than 27 years of service in the U.S. Army.

Uniforms, standards and discipline were amongst the key topics of discussion the Iraqi and American command sergeants major discussed as they visited five NP checkpoints across the Rashid district.

"We are culturing and mentoring these soldiers and NCOs as they are mirroring how our Noncommissioned Officer's Corps is set up – from training to day-to-day operations in Baghdad," said Bobb, who hails from the Islands of Trinidad.

Throughout the month of June, the Raider BCT will recognize Iraqi battalion command sergeants major and outstanding members of the ISF to reward discipline, uniformity and hard work in the ranks of the enlisted leaders, he explained.

"We are offering an incentive plan for each of our Iraqi brigades that adhere and develop to the same uniform and standards that the Soldiers of the Raider Brigade and Multi-National Forces – Iraq follow," he said. "In the upcoming months, we will begin to recognize these outstanding Iraqi

soldiers and their units, like the Iraqi National Police of the 2nd NP Div."

Bobb, who has two combat deployments and more than seven years' experience working as a command sergeant major, will conduct battlefield circulations, visit ISF checkpoints and inspect ISF NCOs as he checks for uniformity of standards and tactical discipline.

"The NCOs set the example," Bobb said to Husseh. "Leaders ensure that Soldiers are in the proper uniform and meet the standards every day, and the Iraqi Soldiers will be rewarded for their efforts."

At the end of the month, the Raider Brigade's senior command sergeant major will meet with ISF sergeants major from the Rashid district and, together, will select the outstanding Iraqi NCOs and their soldiers who meet and exceed the standards.

Effective enlisted leaders and soldiers, who set the example and lead from the front, will receive military awards and recognition as well as cash incentives, said Bobb.

Husseh said the idea is a good one and will motivate his soldiers to do their best.

Col. Da'ood, the commander of the 2nd Bn., 1st Mech. Bde., told Bobb that he would be happy to enforce uniformity at the checkpoints to improve the level of professionalism and, ultimately, security for the Iraqi people.

"Iraqi leaders have expectations," Da'ood told Bobb. "They know what to expect, and they know what leaders should be like. They know what the Iraqi NCO Corps should be like,"



Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Bobb of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, and Command Sgt. Maj. Husseh of the 2nd Battalion, 1st Mechanized Brigade, Iraq's Ministry of Interior's only mechanized National Police unit, joined forces May 28 to conduct ISF checkpoint inspections.

Da'ood, who began his military career in the Iraqi Army under Saddam Hussein, asked Bobb to help him bring drill instructors comparable to the U.S. Army standards and "train the trainer" programs for the policemen of his battalion.

Da'ood would like to see the Iraqi NCO Corps developed more like when he initially entered the Iraqi Army, and said the training would benefit his junior officers as well as his sergeants.

"MND-B has asked us to do our part, and we will do whatever we can to help the Iraqi NCO Corps grow," Bobb promised the Iraqi leaders.

## MND-B, Rashid leaders visit Radwanayah for reconciliation meeting

By Spc. David Hodge

1st BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

FORWARD OPERATING BASE FALCON, Iraq – Multi-National Division – Baghdad leaders visited the residence of a prominent sheik to discuss social projects in the southwest area of the Rashid district in southern Baghdad May 24.

Maj. Gen. Jeffery Hammond, the commanding general of MND-B and the 4th Infantry Division, visited the house of Sheik Ayad al-Jabouri to speak with local leaders about ongoing and future social projects between the Coalition Forces and the people of the Radwanayah community.

"Today, we discussed the issues in our area, Radwanayah, and we will work together with the Coalition Forces to solve any problems or concerns," said Jabouri, chairman of the Radwanayah support council.

"I promise to become one of your brothers, a regular visitor and a member of your team as we work harder to bring about everlasting peace and prosperity."

**Maj. Gen. Jeffery Hammond**  
commanding general  
MND-B and 4th Inf. Div.

"With our friends, the Coalition Forces, we can make progress for many essential services to the residents."

Hammond pledged to make a full commitment to all matters presented at the meeting.

"I will personally become engaged in the matters and do everything I can, plus more, to support the wonderful people of Radwani-

yah," Hammond stated.

Radwanayah consists mostly of farmland, and the people's needs differ from densely populated areas because they rely heavily on irrigation, fertilizer and agriculture.

"I am really looking forward to learning more about agriculture and water," said Col. Theodore Martin, commander of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Inf. Div. "It's im-

portant in Radwanayah, and it is an area of personal interest to me."

After lunch, the key leaders of both parties, Iraqis and MND-B, separated themselves to further discuss a few final requests.

"All of your requests and recommendations are reasonable and will definitely have a great impact on this area," said Martin, a native of Jacksonville, Fla.

After hearing requests for such topics as canal cleaning, detainee releases and jobs for the unemployed, Hammond and Martin both agreed the needs of the people were sensible and would produce long-lasting friendships and results.

"I promise to become one of your brothers, a regular visitor and a member of your team as we work harder to bring about everlasting peace and prosperity," Hammond stated.



2nd BCT, 101st Abn. Div.

# Widowmakers fight off criminal attack while searching for cache near Shulla

By Sgt. James Hunter

2nd BCT PAO, 101st Abn. Div.

BAGHDAD – Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers from Troop B, 1st Squadron, 75th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), received a tip of a possible weapons cache just on the outskirts of Shulla in western Baghdad May 16.

The scene going into the area was almost unreal. Animal carcasses littered the fields surrounding Shulla. The creek running to Shulla's south filled the air with an awful odor. As the Soldiers pushed into the area, an improvise-explosive device immediately detonated. Fortunately, it did not strike any of the troops. The IED attached was immediately followed by three rocket-propelled grenades.

For nearly the next two hours, the Soldiers continued to search the area for the possible cache while under attack by indirect mortar and RPG fire.

The Soldier's fought back against the violent extremists,

firing 5.56mm and .50-caliber rounds into the enemy forces' positions.

"We encountered perimeter defenses in Shulla. We were able to fight through those and take the objective of what we were looking for and conducted our mission safely until we were finished and moved back," said Capt. Robert Gillespie, a native of Great River, N.Y. "Bravo Troop is definitely ready for anything that happens in Ghazaliyah; and obviously as operations progress, is ready to continue with whatever role we are asked to take on in support of the IA and the Iraqi Government to help in regaining control of their city."

The troops 4th Platoon, lead by 1st Lt. Andrew Bowling, were leading the convoy into Shulla to search for the possible cache.

"We were going to clear the field to the west and (1st Platoon) was going to clear the field to the east. We crossed the bridge and everything was going fine... we were about to go into the gate and an IED went off," said Bowling.

Initially, the Soldiers were all a bit shocked and surprised.

"I called up to my lead truck to make sure everyone was okay," said Bowling, a native of Medfield, Mass. "They were!"

With the smoke filling the air, it was hard to tell what was going on, said Sgt. Daniel Unger, a native of Palestine, Texas. Shortly after it went off, the militants fired an RPG down the road, traveling from east to west, and buzzed past the whole convoy.

"One bounced off of our bumper, not exploding, and one went over Red Platoon's truck and stuck in a wall," said Pfc. Matthew Tonkovich, a native of Algonquin, Ill. "We started receiving small-arms fire from the west, coming from a Taxi, and just directly from the east from a red car. We ended up getting two trucks on line to watch east, and we had two trucks to the south to watch."

Fourth Platoon set up a support by fire position, where they took contact and began engaging and suppressing the enemy. 1st Platoon pulled up to a gate. The lead truck couldn't enter, so waited for the second truck to ram through the gate and into the junk yard. While waiting, an individual stepped out with an RPG and shot at them, though missing.

"It went over head. My gunner starting suppressing," said Unger. "Once we fired, he hopped back behind a fence."

Fourth Platoon had guys firing at them with PKC machine gun fire. The men then hopped into a car and proceeded to speed their way,

however, it was the last move they made.

"We fired warning shots, and they didn't stop, so we engaged them," said Tonkovich, a gunner with 4th Platoon, Troop B, 1-75 Cav.

They were also receiving small-arms fire from a three-story building; The Soldiers couldn't positively identify the shooter; however, the Bradley drivers could.

They immediately engaged their targets on the three-story rooftop.

From what Tonkovich said, the blast from the rounds blew one of the men off the rooftop, falling three-stories to the ground.

"Then, mortars starting falling on top of us. They were pretty accurate," said Bowling.

With RPG and small-arms fire flying through the air, The Soldiers now had to deal with the possibility of a mortar falling in on them.

"My heart was beating pretty fast. I got kind of excited. I just did not want to get hit," said Tonkovich. "It was pretty loud. My ears were ringing."

With 4th Platoon ensuring the perimeter security, 1st Platoon, led by 1st Lt. Logan Dick, were through the gate and into the junk yard, where they dismounted and began their sweep for the possible cache.

They swept across fields, through old connexes, garages and clearing areas.

"We put as many dismounts on the ground as we could and started clearing the area," said Unger. "Halfway through, we had to use bolt cutters to breach some buildings and a fence. We cleared that building and brought in a dog team to search for the cache."

About the time they entered the compound was about the time 4th Platoon started receiving indirect fire.

"The enemy was basically walking the mortars in on them. At first, they were hitting hundreds of meters away. About the time we finished clearing with the dog, they were calling up on the radio that they were landing within 20 meters of the vehicle," said Unger. "They then started walking them in on our position. We cleared back to the east. As we began moving back to the trucks, we received two more RPGs. The dog had a hard time clearing with all the indirect fire and small arms."

Once 1st Platoon got back to their trucks, they pushed over to the gate they had previously busted through and began engaging enemy combatants. Through all the chaos and rounds falling on the battlefield, Unger said he was very pleased with his Soldiers performance.

"That was the first time we worked with (4th Platoon) that directly, as one unit with one setting up support by fire," said Unger. "I was very pleased and very confident. They took the majority of the contact. They took the IED and the initial fire. The indirect was landing in mere meters of their vehicles, but they continued to engage them and kept them off our back."

Unger said his troops have never let him down, and this time was no different even with the plan having to adjust multiple times to accomplish the mission and hold off the militants.

"Multiple times, the plan was changed, but the strong point of our platoon is that we adapt really well," Unger said. "Security on the ground was maintained."

Lt. Col. John Hermeling, a native of Green Bay, Wis., said he was also very pleased with his Soldiers' performance.

"Bravo Troop fought well. It's good that when the enemy presents itself, we are able to kill them so they can't present themselves again," said Hermeling, commander, 1-75 Cav. Regt.

"It discourages others from making a mistake from joining that criminal element, who continues to fight against the Government of Iraq."

At the end of the battle, though no cache was ever found, the Soldiers did positively confirm that they killed two Special Group militants; however, the Soldiers believe they got anywhere from six to nine.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. James Hunter, 2nd BCT PAO, 101st Abn. Div.

Capt. Robert Gillespie, commander, Troop B, 1st Squadron, 75th Cavalry Regiment, communicates over the radio near the western Baghdad neighborhood of Shulla May 16.

3rd BCT, 4th Inf. Div. 

# Soldiers aid Sadr City businesses

*Civil Military Operations Center provides micro-grants to expand, improve local shops*

**By Spc. Philip Klein**  
3rd BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

BAGHDAD – Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers provided micro-grants to local shop owners in the Sadr City district of Baghdad to rebuild and expand their businesses as Coalition Forces continue to expand humanitarian operations May 26.

Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, 1st Armored Division, attached to the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, handed out the grants from the Civil Military Operations Center at Joint Security Station – Sadr City.

The CMOC, operated by the 432nd Civil Affairs Battalion, MND-B, recently began supporting ground forces commanders in the Thawra 1 and Thawra 2 neighborhoods of Sadr City by processing applications for grants to Iraqi civilians to expand and improve their businesses and market stands at Sadr City markets.

The CMOC plans to distribute \$100,000 in grants to the residents of Sadr City, in increments of \$2,500, to approved applicants from May 26 through June 1.

On the first day, the micro-grant program distributed \$32,000 in grants.

Lt. Col. Brian Eifler, a native of Farmington Hills, Mich., and commanding officer of Task Force 1-6, spearheaded the operation to get local businesses back up and providing services to the local community after the recent disruptions due to criminal activities.

“The services provided by these merchants and shop owners are essential to improving the lives of the citizens of Sadr City,” said Eifler.

“These grants enable the small business owners of Sadr City to improve their lives and the welfare of their communities.”

Abu Ibrahim, a local merchant who sells fruit in the Jamila Market of Sadr City, said he welcomed the assistance and was thankful for the opportunity to improve his business and for the employees who work for him.

“This is a chance for me to expand and improve my business, which will be good for



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Philip Klein, 3rd BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.  
Lt. Col. Brian Eifler, the commanding officer of 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, attached to the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, shakes hands with the recipient of a micro-grant May 26 after giving the local business owner \$2,500 to improve his business for the benefit of the local community.

my Family and our people here in Baghdad,” Ibrahim said.

“I have also made friends that I can rely on to keep trouble away,” he said, in speaking of Eifler and TF 1-6.

Eifler recounted tales of criminal elements, who force local shopkeepers to pay money to run their business without providing any services.

“These criminals threaten local businessmen and force them to pay out ‘protection money,’ and yet they then fail to provide anything to these merchants who they say they want to help,” said Eifler.

“Our Coalition Forces, including our Iraqi partners, want nothing but to get these people up on their feet and for them to succeed and as a result improve their neighborhoods.”

18th MP Bde. 

## Strong leadership brings rule of law to Baghdad neighborhood

**By Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger**  
18th MP Bde. PAO

FORWARD OPERATING BASE RUSTAMIYAH, Iraq – Iraq is safer due to the sternness and dedication of its leadership from the District Iraqi Police Headquarters in the Karadah district of Baghdad. The strength of the Iraqi Police force has grown significantly in size and its ability to protect the citizens in Karadah in the past year.

Iraqi Col. Kareem Salman, Karadah District commander, is working hand in hand to ensure this trend continues as he works along side Coalition Forces and the 1132nd Military Police Company, a North Carolina National Guard unit.

The 1132nd MP Co. arrived May 16 at the Iraqi District Headquarters with a Police Transition Team to check in as its Soldiers oversee operations at the District Headquarters.

During the visit to the station, the squad leader reviewed operational needs with the district commander and offered any assistance or supply requests that were needed to improve the police force.

“The colonel never asks for anything for himself only for his station,” said Staff Sgt. Joseph Carberry, squad leader, 1132nd MP Co., and native of Clinton, N.C.

The MP squad continues to see a trend of improvements within this district. Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers have helped more in the past. Now the Iraqi Police force is taking over.

“We have built stuff for them and as they saw us do it, then they (IP) started building stuff for themselves,” said Carberry, referring to some of the station improvements the PTT has helped with.

But the physical things are not the only areas that have been improved upon, but the pride and abilities the IP and commander demonstrate.

The squad of military police Soldiers credit the success of the stations to the station’s district commander, who is constantly mentoring and guiding his IP to continue to establish rule of law in their community.

“He is sometimes up as early as 4 a.m. checking in on his IP at the checkpoints, making sure they are doing their jobs,” said Carberry.

Carberry added that he had seen a lot of progress in the IP establishing rule of law in Karadah since they arrived a year ago.

“There is a lot less crime from day one, when we arrived here,” said Carberry. “The colonel has seen how we help him and gets along well with us.”

The IP commander’s assessment is that violence in Karadah is decreased significantly in the past year.

“Violence has decreased; now you don’t find as many dead bodies, improvised-explosive devices, or hear of kidnappings. All crimes in Karadah are less frequent now,” said Salman, commander, IP Karadah District.

Salman credits the decrease in violence to the fact that different religious sects in Baghdad are starting to work together for the first time.

“There is less sectarian violence, which never happened before,” said Salman. “Religious sects are starting to work together, now the only thing holding the people of Baghdad back from peace is criminals in the area.”

“We want this country to be safe so that we can remove the sand bags. That is our goal for Karadah,” added Salman.

Salman agrees the IP and Coalition Forces are making progress but that the criminals are the only thing that stands in the way of future success.

“Criminals try to break the progress we are making,” said Salman.

Rodney Dallas, an Iraqi Police advisor, who has worked at the station for the past two years, said he witnessed the IP and CF sweep through Karadah several times while trying to rid the area of criminals.

“The IP and CF sweep through the area a lot to counteract violence when it begins to break out,” said Dallas, a native of Tupelo, Miss.

“We are trying to make the IP system work the best we can,” said Dallas, referring the PTT mission at the station.

Over the past two years, Dallas said he has seen the several factors contribute to the decrease in violence in Karadah, saying that, “The surge, which brought more troops into Baghdad, and the expansion of the IP force’s strong leadership encouraging IP to do their jobs,” said Dallas.

“When Salman says it, he means what he says,” said Dallas, referring to Salman’s leadership style.

Salman thanks the PTT for their help in aiding the people of Karadah.

“United States Soldiers take care of the civilian people,” said Salman, as he discussed a future medical delivery operation by CF to a local clinic in the area.

“It is a priority for us to get the medical supplies to the poor people in Karadah,” continued Salman.

Although violence has decreased in Karadah, criminal activities are still present in the area, making the job for IP dangerous every day.

“It has been a dangerous job since 2003,” said Salman. “We have a dangerous job here.”

“There are still criminals in Karadah, but they are running and they cannot run forever,” said Dallas.

The 1132nd MP Co., North Carolina National Guard, will return to North Carolina in the upcoming weeks as they conclude their Operation Iraq Freedom deployment.



## 2nd BCT, 25th Inf. Div.

# Knights in armor help orphaned children

**By Spc. Dustin Weidman**

*1st Bn., 21st Inf. Regt., 2nd SBCT, 25th Inf. Div.*

BAGHDAD – No conflict is without tragedies, and this one is no different. In the midst of war, children sometimes get overlooked.

Iraq has many orphanages filled with children, but for one in Ibrahim Bin Ali, their “Knights” in armor arrived.

The “Knights” of 3rd Platoon, Company B, 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment “Gimlets,” 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team “Warriors,” 25th Infantry Division, Multi-Nation Division – Baghdad, have taken a special interest in the orphanage and its children since their arrival in the area in January.

First Lt. Tony Sgroi, native of Wheeling, W.Va., and “Knights” platoon leader, said his Soldiers adopted the orphanage as “one of the regular stops during a patrol.”

Soldiers have become friends with the children and always evoke eager cheers and smiles when they hand out candy and pens during their visits.

Some of the platoon’s Soldiers have gotten their Families involved as well. “My wife sends my care packages loaded with candy for the kids,” said Sgt. Bryan Doe, native of Boston. “You see, many of them have lost parents and loved ones to the insurgent presence here, and your heart goes out to them.”

The children are not the only ones who enjoy seeing their “Knights.” The adult workers welcome the platoon with open arms at each visit and are almost as excited as the children when they see the Strykers roll up.

There is always a hint of sadness when the Soldiers leave, but they all know the their “Knights” in armor will return.



U.S. Army courtesy photo

First Lt. Tony Sgroi, native to Wheeling, W.Va, and platoon leader of 3rd Platoon “Knights,” Company B, 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment “Gimlets,” 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team “Warrior,” 25th Infantry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, talks to the administrators of a small orphanage in Ibrahim Bin Ali, northwest of Baghdad, May 22.



## 4th BCT, 10th Mtn. Div.

# Iraqi businesses display wares at expo

**By Sgt. Jeremy Todd**

*4th BCT, 10th Mtn. Div.*

BAGHDAD – More than 70 Iraqi business owners gathered in the Babylon Hotel on the Karadah Peninsula in southeastern Baghdad for the inaugural Rebuilding – Karadah Expo and Conference May 23-24.

Entrepreneurs and shopkeepers met at the hotel to display their products and services and to meet other Karadah business owners and community leaders. Participants setting up booths represented businesses in the fields of retail sales, construction, durable and industrial goods and even a beekeeper selling honey. In addition, several non-government agencies and municipal officials set up and visited booths, and various Arab media organizations covered both days of the conference and expo.

The Iraqi Chamber of Commerce and Industry hosted the two-day event, which Baghdad-2 embedded Provincial Reconstruction Team officials estimate more than 2,000 visitors attended. Conrad Tribble, leader of Baghdad-2 PRT, a Washington, native, said this was the largest event of its kind to take place in Baghdad outside the International Zone in a long time.

“The event was a success because it sent a strong message to government leaders of Baghdad that business owners are an important voice of the community,” proclaimed Tribble. The business owners of Karadah have a positive message, he said.

Baghdad-2 e-PRT, based at Forward Operating Base Loyalty, sponsored 10 booths at the expo for local small-business owners, while the main Baghdad PRT, based in the IZ, sponsored 10 booths.

In addition to leading the team, Tribble serves as the e-PRT’s political specialist, drawing on his 20 years of experience as a State Department foreign services officer. He said his mission is to bring civilian development and diplomacy to

the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division operating environment.

“What we are trying to do through our participation is to stimulate the private sector as well as see what kinds of businesses would come out,” explained Tribble, crediting the Iraqi Chamber of Commerce and Industry for planning and executing the expo and conference.

Madeeha Hasan Odhaib, a Karadah business owner and member of the Karadah District Advisory Council, whom Time Magazine recently named one of the world’s top 100 most influential people of 2008, attended the event. She employs 100 Iraqi women in the sewing factory in the district.

“I’m happy that Iraqi ladies of Karadah are allowed and encouraged to participate in events such as these,” said Odhaib, whom Queen Rania of Jordan nominated for the Time Magazine honor.

Baghdad’s provincial governor, Hussein al Tahan; Sabir al-Isawi, the mayor of Baghdad; and Mu’in Hamid Abd al-Majid al-Kadhimi, Baghdad Provincial Council chairman, attended the event to support Karadah businesses.

Baghdad e-PRT-2 and Baghdad PRT sponsored the Business-2-Business trade show in February, in which more than 300 businesses from throughout the capital participated. That “monumentally successful” event, explained Tribble, spawned the idea for each local district to have its own expo, highlighting local business owners and addressing their concerns.

Next month, the Rusafa district of Baghdad will host its expo, and it won’t be long before every district in Baghdad has celebrated its inaugural business expos.

Tribble commented that “this is sort of developing a Baghdad-wide wave of enthusiasm and attention to the private sector, which we all like to think is the primary stimulus for economic growth ... the main potential for employment growth over the next several years.”



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jeremy Todd, 4th BCT PAO, 10th Mtn. Div.

Karadah district business owners display their products to Iraqi patrons during the Rebuilding – Karadah Expo and Conference in Baghdad’s Babylon Hotel May 23. More than 70 businesses took part in the Iraqi Chamber of Commerce and Industry event, and officials estimate more than 2,000 visitors attended the expo.



Task Force XII

# TF XII maintainer fought for chance to come to Iraq

**By Sgt. 1st Class Chris Seaton**  
Task Force XII PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – “Chief, what the heck are you doing?”

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Christian Smith, a maintenance technician who had just tripped and fallen to the ground, looked up at his confused motor sergeant. Smith, who hails from Villa Grove, Ill., but was on a deployment to Iraq, had fallen a lot lately. Something was wrong with his left leg, and he didn’t know what – all he knew was that it made him fall.

“I don’t know,” said Smith. “I just fell. It happens all the time.”

“Well next time, yell ‘incoming’ and I’ll go down with you,” said the sergeant.

The year was 2003, and Smith was deployed with a military police brigade. Over the course of the deployment, he noticed his muscles growing alarmingly weaker.

“It was very humbling – to say the least,” said Smith. “There wasn’t much I could do about it then, but I knew that once I got back from (Iraq), I was going to have to go see a doctor and find out what was going on.”

In February 2005, after multiple visits to doctors, Smith underwent surgery for a herniated disc in his back to help relieve pressure on what his doctor thought was a pinched nerve. It didn’t help. By this time, he couldn’t move the toes of his left foot, and he continued to grow weaker.

Still more visits to more doctors led him to a neurologist. Late in September 2005, he was diagnosed with multifocal motor neuropathy.

“It’s a condition where my body thinks there’s something wrong with the nerves,” said Smith.

“It’s attacking my nerves, and it doesn’t

allow good conduction for the signals that tell the muscles to move – but there’s treatment for it.”

He began treatments right away. Every three weeks, he underwent an intravenous immunoglobulin treatment at a local hospital. By this time, Smith’s unit was on mobilization orders for deployment, but he was scheduled to stay with the rear detachment.

“Within four or five days, I started noticing a lot more strength, and by 10 days after that, I could wiggle my toes and keep my left foot up,” he said. “I went back to the unit and told them the treatment was working. At that point, it was a matter of how the Army medical system was going to handle this.”

The unit deployed. Despite his objections, Smith stayed at Fort Hood.

“The doc said, when he diagnosed me, that this is a legitimate medical condition that would definitely keep me from deploying,” he said. “He asked me why I’d want to deploy if I didn’t have to.”

“It’s one of those things where, having grown up playing sports, you spend all that time practicing with a team; and, all of a sudden, they go to an away game, out of town,



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Chris Seaton, Task Force XII PAO

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Christian Smith, a Villa Grove, Ill., native, stands at the open hood of a military humvee May 16. Smith is the squadron maintenance technician for 4th Squadron, 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment, Task Force XII, Multi-National Division – Baghdad.

and you’re stuck at home,” he added. “It’s not a good feeling.”

A year and a half later, Smith found himself facing the same situation, this time with a new team. He was newly assigned to Troop R, 4th Squadron 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment, once again on orders for Iraq.

The treatments were working, and Smith

said he was determined not to get left behind again. He began what he called a very frustrating process to make himself deployable.

Once again, the doctors said no. A chain of emails revealed one medical professional after another who believed he had no business deploying.

They cited the risk for contamination with possible secondary effects of anaphylaxis or renal failure. They said his understanding of the condition was “oversimplified.”

“My response to those emails was rather lengthy,” he said. “They thought I was oversimplifying the condition, and I thought they were over-exaggerating it.”

In his response, he said he outlined his own research – discussing the shelf life of the medication and the plan that he and squadron surgeon, Maj. Sean Hollonbeck, had come up with to administer the treatments.

“The Army is attempting and perfecting new things in the theater of operation every day,” he wrote. “Why not this?”

“I didn’t think he’d get to go based on seeing the email traffic from the doctors in theater,” said Capt. Jeffery Hernandez, his troop commander. “I never tried to talk him out of it though. He had such a desire to be with the troops and support the mission.”

“I guess I just felt like I’m in the Army to do a job,” Smith said. “Having been left back once, I told my wife, if I can’t deploy and go do what I’ve trained to do, then I shouldn’t be doing this anymore.”

After a successful month at Fort Irwin, California’s National Training Center, during which an enlisted combat medic successfully administered the treatment, the Army finally relented. Smith deployed to Multi-National Division – Baghdad as part of Task Force XII in November, 2007.

**OPERATION FREEDOM STRONG**

**What: Mass Reenlistment with the MNF-I Commander**  
**Who: Soldiers, Marines, Sailors, Airmen, and Coast Guardsmen**  
**~Active, Reserve, and National Guard~**  
**When: July 4 @ 10 a.m.**  
**Where: Al-Faw Palace, Camp Victory**

Contact your career counselor or retention NCO for more info

# ULTIMATE SACRIFICE

## MND-B Soldiers remember, honor fallen heroes, comrades during Memorial Day ceremony

Story and photos by  
Sgt. Mark Matthews  
MND-B PAO

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – A hero is defined as being a person of distinguished courage or ability, admired for his brave deeds and noble qualities – also, as a person who, in the opinion of others, has heroic qualities or has performed a heroic act and is regarded as a model or ideal.

As the warm Baghdad sun rose higher in the clear blue sky, Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers gathered in front of the division's headquarters building to pay their respects and remember the heroes who paid the ultimate sacrifice for freedom during a Memorial Day ceremony May 26.

"Today is that one day out of the year we take time to remember our fallen and the sacrifices they made for the freedoms we share on a daily basis," said Command Sgt. Maj. John Gioia, a native of Buffalo, N.Y., who serves as the senior enlisted leader with MND-B and the 4th Infantry Division. "In this case, we take time today to memorialize 75 of our fallen comrades – it's a very special day."

For some, Memorial Day may mark the beginning of summer, a day off of work or just another Monday. For Soldiers however, the day means much more than that. It's a day to say thank you to the ones who gave everything.

"I think Soldiers who wear this uniform possess great moral courage and character," Gioia added. "It's not about going to barbecues and fireworks. It's about wearing this uniform and going into harm's way – and protecting our nation so that others can enjoy the freedoms we all share."

Gioia has personally attended every memorial ceremony for each MND-B Soldier who has fallen and said that each one feels like another piece of the fabric of his soul is taken away, and ceremonies like this remind him that it wasn't all for not.

Although ceremonies are held throughout the Unit-



American flags fly high in the wind in honor of the heroes who paid the ultimate sacrifice for freedom during a Memorial Day ceremony May 26.

ed States of America, conducting one in Iraq adds a sense of purpose and meaning for the heroes of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"I think it is important here, in Iraq, to honor Memorial Day because we are here to protect and provide security for the Iraqi people," said Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Jim Carter, a Monroeville, Ala., native, who serves as the division chaplain for MND-B and the 4th Inf. Div. "It's important to remember that we are honoring not just our Soldiers, but we are also honoring our Iraqi brothers as we are here to support them

and their land against the radical extremist-criminals who seek to take away our freedoms."

The day of remembrance has been a long standing tradition in the United States, and the 4th Inf. Div. commanding general reminded Soldiers that it isn't just the fallen Soldiers they honor today, but their Families as well.

"For over 104 years, Americans have gathered on Memorial Day," said Maj. Gen. Jeffery Hammond, a native of Hattiesburg, Miss., who serves as the commanding general for MND-B and the 4th Inf. Div.

"We do this to honor our fallen heroes, but we really gather to honor America's broken hearts – those who were killed in the cause for freedom and the Families who were left behind.

"We honor their lives; we honor their sacrifices and the dream they died for – their children."

To conclude the commemoration, Gioia read the names of the 75 fallen heroes who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

A 21-gun salute reverberated throughout the gathering before an honor guard cased the national colors. A bugler from the 4th Inf. Div. band played "Taps" to pay homage to the memories of the brave men and women of MND-B who gave their lives for freedom.

"Clearly, no one understands the meaning of Memorial Day more than (Soldiers)," Hammond said. "We see it; we feel it, and our generation has lived it."



Spc. Thomas Major, Multi-National Division – Baghdad and 4th Infantry Division's Honor Guard, stands guard next to a fallen Soldier memorial during a Memorial Day ceremony held in front of the MND-B headquarters building May 26. The ceremony was held to honor the fallen heroes of the U.S. military and the 75 MND-B servicemembers who have paid the ultimate sacrifice since the 4th Infantry Division arrived in December 2007.



► Seven Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers render a 21-gun salute to honor their fellow MND-B Soldiers who have lost their life during a Memorial Day ceremony in front of the MND-B headquarters building May 26.



◀ Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers render a salute during a Memorial Day ceremony in front of the MND-B headquarters building May 26.



Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers case the colors during a Memorial Day ceremony held in front of the MND-B headquarters building May 26. The ceremony was held to honor the fallen heroes of the U.S. military and the 75 MND-B servicemembers who have paid the ultimate sacrifice since the 4th Infantry Division arrived in December 2007.

# Day in the life ...

## CG's aide ensures boss prepared for mission

Story and photo by Spc. Aaron Rosencrans  
MND-B PAO

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq — The mission may seem simple to the casual observer upon initial inspection. However, when one adds the up minute-detailed battlefield updates, the ever-changing battlefield conditions, route security and the sheer load of coordination it takes in being the Multi-National Division – Baghdad commanding general's aide de camp – it becomes glaringly obvious the mission is anything but simple.

And filling that role is Capt. Colin Mahle, a native of Sacramento, Calif., who serves as the aide de camp for Maj. Gen. Jeffery Hammond, the commanding general for MND-B and the 4th Infantry Division.

In his role, he often sacrifices sleep and chow in order to ensure the CG makes it to his daily appointments smoothly and without any glitches.

"I never understood how important my job was until I actually got the position," said Mahle. "It's my duty to get the CG from door to door without any delays and with minimal effort on his part. This way, Maj. Gen. Hammond can be fresh and not exhausted when he makes decisions for thousands of Soldiers across Baghdad."

There is more involved in his job than just getting the commanding general from one installation to another, added Mahle. His job also includes researching the routes and keeping tabs on any significant events on the path en route to their next destination.

"My job extends beyond just getting the CG to the location of his next meeting or appointment," he said. "It's my job to get him to the building, walk him to the room and show him his chair if needed. I have to focus on the smallest details to ensure each mission is a success."

As with all unit commanders, they generally like to keep a close eye on the places where his or her unit is having the most trouble. As such, Mahle is able to quickly change course at the drop of a hat when the boss wants to cancel one appointment and check something else out.

"All commanders want to go to the hot spots on the battlefield," said Mahle. "One of my biggest challenges is dealing with the quickly-changing battlefield. One event can change the current operational environment, and the CG would want to cancel all appointments and go overview that area. At that point, I coordinate on the move, finding planes, trains and automobiles to get him to where he wants to be."

When things change or something doesn't go according to plan outside the wire, it is important for Soldiers to not lose control of their emotions.

"When we run into challenges while we're out on the battlefield, he always keeps his cool and doesn't let the situations get to him," said Sgt. James Eden, a native of Crosby, Minn., who serves as a team leader with the 4th Inf. Div. and MND-B commanding general's personal security detachment. "If you're out in sector and you start freaking out, you start missing details. This is a detail-oriented job, so it's very important to stay calm and relaxed. He does a great job of dealing with those tough situations."

After a successful mission, Mahle's job still isn't over. As soon as he takes his body armor off, it's time to start planning for the next day.

"Whenever possible, I try to work at least 24 hours out from the next mission," said Mahle. "Every now and then, I get missions, which are scheduled for two or three days out, but most of the time I'm working on the arrangements for the next day."

With the never-ending cycle of planning and conducting missions, Mahle doesn't have much personal time.

However when he does have a chance to relax, he enjoys spending time with his wife, who has deployed with him this rotation.

"I'm lucky to have my wife here on this deployment," he said. "She just took command of her unit so she is really busy as well, but it's nice to spend time with her whenever we get a chance."

This wasn't the first deployment he and his wife have had together. However, the setup for the last deployment wasn't as favorable.

"Last deployment, we were both in Iraq together, but we were in different locations," he said. "Then, we were only able to see each other maybe once per month, which made the deployment very stressful. Now that we're together in the same place, we act together as a support network so we can help each other out with the little things."

Even though Mahle's job can be stressful at times, he said he takes great pleasure in seeing his boss have a successful day because his work ultimately helps the CG make the best decisions he possibly can for his division.

"For me and the rest of the PSD, our reward is making Maj. Gen. Hammond successful," he said. "When we get him to the right place at the right time, that is our reward. He is in charge of over 35,000 Soldiers, so it's our place to ensure he can focus on the decisions he has to make for all of them, not how to get to his next appointment."

Capt. Colin Mahle, a native of Sacramento, Calif., who serves as the aide de camp for the commanding general of Multi-National Division – Baghdad and the 4th Infantry Division, pulls out a bag of coins for the CG to present during a visit to the Soldiers in the 4th Battalion, 42nd Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, at Forward Operating Base Prosperity May 19.



# Married couples take part in rare reenlistment ceremony

By Sgt. 1st Class Chris Seaton  
Task Force XII PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – For proof that the Army can be a Family affair, one need look no further than the Daly Family. They are a married couple in Multi-National Division – Baghdad’s Task Force XII who reenlisted in a double ceremony. If you’re still not convinced, you can talk to the Johnston Family – the husband and wife team who administered the oath.

Sgt. Michael Daly, a native of Tampa, Fla. met his wife Sgt. Yeimie Osorio, from Bayamon, Puerto Rico, a few years ago while deployed to Afghanistan. They married two years ago and have managed to stay together, in the same unit, Headquarters and Headquarter Company, 3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, ever since. In July, 2007, the couple deployed again – this time to Iraq.

“It’s good having your spouse here, but sometimes it’s a little difficult,” said Osorio. “We’d like to be able to treat each other the same way as we do back home – all ‘lovey dovey,’ but here, we work every day, and we’re Soldiers 24 hours a day.”

Their situation is not all that unique. There are several married couples in Task Force XII. Among them are Capt. Jay Johnston and his wife Capt. Jennifer Johnston.

Jay, who now commands Company C, 412th Aviation Support Battalion, spent 1.5

years working as the signal officer for 3rd Bn., 158th Avn. Reg., where he was Daly’s supervisor.

Jennifer works in the air mission request cell of 3rd Bn., 158th Avn. Reg., with Osorio.

“I already knew that if I reenlisted, I wanted him to do the oath,” said Daly. “Since my wife and his wife work together, this worked out really well.”

The two couples faced each other during the ceremony, each pair reciting the oath in unison – first the Johnstons, then Osorio and Daly.

“I’ve done a lot of reenlistment ceremonies,” said Jay. “This one was unique though.”

Upon redeployment, Osorio and Daly will begin a new chapter in their lives as an Army married couple. The two will report to Recruiter School at Fort Jackson, S.C.

The two said they hope to share their story with future Soldiers who may be interested in joining the Army Family. They also hope to work in the same recruiting station, but say they’re ready for anything.

“We both stay in the Army because wherever he goes, I want to be with him – even if it means deploying or working long hours in a recruiting station,” said Osorio.

“I wish them the best of luck,” said Jay. “I know they’ll do great on recruiting because they’re both great Soldiers.”



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Chris Seaton, Task Force XII PAO

Married couple, Sgt. Michael Daly and Sgt. Yeimie Osorio, both of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, recite the oath of enlistment at a reenlistment ceremony May 27. The oath was administered by fellow married couple, Capt. Jay Johnston and Capt. Jennifer Johnston.

## Chaplain's Corner: Teamwork is key to success in all facets of life

By Lt. Col. James Carter  
MND-B chaplain

Teamwork is essential to our success.

Our commanding general has built into our daily activities the importance of Mission – Soldier – Family – Team. Teamwork and becoming a team player is critical to empowering others in our unit and defeating the enemy.

Here is a great story about teamwork and serving others. As I was preparing and reading a sermon last week, I ran across this excellent illustration on Magic Johnson, which is taken from a sermon written by Melvin Newland. I certainly don’t think that Magic Johnson is a perfect role model in all areas of his life, but he was a great basketball player and has made a difference in many people’s lives over the past years by giving back to his community.

Pat Riley, who has long been thought of by many as one of the finest coaches in the National Basketball Association, used to coach

the Los Angeles Lakers. He once told a story of Magic Johnson when Johnson was in middle school. At that point in Johnson’s basketball career, his talent was already obvious. He was so much better than all the other players on his team that he would score 50 points while the rest of the team would score five, yet they won every game.

But the other players were very unhappy because they didn’t often get the ball or a chance to shoot. Johnson decided to change his role on the team. He would soon become an enabler, passing the ball to others, making them look good.

He played only two years in college before becoming a professional basketball player.

He went on to play for the Los Angeles Lakers, a team made up of a lot of different superstars at that time. They were all great players, but the team wasn’t winning because they were all playing for themselves.

Riley said that Magic Johnson became the catalyst, and he decided to make other players look good. He went to Byron Scott and said, “I’m going to make you the number 1 scorer on this team. I’m going to pass the ball to you and you’re going to score.” And score he did.

He went to James Worthy and asked, “Why have you never made the All-Star team?” He then made a promise to help Worthy become an All-Star.

He began passing the ball to Worthy and soon thereafter he was on the All-Star team.

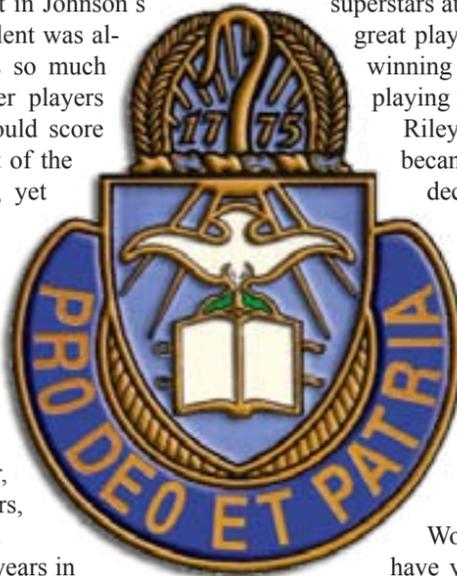
Kareem Abdul Jabbar is the highest scorer in NBA history, but before he broke the record, Johnson had said to Jabbar, “I want to be the guy who passes you the ball when you make the record-breaking basket.”

On that night, when it was about time for Jabbar to score that record breaking basket, Johnson got off the bench, put himself in the game, and dribbled down the floor, passed the ball to Jabbar; the ball went through the basket and the record was shattered.

“If you look at the video tape of that event, you’ll see Magic Johnson leaping into the arms of Kareem Abdul Jabbar. And if you look closely, you’ll see tears streaming down his cheeks,” said Riley.

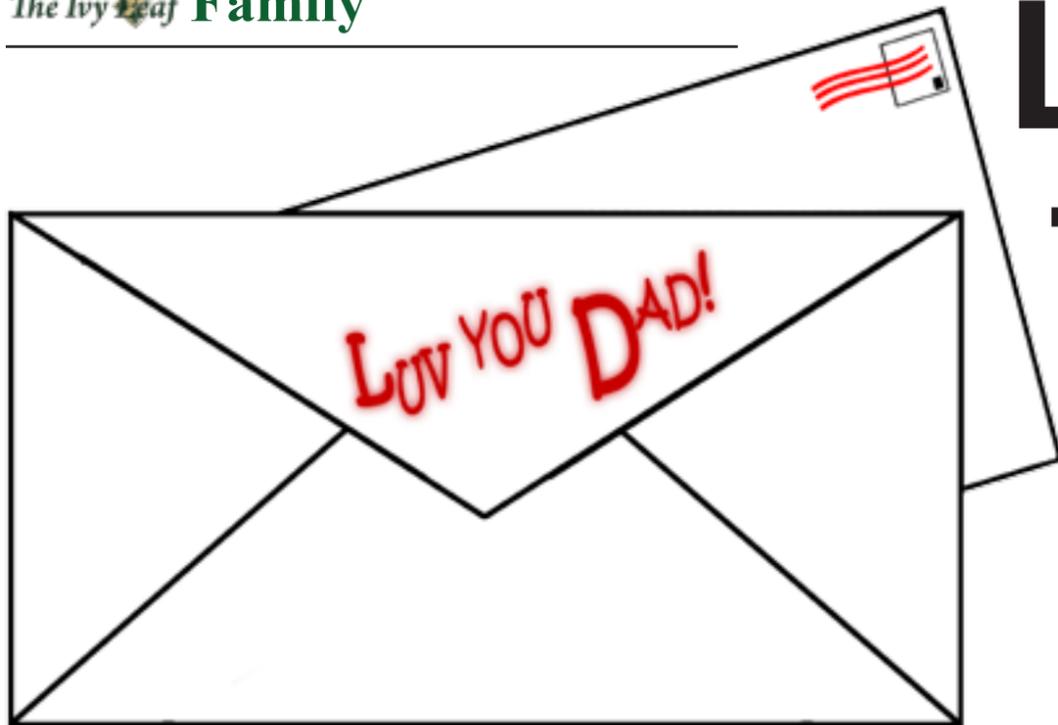
“He’s the most unselfish basketball player I’ve ever seen.”

If this works in sports – how much more powerful will it work in your spiritual life as you reach out to empower others?



Visit the 4ID website for a full archive of past and present news and other important info.

<http://www.hood.army.mil/4id>



# Letters to front line ...

To: Pfc. Donald Harris,  
4th Bn. 42nd FA Regt., 1st BCT, 4th  
Inf. Div.

Donald,  
The Harris Family could not ask  
for more. Thank you for being a great  
Dad. We love you!  
From: Rebecca, Elora, Bridger,  
and Meghan Harris,  
Fort Hood, Texas



To: Sgt. Matthew McCord,  
1st Bn., 68th Armor Regt., 3rd BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

Happy Father's Day Daddy!  
You're the best, and  
I love you very much.  
I can't wait for you  
to come home and have  
French fries with me.  
I'm getting really big!  
Mommy, Rielly, and  
I miss you a lot. Hope  
you come home soon!  
From: Anna McCord  
Vista, Calif.



To: Staff Sgt. Wesley Faulkner,  
1st Bn., 66th Armor Regt., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

Wes,  
Thanks for being such a wonderful father to our  
children. You are the best man in the world. Stay safe  
and know that we are here waiting for you. I love you  
and miss you bunches.  
Happy Father's Day!  
Love you always, Racheal  
From: Racheal, Trevor and Abigail Faulkner,  
Gatesville, Texas



To: Staff Sgt. Vincent Paul,  
1st Bn., 22nd Inf. Regt., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

Happy Father's Day Dad!  
We can't wait until you come home. We miss you  
very much!  
Do you know I don't have anyone to play the video  
game with? That's why you need to tell your boss you  
really need to come home so I can play the game with  
you.  
Mom told me that you miss us too. So I guess I'll  
play by myself and  
save the game until  
you come home. That  
will be a lot of saved  
games you know?  
I love you and  
Kayla, Ky'la and Jada  
too.  
From: JaiShawn  
Vincent,  
Fort Hood, Texas



To: Spc. Ben Zimlich,  
1st Bn., 22nd Inf. Regt.,  
1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

My Dear Husband,  
This is a very special  
day for you as a father,  
as well as a husband.  
I wish I could spend  
this wonderful day with  
you, but as we both  
know you have an im-  
portant duty to fulfill.

I hope that you have a fantastic first Father's Day,  
as well as our first wedding anniversary in Iraq.

You are loved and missed very much, and Benja-  
min and I cannot wait till you return home. We are so  
proud of you, and what yall are doing over there.

Keep up the good work!  
Much Love

From: Gabrielle and Benjamin Zimlich  
Magnolia Springs, Ala.

To: Staff Sgt. Brad Tipton,  
7th Sqdn., 10th Cav. Regt., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

We love and miss you so much daddy! You are our  
hero and the best thing to ever happen in our lives.  
We know it get's lonely being away from us but  
just remember we are always together by heart.  
You are "Da Man!"

From: Brandon, Kyler and Karen Tipton,  
Fort Hood, Texas



To: Spc. Dustin Bishop,  
7th Sqdn., 10th Cav. Regt., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

Dustin,  
I can't believe you are so far away for your first  
Father's Day. I wish you could be here to see our son  
grow. He is such a perfect, happy baby.  
He knows his Dada. When he sees pictures or vid-  
eos of you he smiles so big. And when you talk to him  
on the phone he gets so calm and really listens and  
smiles and tries to talk back. That just melts my heart.

When he hears the words Dada he just lights up.  
I can't wait for you to come home and play with  
your BooBoo. You were such a great Daddy those first  
3 1/2 months before you had to leave. I can't wait to  
watch you with him when you get home.

We are very proud of you and miss you so much.  
Please be safe and come home soon. We love you  
forever and a day. Happy Father's Day.

From: Nicole and Blake Bishop,  
Killeen, Texas

To: Spc. Jimmy  
Barber,  
7th Sqdn., 10th Cav.  
Regt., 1st BCT, 4th  
Inf. Div.

Happy 1st Fa-  
ther's Day! You are a  
great Dad!

I could not have  
asked for a better  
husband, or better  
Father for our son!

We love you and  
miss you very much!  
We can't wait for  
you to come home!



From: Elizabeth and Luke Barber,  
Haymarket, Va.

## SUPERDAD!



To: Sgt. Jason Thompson  
4th Inf. Div. PAO

Daddy,  
Happy Father's Day and  
Birthday! We miss you so  
much and love you too.

We can't wait till you  
see how big we're getting.  
Mommy is doing great too.

Be safe and come  
home soon. Grandma and  
Grandpa say hi too.  
Love, your favorite Buds  
and Duds

From: Haden, Junior  
and Brandi Thompson  
Layton, Utah



To: Sgt. Frank Aldaco,  
4th Spt. Bn., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

Hey Dad, we want to wish you a very  
Happy Father's Day!

We love you and miss you so much and we  
can't wait for you to get home, never forget  
we are proud of you and have you in our  
thoughts and prayers.

Stay safe and love always.

From: Maria, Francisco,  
Jesus and Daniel Aldaco,  
Killeen, Texas

## GONE FISHING



# Missing you from home

To: Sgt. Max Gideon,  
1st Bn., 22nd Inf. Regt., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

Daddy I miss you more than you will ever know.  
I am so proud of all you are doing and can't wait  
to see you soon. Trying to fill in as you while you are  
away but you have left some pretty big boots to fill.

Happy Fathers Day!

I love you daddy!

From: Wendi and Tucker Gideon,  
Fort Hood, Texas



To: Staff Sgt. Charles Alsup,  
4th Spt. Bn., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.



Hi Daddy,  
We miss you  
so much! We are  
so very proud of  
you. We both did  
great in school this  
year, and are so  
happy it is summer  
time finally! I

bet it's hot there and I hope you get to go swimming  
sometimes.

We miss your barbeques! We are taking good care  
of Mommy and she sends all her love too!

You are the best Daddy in the whole Universe.

Hugs and Kisses,

From: Vanessa and Nathan Alsup,  
Fort Hood, Texas

To: Pfc. Guy Barnes IV,  
1st Bn., 66th Armor Regt., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

"Happy first Father's Day, Daddy"

Daddy this is just for you so you'll never ever  
forget you're loved tons and tons.

I'm glad you are my Daddy.

From: Brenda Barnes,  
Killeen, Texas



To: Spc. Muhammad Pulliam,  
1st Bn., 22nd Inf. Regt., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

Hi Honey, just wanted to say happy Father's Day!  
We wish you were here to celebrate with us. We miss  
and love you dearly. Take care and just know that we  
have our angels watching over you each and every-  
day.

Kiss, kiss and hug, hug.

From: Amica Pulliam,  
Phoenix, Ariz.



To: Pvt. Gary Short,  
1st Bn., 66th Armor  
Regt., 1st BCT,  
4th Inf. Div.

Hey babe,  
We just wanted to  
say Happy Father's  
Day.

As you know Har-  
ley's birthday falls on  
Fathers Day this year.  
So I hope you will be  
able to call and talk to  
her. I hope you have a  
good day.

Keep your head on a swivel ... we love you and  
stay strong.

From: Charity, Harley, and Cheyenne Short,  
Indianapolis, Ind.

To: Spc. Frank Costa,  
4th Spt. Bn., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.



Happy Father's Day!

You are in our  
thoughts and prayers  
every single day.

Wish you were  
here with us in  
"Paradise," the  
beautiful island of  
Oahu.

We love you and miss you very much.

Take care and God Bless.

Love your Ohana,

From: Cassandra, Courtney and Shirley Costa,  
Waipahu, Hawaii

To: Cpl. Raymond Schuck,  
1st Bn., 22nd Inf. Regt., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

Happy first Father's Day! We love and miss you  
more than words can say. Be safe Daddy, I can't wait  
to hang out and watch football with you.

Go Noles!

From: Justine and Romy Raye Schuck,  
Fort Hood, Texas

To: Cpl. James George,  
1st Bn., 22nd Inf. Regt., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

Happy Father's Day! We can't wait to see you  
soon. We are very proud of you. Take care and be safe.  
We Love You and Miss You Very Much!!

From: Stephanie and Tyler George,  
Killeen, Texas



To: Sgt. Vincent Boyd,  
1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.  
Vince,  
I hope you know that even though you are not here the boys and I are thinking of you on this Father's Day and celebrating what a wonderful father and husband you are.  
Thank you for all you do by taking care of us here and serving our country!  
We love you and miss you!  
Happy Father's Day!  
XOXOX  
From: Gwen, Brendon and Logan Boyd,  
Fort Hood, Texas

To: Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Smith,  
7th Sqdn., 10th Cav. Regt., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.  
Happy Father's Day Jeffrey!  
We all love you so very much and can't wait to see you again.  
We pray for you everyday.  
We are looking forward to spending the next Father's Day with you.  
XOXOXO  
From: Melissa, Corey, Chaun, Chade, Christian, Zach, and Gabe Smith,  
Copperas Cove, Texas



To: Staff Sgt. Bill Springs,  
1st STB, 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.  
I just want to say I love you and miss you so much, thank you for being my husband and the father of our children. We have our ups and downs – and what Family doesn't – but if we work together it pays off in the end.  
Thank you for your courage and bravery by serving our country and that makes you our hero.  
You are a wonderful father and you always provide for us. On this Father's Day, I want you to find a TV, remote control, a can of beer, and a sofa, then lie down and watch sports all day. I love you and miss you, be safe.  
From: Sharon Springs,  
Killeen, Texas

# Messages from home wishing all Happy Father's Day

To: Sgt. 1st Class Mark Biggins,  
1st Bn., 22nd Inf. Regt., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.  
Hi Daddy,  
I really miss you and I hope you have a great time there in Iraq. I wanted to say that I hope you have a great Fathers Day.  
I miss playing Call of Duty with you. I have no one to play it with. I have no one to wrestle with. I have no one to play football with because my mom is afraid of the ball when it comes toward her.  
Please come home soon so we can do these things again.  
I wish you weren't in Iraq but I know that you are still helping the country and please try to get the bad guys.  
From: Skyler Biggins,  
Killeen, Texas



To: Sgt. Uroy Hyde,  
4th Spt. Bn., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.  
Your Family is home eagerly awaiting your return.  
We want you to know that we love you and miss you immensely, and that no matter how far you are, Father's Day for us is just as special.  
You are the ultimate father to your children and the best husband any woman can have!  
We love you ... FTW for life.  
From: Entric, Anthony and Autumn Hyde,  
Fort Hood, Texas



To: Sgt. Stanley Vos,  
1st STB, 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.  
Hi Daddy! Happy Father's Day! We just wanted to tell you that we love and miss you very much!  
We're trying to be good for Mommy so you don't have to worry about us. You are the best Daddy we could ever ask for and we are so proud of you!  
We love you! Come home soon!  
From: Isabella, Brooke, and Kaelyn Vos,  
Fort Hood, Texas

To: 1st Sgt. Shannon Boldman,  
7th Sqdn., 10th Cav. Regt., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.  
Happy Father's Day to the best Daddy!  
We miss you lots and lots. We love you very much and can't wait to have you home.  
Stay safe and we'll see you soon.  
xoxo  
From: Rhonda and Kylie Boldman,  
Copperas Cove, Texas



To: Sgt. 1st Class Eric Espino  
DSTB, 4th Inf. Div.  
We are so proud of everything that you are doing over there and for the sacrifices that you make to keep us safe here.  
I pray every night that God keeps you safe and that he blesses you and all our Soldiers that make the same sacrifices that you make everyday.  
We love you so much and can't wait to see you again.  
Until then, we will continue to wait for however long it takes for you to come home.  
Stay Safe and always remember ... No One Loves You More Than I Do  
The Espino Family  
From: Angie, Jordan, and Adrian Espino,  
Fort Hood, Texas

To: Pfc. Christopher Biggers,  
1st Bn., 22nd Inf. Regt., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.  
Hey there Daddy,  
We wanted to wish you a very Happy Father's Day!  
We hope you enjoyed the treats we sent. Our baby is growing fast, but don't worry, she keeps you close to her heart every day.  
She insists on carrying around a picture of you where ever she goes.  
To a very special husband and an amazing father, be safe and have a wonderful Father's Day.  
Hugs -n- Kisses  
From: Erin, Madeline and Poco Biggers,  
Killeen, Texas

To: Sgt. James Aneweer,  
7th Sqdn., 10th Cav. Regt., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.  
You are a wonderful father, husband, and Soldier.  
We wish you the best Father's Day.  
Love and miss you.  
Go Spartans!  
From: Jessica, Elizabeth and Ian Aneweer,  
Fort Hood, Texas



# Holiday Family support from home

To: *Spc. Vernon Strickland Jr., 7th Sqdn., 10th Cav. Regt., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.*

Mommy and I wish you were here with us and we want you to know just how much we love you and how proud of you we are.



You're the best Daddy a little boy could ever have and I'm so lucky you're all mine. I can't wait to see you.

In the meantime, have a great Daddy's Day and remember Mommy and I love you lots!

From: *Spencer Strickland, Kingsland, Ga.*

To: *Maj. Todd Bertulis, DSTB, 4th Inf. Div. SGS*

Happy Father's Day Daddy.

We miss you every day. Hugs and kisses.

From: *Maddie, Jack, and Michael Bertulis, Harker Heights, Texas*



To: *Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Bobb, 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.*

Hello to the best dad in the world! I love you and miss you very much.

I couldn't have asked for a better dad!

I am so proud of what you and your troops are doing to help keep the Iraqi people safe.

I'm graduating in the top 10% of my class and I couldn't have done it without your love and encouragement.

I can't wait to see you and have you home again. Never forget how much you are loved and how so very proud I am of you!

Happy Father's Day to the best dad in the world. Be safe and come home soon!

Love, Brittaney.

From: *Brittaney Bobb, Killeen, Texas*

To: *Sgt. Christopher Murrell, 4th Spt. Bn., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.*



Honey, you have done so much for me and our son we just want you to know that we love you and appreciate all that you do. You are a wonderful husband and dad.

We will keep supporting you and look forward to spending time with you. Happy Father's Day!

From: *Monique Murrell, Killeen, Texas*



To: *Spc. Ryan Minier, 1st Bn., 22nd Inf. Regt., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.*

Ryan, Happy First Father's Day!!! I know you didn't get to spend a lot of time with our daughter but I know you will be a great dad.

We both wish you could be here for this day. We both miss you a lot and love you very much. Please take care.

We are always thinking of you.

From: *Cynthia and Kathryn Minier, Waxahachie, Texas*

To: *Spc. Michael Gates, 1st Bn., 22nd Inf. Regt., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.*



Hi daddy, We just wanted to tell you we love you and miss you. We wish you could be here for Father's Day, but we will be thinking about you.

I am getting so tall, just like you. I can't wait until you come home to pick me up and play with me, and make me

laugh, we will have so much fun daddy, I will be such a big boy. I love you so much daddy and we can't wait to see you.

Please come home safe to us. I miss you so much daddy, mommy really, really misses you too. We love you so much please be careful, and stay safe.

Happy Father's Day Daddy!

I love you Shane, please stay safe and come home safe to us.

I love you, happy Father's Day, Babe!

From: *Ashly & Tyler Gates, Fort Scott, Kan.*

To: *Sgt. Donald Alden, 1st Bn., 22nd Inf. Regt., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.*

We just wanted to wish u a Happy Fathers Day. Sorry we are not there to spend it with you. Hope you are doing well.

We are thinking of you all the time. The boys and I are missing you very much. We want to wish u the best of luck.

Take care of yourself and be safe. We can't wait to see u again. We all love you lots.

Love your Family.

From: *Ryan, Bryan, Phillip and Dusti Alden, Fort Hood, Texas*



To: *Spc. Joshua Lucas, 4th Spt. Bn., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.*



Josh, your girls are wishing you happy Father's Day we all miss you and love you so much.

I couldn't have asked for a better person to join me on this journey you are a wonderful man!

Hurry home, hugs and kisses, I love you!

From: *Julie, Lindsay and Lacey Lucas, Killeen, Texas*

To: *Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Hite, 1st Bn., 66th Armor Regt., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.*

Happy Father's Day, "Unko" Matt!

We're so proud you're our uncle! We pray for you and your Family and the rest of the troops and their Families nightly.



We miss you and look forward to your return soon. We hope you don't mind a Texas invasion of Puppis people when you arrive home!

From: *Jeff, Moosie, Michael and Kitty Puppis, Grosse Pointe Woods, Mich.*

To: *Pfc. Anthony Wray, 1st Bn., 66th Armor Regt., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.*

Anthony Sweetheart, I could not have possibly chosen a better Daddy to our children than you.

We love you very much and wish you a very Happy Father's Day!

From: *Ashleigh, Annika and Alesia Wray, Killeen, Texas*

To: *1st Lt. John Lopez, 7th Sqdn., 10th Cav. Regt., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.*

Happy Father's Day, Daddy. We love you and miss you sooo much.

We can't wait to see you and we are excited for all the movies we are going to see together and all the popcorn we are going to eat.

We are so proud of you!

From: *Sara, Eric, and Faith Lopez, Converse, Texas*



**Editors Note:**

Thank you to everyone who submitted a greeting for our Soldiers here in Iraq. We had amazing support from all the Family members at home. Due to the enormous outpouring we were unable to publish every greeting. If your greeting was not published we are sorry. Your support is still greatly appreciated.

- Jason Thompson, Ivy Leaf Editor

# Stage Right Review: *Iron Man soars through expectations*

By Pfc. Samantha Schutz

MND-B PAO

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Superheroes are deeply rooted in American culture; it's only natural for us to identify with these seemingly ordinary human beings who suddenly find themselves transformed by twists of fate, inadvertently becoming enforcers of justice and goodwill.



Pfc. Samantha Schutz

Considering Americans' affinity for these characters, whether in comic books or cartoons, it seems to be a long-running American tradition to start the summer off with a brand-new big-screen blockbuster featuring one of many crime-stopping do-gooders.

This year, joining the likes of Superman, Batman, Spiderman, the Incredible Hulk and the Fantastic Four, to name a few, is Iron Man.

Robert Downey Jr. (*Kiss Kiss Bang Bang*) takes on the role of Tony Stark, the successful head of Stark Industries, a weapons manufacturing company that supplies American troops with heavy munitions during the war in Afghanistan.

During a visit to Soldiers on the battlefield, Stark's convoy is hit by a barrage of enemy bombs, which – much to his dismay – bear the logo of his own company. He is critically wounded and taken captive by a terrorist cell leader. A fellow prisoner, a doctor, is tasked with bringing Stark back to health. He installs an electromagnet in Stark's chest to keep the shrapnel from entering his heart and killing him. Stark, a scientific genius, devises an improved device based on a technology he'd developed for his company.

Instead of building the massive warhead his captors intend for him to make, Stark begins working on an improvised, interactive, robotic suit that will harmonize with the equipment installed in his body. With the help of the other captive, Stark manages to defeat the terrorists and escape, to be rescued by American forces.

Upon his return to civilization, Stark is a changed man. He has every intention to cease his company's production of weapons, arousing suspicion and concern from his business partners and the media. Before the incident, Stark was a charismatic socialite, but the experience has left him obsessed and determined to improve his suit and use it for the greater good of the world.

**"I'm not crazy.**

**I just finally know what I have to do."**

Iron Man comes with all the hallmarks of the superhero movie genre: a person who has been physically and mentally transformed, an awesome outfit, a mentor – in Tony Stark's case, his mentor is played by his faithful and responsible assistant, Virginia "Pepper" Potts, played by Gwyneth Paltrow (*The Royal Tenenbaums*), and, of course, a villain to defeat.

Jeff Bridges (*The Big Lebowski*) excels as Obadiah Stane,



Stark's business partner and, ultimately, his nemesis. The story's plot thickens when Stark discovers Stane's two-faced ways of doing business; he is disgusted when he learns that Stane had a hand in the war profiteering that Stark Industries was indulging in overseas. Likewise, Stane is furious to see Stark thinking for himself and putting the company in jeopardy.

So Stane attempts to one-up Tony Stark by building a suit of his own, resulting in a high-flying, metal-crunching, computer-generated battle of epic proportions.

Don't worry; when I tell you Stark wins, I'm not spoiling the ending – everyone knows good always prevails in superhero movies. That's not to say the suspense won't have you on the edge of your seat, though. After all, these types of films thrive on creating adrenaline with wild stunts, near-death experiences and visually stunning graphics.

Jon Favreau, an actor-turned-director, did a decent job on *Iron Man*, his first major action flick. He succeeded in presenting a world that exists somewhere between now and the near future, a believable dream state in which Stark's use of

technology and a battle royale between two robots in the middle of New York City seem feasible.

It seems, though, that character direction is Favreau's forte. The script for *Iron Man* was little more than a draft when the crew started shooting, but it developed along the way to include realistic, witty dialogue and very human portrayals of all the eccentric characters we meet.

Downey's Tony Stark is especially well-crafted. This is his first leading role in several years, following a mandated stint in drug rehab, and he acts skillfully and confidently. Personally, I questioned whether or not he'd be right for the part – but after watching his performance, I don't think a better actor could have been chosen. He shows us the aloof-yet-intelligent playboy and its enlightened, determined counterpart in a flawless contrast.

**"It's not a piece of equipment.  
It's a suit. It's me!"**

My problem with *Iron Man* is the problem I have with the majority of modern superhero movies – there's no real depth. It's a very cut-and-paste genre.

The recipe is simple: take one part good guy, add an equal part bad guy and blend well until it reaches a conflict. Don't forget to season it generously with CG special effects. However, the right amount of garnish in the form of good dialogue and unique cinematography can make all the difference.

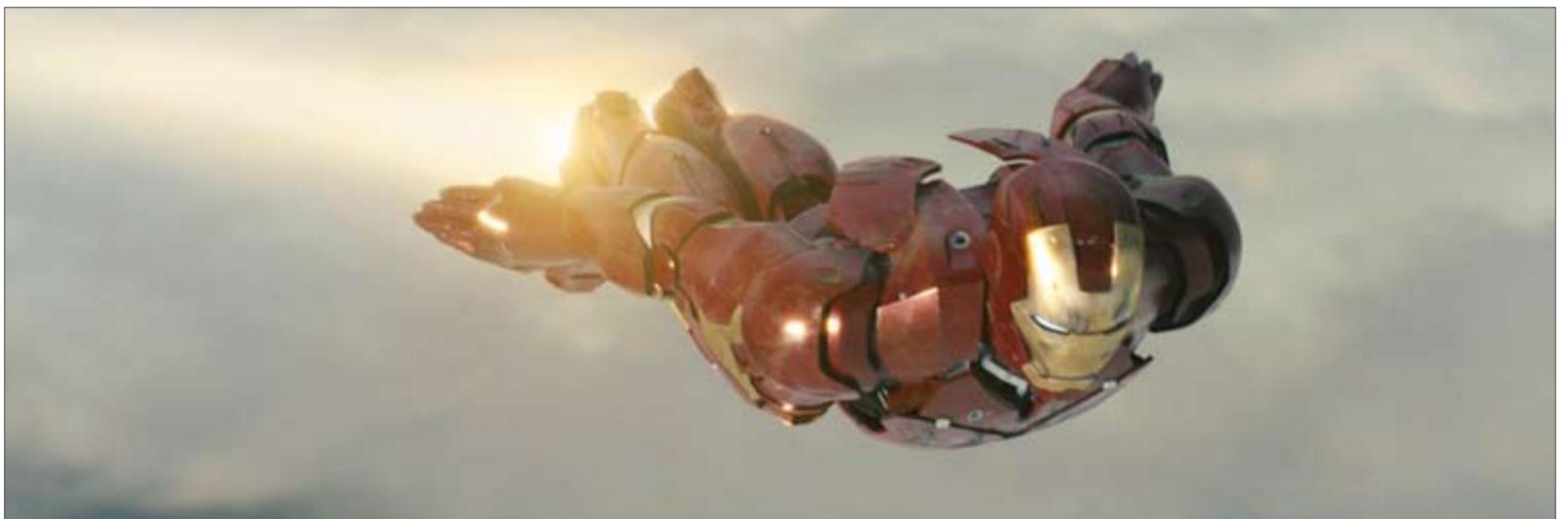
If I had to make the distinction, I'd say *Iron Man* soars high above *Fantastic Four* and completely blows *Ghost Rider* out of the water. But it is nowhere near the level of any *Batman* film, nor is it as interesting and stunning as *The Incredible Hulk* or *Hellboy*.

Okay, before any of you Marvel comic book enthusiasts come after me with threats of paper cuts, I feel obligated to give the following disclaimer: I am a nerd, but I am not a comic nerd. I don't know Tony Stark's background and how it differs from Bruce Wayne's. In no way am I qualified in my limited knowledge of this genre to analyze how well the movie version of *Iron Man* tells the story of this particular superhero. I don't really even understand the obsession with superheroes and special effects.

All I do is judge movies based on my opinions, and in my opinion, *Iron Man* was okay. Granted, like so many big Hollywood movies, it shamelessly exploits fast, name-brand cars to the point where I sometimes felt like I was watching an Audi commercial. That's something that really upsets me, but I must deal with the fact that Americans are a consumer culture and move on.

I doubt *Iron Man* will ever grace my DVD player again, as I prefer to fill it with films that stimulate my imagination instead of my adrenal glands and my urge to spend money. When it comes to superhero movies, they just don't leave much to be imagined. But, like riding a new rollercoaster or being in the front row at a rock concert, it was fun while it lasted. Until you walk away slightly nauseous with ringing ears, that is.

I give *Iron Man* 2.5 stars out of 5.



# Gaming Review: Mario Kart Wii

## Mario, friends hit the road in new, improved 'Kart' race

By Sgt. Mark Matthews  
MND-B PAO



Sgt. Mark Matthews

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Well everyone, this is it – my last review before I redeploy. However, the good news is I'm going out with a smile on my face because Mario Kart is everything it has always been – no better and no worse.

If you've been living in a cave for last 15 years and don't know what Mario Kart is, it's go-kart style racing game in which players race around tracks, pummeling their opponents with different items they obtain throughout the course.

The franchise began with Super Mario Kart on the Super Nintendo Entertainment System and has had a version of the game released on every Nintendo system since – hand-held and console.

Mario Kart for the Nintendo Wii is a welcomed addition to the already sterling reputation the game carries with it. It's easy enough for anyone to pick up and play yet allows more experienced players to rely on strategy, technique and tricks to come up ahead.

There are a few changes to the original game. The most substantial being the hot new wheels the characters are sporting – motorcycles.

Personally, this was an awesome idea.

Is it any different than riding a kart? Not really.

Does it totally change the scope of the game or gameplay itself? In some ways, yes.

Does it allow you to pull turbo wheelies and scream down the straight-aways with nothing but a small piece of rubber between

your victory and you eating the pavement? You bet it does!

If you haven't guessed, I'm a fan of motorcycles.

I own one myself, and not that I'm comparing Mario Kart "Go-Bikes" to my beautiful BMW, it did however peek my interest.

Another cool aspect of Mario Kart is the track selections.

It offers 16 tracks from previous editions of the game and 16 brand new tracks.

I would have like to of seen a few more, but at least the 32 tracks they do have are all good. None that I have played have been remotely boring or too easy.

Game Boy Advance tracks are back as well as SNES tracks, Nintendo DS tracks and even Mario 64 tracks.

All have been re-mastered for the Wii; but remember, the Wii is no graphics machine so don't expect much better than what you remember from the Nintendo GameCube.

A few new items have been added, but very few. So far, I have counted about three that I did not recognize – none of which are really worth mentioning – but really, what would you want them to add?

They did take away the "Ghost" item, which stole an item from your opponents without warning. That one always annoyed me anyways.

I had to save the best for last.

The absolute best thing about Mario Kart for the Nintendo Wii is the controls. It comes with a free Wii Wheel, which works in conjunction with the Wiimote to make for a great combination.

Finally, a unique control scheme for the Wii that works the way it's supposed to. If you want to turn left, than do so with ease. The sensitivity can be adjusted, but

mine was perfect right from the get go.

Thank you Nintendo, it may have taken you well over a year, but you did it – congratulations.

Now, when your arm gets tired of holding the steering wheel, which after an hour or so it will, you can switch to the classic controller mode, the GC controller, or the Wiimote and Nunchuk configuration.

Either way, the Wii Wheel is worth a shot; you may look like a dork doing it, but that's really what the Wii was made for so no shame here.

The only negatives I have about the game are the lack of unlockable characters. There is only one I am aware of, and the transmission modes – Automatic and Manual.

Automatic works well because it improves your steering but takes away the ability to mini-boost around turns.

Manual is the exact opposite; it hinders steering but allows you to mini-boost around turns.

Now, let's think this through.

If your ability to steer is hindered, why would you want to boost around your turns.

It's a disaster waiting to happen for newcomers. However, this new feature does present a challenge fans of the franchise can slowly begin to master.

There is nothing really bad to say about Mario Kart; there never really is. However, everything good about it is kind of weak too.

It's a good game.

It's not great because for casual Mario Kart fans, you could put in the Nintendo 64 version and be just as happy.

It's basically the same thing, which is always a double-edged sword.

As I part from the Ivy Leaf staff, I hope you all have enjoyed these game reviews over the past few months, and I wish you all the best.

Sgt. Jason Thompson will now take over as he will continue to provide quality reviews to help steer you toward gaming happiness. Stay safe and Godspeed.

So for the last time ...

I give Mario Kart for the Nintendo Wii 3.5 crazy kart tires out of 5.



# Soldiers, Families connect via Town Hall meeting

By Sgt. Jerome Bishop  
MND-B PAO

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – In keeping with its tradition, Soldiers and leaders of the 4th Infantry Division took time in the early morning hours here in Iraq May 29 to talk with friends and loved ones back home, where it was the evening of May 28, during the monthly 4th Infantry Division Town Hall meeting.

As with all Town Hall Meetings, Maj. Gen. Jeffery Hammond, a Hattiesburg, Miss., native, who serves as the commanding general of the 4th Inf. Div. and MND-B, along with Command Sgt. Maj. John Gioia, a Buffalo, N.Y., native, spearheaded a group of key leaders who met with the Fort Hood, Texas, and Fort Carson, Colo., communities and thanked them for their everlasting support.

"We're eager and we look forward to having the opportunity to speak to you and hold Town Hall meetings," said Hammond. "This is important to us – and every month, this is a big highlight for us.

"You know the uniqueness of the 4th. Inf. Div. We talk 'Steadfast and Loyal' but what it's all about is Family – of humility – great people who are humble by nature, and they do the right thing in times of stress."

The Town Hall meetings are conducted via satellite for live broadcasting and afford Family members and friends back home the opportunity to talk to the leaders in charge of their loved ones.

The meetings also provide a few lucky Soldiers the opportunity to say hi to someone back home and share their stories about what it's like to be serving in Iraq.

Morale is strong and the mission was going well, said Hammond, as he opened the stage up and introduced a couple 4th Inf. Div. Soldiers and provided them the opportunity to share their stories.

Two of the Soldiers who spoke to the audiences back home were a brother and sister, who have been reunited in Baghdad: Pfc. Rob Duerst, an infantryman serving with the Company C, 1st Battalion, 66th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Inf.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jerome Bishop, MND-B PAO

Pfc. Rob Duerst, an infantryman serving with Company C, 1st Battalion, 66th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, and his sister, 2nd Lt. Lindsey Duerst, a support platoon leader serving with the Headquarters Support Company, Special Troops Battalion, 4th Inf. Div., both of whom are natives of Beaver Dam, Wis., wave hello from Baghdad to the Families and community members gathered at Forts Hood and Carson during the 4th Infantry Division Town Hall Meeting May 29.

Div., and his sister, 2nd Lt. Lindsey Duerst, a platoon leader with the Headquarters Support Company, Division Special Troops Battalion, 4th Inf. Div., MND-B, both of whom are natives of Beaver Dam, Wis.

"Ever since I was in middle school, I knew I wanted to be infantry," said Rob. "I always felt that fighting for our nation was what I'm meant to do in life. I've never even considered a life outside of the Army. I take pride in being an infantryman and I really enjoy the work that I'm doing."

Rob's decision to serve in the Army was influenced by the siblings' grandfather, who served when he was younger. Although Rob has yet to finish his service, another member of his Family soon became inspired by his actions and signed up.

"I decided to take a new course in life and enter the Army as an officer because I was so

inspired by my brother," said Lindsey. "We've always been extremely close, so I took a sincere interest in my brother's passion. I guess it rubbed off on me, and I've decided that I want to devote a portion of my life to serving my country too.

"It's been a phenomenal experience and my life is richer for it. Every time I see a Soldier, I see my brother."

Next in line to share her story was a Soldier who's responsibility and accomplishments tower over the rank she holds.

Pfc. Samantha Schutz, a Lafayette, Ind., native, who is serving as a public affairs specialist with the 4th Inf. Div., MND-B, told the folks back home what it was like being the editor of the Daily Roar, the division's daily electronic newspaper that is distributed electronically to thousands of MND-B troops.

"I've been the editor for 'The Daily Roar' for about two months now," Schutz said. "Before that, it was my job and duty to tell the stories of Soldiers – like the ones who spoke before me – and now it's my pride to put those stories out for everyone.

"It's kind of overwhelming for me, but it's great."

After the Soldiers told their stories, Hammond introduced another guest to talk to the Families back in the U.S. "Al," a Baghdad native, who works as a cultural advisor for the 4th Inf. Div. and MND-B, spoke to the audience about the importance in understanding Islam and Iraqi culture.

An example he brought to the attention of the group was the significance of the Quran-shooting incident earlier in May and how it affected the Iraqi people, adding that Hammond's forthrightness and willingness to address the issue head-on proved instrumental when dealing with the local populace and their concerns.

Hammond then introduced two men well known to the gathered audiences back in Colorado and Texas: Col. John Hort, the commander of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, which is based out of Fort Carson, and Col. Ted Martin, the commander of 1st BCT, which is based out of Fort Hood.

The two shared center stage and took turns answering questions from the Fort Hood and Carson communities as well as providing those gathered an update on what their loved ones are doing in Iraq.

The two faced a variety of questions ranging from redeployment to Fort Carson, Colo., to the necessity of joint security stations and combat outposts and environmental morale leave.

Almost as quickly as it began, the meeting wrapped up in the traditional manner it has since the first in theater in January – with the singing of the 4th Inf. Div. song. Of course, music provided live by members of the 4th Inf. Div. Band.

Although it will still be many months before the Soldiers will be able to see their Families face-to-face,

Town Hall Meetings such as this helps to bridge the gap and make the separation a little more bearable – and provides Family and community members the opportunity to have their questions answered.

## Senior enlisted 'Raider' speaks to 1st BCT Soldiers about retention

By Spc. David Hodge  
1st BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

FORWARD OPERATING BASE FALCON, Iraq – The senior noncommissioned officer of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, spoke to "Raider" Soldiers May 16 about the benefits of reenlisting Army Strong at Forward Operating Base Falcon, Baghdad.

Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Bobb, 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div., Multi-National Division – Baghdad, stood in front of a packed house of "Packhorse" Soldiers from the 4th Support Battalion, 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div., to offer his experience and guidance on reenlistment and the U.S. Army furthering its commitment to Soldiers.

"I have been in the Army for 27 years, and I have never had any regrets," Bobb stated.

"I have run into obstacles ... but it did not deter me from what I wanted to do."

Bobb encouraged the Soldiers to seriously consider all their options for reenlistment while they are deployed to Baghdad for a 15-month rotation in support of MND-B and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"Reenlistment is a mission," said Bobb, a combat veteran with more than 26 years service. "It is the other mission that Soldiers have to accomplish."

Bobb explained to the Soldiers in attendance that he and Col. Ted Martin, the 1st BCT commander, were very happy with the Raider Brigade and its overall performance since arriving in the Iraqi capital in March.

"What Soldiers are doing right now is more important than what less than one percent of 250 million people are doing in the U.S.," he said.

Bobb reminded those in their window for reenlistment that in addition to creating Soldiers, the best job a person can sign up for, the Army offers exceptional jobs and provides exceptional benefits, such as health insurance and job security for Soldiers and their Families.

"As long as Soldiers stay in the Army, they will never be poor, go hungry, and will always have a place to stay," said Bobb.

Bobb said that when he first enlisted in the Army in 1980, the young man from the Islands of Trinidad had a hard time deciding on what he wanted to do with his life.

"I joined the Army initially for three years," Bobb told the Soldiers. "I had a very difficult time deciding whether I would continue or not.

"I went ahead and reenlisted and, because of the decision I made then, I am here today."

Sgt. Nelson Galarza, a petroleum supply specialist assigned to Company A, 4th Support Battalion, 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div., MND-B, said that he plans on reenlisting indefinitely and decided to attend to hear what the brigade's top enlisted Soldier had to share with Soldiers within their windows of opportunity.

"Everything Command Sgt. Maj. Bobb said was pretty much right on," explained Galarza, a native of San Sebastian, Puerto Rico. "Especially when he spoke about the benefits of a career in the Army."

Galarza also said that the Army provides for his Family, and the strong bonds with his Family play a key role in his success and his decision to stay Army – even as his mission keeps them apart.

"The thing that most Soldiers don't like about being deployed is being away from their Families," he said.

# Mol's Wide World of Sports

## Baseball's first 2 months complete

By Staff Sgt. Michael Molinaro  
MND-B PAO

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – The baseball season has cruised past Memorial Day and now sets its sights on the upcoming All-Star Game and dog days of summer this 2008 season. Now seems like a good time to take a look on what has been and what is yet to come.

### Are they for real? Part One.

This seems to be the theme so far this season. I am talking about the Tampa Bay Rays and the Florida Marlins, the two teams with the lowest payrolls in baseball happen to be in first place in their respective divisions (Rays-American League East, Marlins-National League East). The Rays in fact have the best record in the game.



Sgt. Michael 'Mol' Molinaro

This is a team that had the worst record out of every team in 2007 and didn't really go out and get anybody that good in free agency.

But perhaps years and years of good draft picks are starting to pan out and that young talent is emerging as a solid unit from playing together in the minors and then last year in the majors.

Florida, on the other hand, shipped off its best hitter (Miguel Cabrera) and its best pitcher (Dontrelle Willis) to Detroit to once again purge salary – and yet again has come out of it alright. Remember, this is a franchise that has won more World Series in the last ten years than historic teams the Cubs, Tigers, Dodgers, Pirates, Indians, Braves, Mets, and Cardinals COMBINED (Two to one – Cards in 2006).

My instinct tells me that Florida will drift off, since it plays in a very good division, but I think Tampa is for real. Boston thought it would have to fight off the Yankees for the division crown, but it's for real.

Tampa will be in the hunt come September.

### Are they for real? Part Two.

I am talking about Chipper Jones, Lance Berkman and Josh Hamilton. Let's start with Jones. The Braves stalwart is hitting over .400 heading into June, a feat we haven't seen in sometime. In fact, many of you reading this paper probably don't remember anyone toying with the historic .400 mark at all. The last one I remember was the great George Brett back in the 80s. It seemed like Tony Gwynn always did, but never this late into the season. Jones, a switch-hitter, has the tools to keep this roll going all through the summer. While I don't think he will stay above .400, that isn't a knock on him at all. There's a reason it hasn't happened in 67 years (Ted Williams).



Berkman and Hamilton are flirting with the triple crown. If someone were to tell me that two players would be near the top in their leagues in average, home run and runs batted in, these were two names I would never have imagined. Berkman seemed past his prime and Hamilton, well, I didn't even know if he was still in the league.

I love domination in sports, whether it's individual or team domination. While I would like to think that these guys will keep it up, I just don't see it. I think if anyone has a better chance, it's Hamilton. Berkman has to contend with the aforementioned Jones in the batting average category. But hopefully they can give their fans a reason to keep watching, especially Hamilton, who plays for the friends of the Ivy Division, the Texas Rangers.

### The Race for October

To me, more than any sport, it seems that playoff teams in baseball start off strong and play that way all year. It's why Colorado's magical run last year was so scintillating, the fact that they were in last place for the early part of the year.

With that being said, I think the Red Sox and Angels are locks to play into October in the AL.

In the central, it's a toss up. Detroit was supposed to be the team to beat, but they stink right now. Chicago has surprised; Minnesota is playing better than most thought they would, and Cleveland looks good one week and bad the next. I think Cleveland will pull it out somehow but look for a tight race down the stretch. As for the wild-card, I am sticking with the Rays. Sorry Yankee fans, that team has issues and may need to be blown up in the next few years.

In the NL, I think Philadelphia will win the East, but that may not be decided until the final weekend – just like last year. The Cubs are rolling right now, and I don't see anyone in that division giving them a fight. Cubbie fans are salivating at the thought of a long October run, and this could be the year they do it.

Arizona has led from the start out west and should cruise into the playoffs. The team has a young nucleus and could be a National League juggernaut for years to come. And the wild card in the NL could come from one of many teams: Braves, Mets. Cardinals and Dodgers. For now, I will go with the Braves, but I may change that pick after the trade deadline come July.

Well, that's all for now sports fans. Do your best to stay cool and drink plenty of water if you're out there running or doing any type of physical activity.

See ya next time!





Sgt. 1st Class Atir Wise, a native of Killeen, Texas, who serves as a division language manager with Company B, Special Troops Battalion, 4th Infantry Division, pours her heart into singing Christina Aguilera's "Beautiful" making her the winner of the Ironhorse Idol competition at the Ironhorse Sports Oasis Dining Facility on Camp Liberty May 30.

The judges for Ironhorse Idol watch and react to the performances of Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers at the Ironhorse Sports Oasis Dining Facility May 30.

# Competition brings out unseen talent among MND-B Soldiers

**Story and photos by Spc. Aaron Rosencrans**  
MND-B PAO

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq — American Idol is the hit TV show where people from all over the United States showcase their singing abilities in a competition for fame and to be known as The American Idol. Although far from Hollywood, Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers had their own shot at the big time.

Such was the setting when the Soldiers of the 4th Infantry Division hit the stage as Multi-National Division – Baghdad kicked off its inaugural Ironhorse Idol competition at the Ironhorse Sports Oasis Dining Facility here May 30.

The competitors belted out their tunes, as the 4th Infantry Division Rock Band provided accompaniment, in an effort to win the hearts and votes of the audience.

Although Ryan Seacrest was nowhere to be found, the show was humorously hosted by Lt. Col. Dale Buckner, a native of Rochester, N.Y., who serves as the commander of the Division Special Troops Battalion, 4th Inf. Div., who was equally entertaining and even kicked off the show with a little of his own "old-school flavor."

The evening's champion was Sgt. 1st Class Atir Wise, a native of Killeen, Texas, who serves as a division language manager with Company B, Special Troops Battalion, 4th Inf. Div., who sang Christina Aguilera's "Beautiful," who said she had no expectations on winning the competition.

"There were some people who could really sing, so I didn't think I could beat them," she said. "For me, this was just a morale booster because I like to sing."

For Wise, the song choice was an easy

one for her because of the meaning behind the lyrics.

"There's a stigma with being a female in the military," she said. "It's as if we're all expected to not be feminine nor know how to act like a lady. Regardless of what anybody says, we are all beautiful in our own way, and I think the song is an inspiration to other female Soldiers."

Among the other performers, one stood out as more of the William Hung-like contestant.

Staff Sgt. Keslet Cineas, a native of Miami, who serves as the driver for the commanding general of the 4th Inf. Div and MND-B, dressed up as Michael Jackson and gave his best rendition of "Billy Jean," with the moonwalk, white gloves and all.

For Cineas, it wasn't about winning or being the best, the whole reason he did it was to give people a laugh and lighten the mood.

"It's all about fun here," he said. "I wanted to put a smile on everyone's face and just have fun with the event. We've been out here for six months now, so this was a perfect way to break up the time."

Band members enjoyed the experience because it changed up their normal routine.

"It was interesting because you never know what you're going to get with each new performer," said Staff Sgt. Sean Kerley, a native of Williamsburg, Va., who serves as a bassist with the 4th Inf. Div. Band. "After all the work we put into this show, it really felt good to see it go so well but now it's time to get the show back out on the road and get back to what we normally do."

Soldiers in the crowd seemed to have as much fun as the performers on stage and thought the event was a great way to break up the routines of their deployment.

It helps break up the monotony of the everyday grind we go through," said 1st Lt. Stephanie Davison, a native of Massillon, Ohio, who serves as the deputy secretary general, with the secretary general staff section, 4th Inf. Div. "This gives us something to look forward to, which makes the week go by really fast."

2nd Lt. Lindsey Duerst agreed with Davison and said events like Ironhorse Idol help break up the time in Iraq and help Soldiers forget about where they are for a little bit.

"We have so little to do out here as compared to what we have back in the United States," said the platoon leader who serves with Headquarters Support Company, STB, 4th Inf. Div. "These events are like bringing a piece of home into theater for a night."



Contestants for Iraq's first Ironhorse Idol line up before the packed audience at the Ironhorse Sports Oasis Dining Facility May 30th. The Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers from the 4th Infantry Division sang and danced their way to become the next Ironhorse Idol.