



The Striker Torch

The Official Newsletter of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division

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Operation Iron Pursuit

The Iron Brigade takes the fight to AQI



1st Platoon, Golf Troop, Task Force 1-35 Armor, move out on patrol with Iraqi Army soldiers in search of weapon caches during Operation Iron Pursuit. (U.S. Army photo by SGT Eric Hein)

STRIKER 6

On Line

By COL Pat White
2nd BCT Commander



Operation Iron Pursuit-Mission Complete

On July 30, the Iron Brigade lost SGT James McHale, who died from wounds he suffered when his vehicle encountered an IED eight days earlier in Diyala Province. SGT McHale will be missed. We will not forget the valuable contribution he made to his country and the impact he left on the Iron Brigade and the Army. We express our deepest condolences to the family and friends of this fallen warrior.

While under MND-North and the 1AD Headquarters, the Iron Brigade has completed Operation Iron Pursuit in the Diyala Province. Our mission, in conjunction with our Iraqi Army partners, was to clear several areas in order to deny al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) and other extremists sanctuary. We accomplished our mission in one month of aggressive, hard combat.

The Brigade Headquarters supported the operation with a small command and control cell, two maneuver elements—a Task Force comprised mainly from 1-35 Armor led by LTC Rich Morales, and a squadron from 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment led by Major Cam Cantlon. We also had support from the 40th Engineers, 4-27 Field Artillery, and the 47th Forward Support Battalion. We can be proud that when the Army saw a tough fight, they called on the Iron Brigade to take it to the enemy.

We completed a night time air assault into an area of Iraq controlled by AQI which had not seen Coalition Forces or the Iraqi Army for some time and was controlled carte blanche by AQI.

We were able to locate and destroy many weapon caches denying the enemy the ability to attack our Soldiers and Iraqi civilians.

In one despicable act, which illustrates the moral depravity of our enemy, a school was discovered rigged with a large bomb. Thankfully, we discovered and destroyed the bomb before it could explode and kill school children.

Our successful operation in the Diyala Province will continue to expand the Government of Iraq's capability to increase

essential services and reconstruction to the local populace.

We completed the mission by conducting a relief in place with the Iraqi Army. After a month of aggressive, hard fighting we returned to a much needed rest and refit at our patrol bases.

I am extremely proud of each and every Soldier in the Iron Brigade for what you accomplished in Operation Iron Pursuit while simultaneously conducting operations in AO Striker.

The Soldiers who took the fight to the enemy in Diyala Province performed courageously and brilliantly. You did not falter in the extreme heat or the spartan conditions. You proved

your mettle in the canals and rat holes of the villages you patrolled in. You took the fight to the enemy, while providing humanitarian assistance to the Iraqis you encountered in the villages. You proved you are the best Soldiers in the Army in what may be the last major offensive in Operation Iraqi Freedom. I am extremely proud and honored to be your commander.

The Iron Brigade staff worked many long days to formulate a great plan for the Soldiers to execute. I absolutely have the best staff of any BCT Commander.

And, for those forces that remained in the Striker Operational Environment, you performed magnificently. You continued to relentlessly pursue the

enemy with less resources but twice as much persistence. You allowed me to conduct two simultaneous operations, a feat unmatched by any other brigade in Iraq. Be proud!

In closing, the tough combat days of the past month were made easier with the support of our families. You are always in our thoughts, and we could not do what we do without your support. Strike Hard!

COL Pat White
“Striker 6”





Don't Forget Nothing

I would first like to congratulate the following Soldiers on their selection to Sergeant Major and attendance at the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas:

To Sergeant Major
MSG Bryant
1SG Ebbs
MSG Martinez
MSG Morales
1SG Thomas, Eldridge
1SG Tuck

Selected for USASMA and then promotion to SGM
1SG Copridge
1SG Mizell
1SG Mullens
1SG Rinehart
1SG Scott
1SG Thomas, Michael

I would like to applaud you all on your selections at this very difficult time in our nation's history. The hard work and dedication you have shown over your time in service, and more importantly your potential for positions of greater responsibility are truly an inspiration to us all. Your selection during this time of war reinforces the achievements and sacrifices you and your families have endured to be successful. I look forward to working with you all in the future.

It is truly an honor to work each and every day with the great men and women of the Iron Bri-

gade. The selection of these twelve Iron Soldiers to the rank of Sergeant Major is a testament to our Brigade and the Soldiers within it.

Sadly again we said good bye to another Iron Hero, SGT James McHale of the 40th Engineer Battalion. SGT McHale was a member of the Brigades Route Reconnaissance and Clearance Team. This is a group of Soldiers that risk their lives daily to allow the remainder of the Brigade freedom of movement across the battlefield. Our prayers are with SGT McHale's family.



Where ever you see Soldiers you can guarantee the Engineers had something to do with getting them there or building the structure they are in. As I mentioned last month, the 40th Engineers are responsible for FOB Hammer, as you can see, that is just a small part of their main mission here

in Iraq.

I would like to say thank you to all Iron Soldiers for your service. And a special thank you to the Iron Families. Strike Hard!

CSM Michael Eyer
"Striker 7"

Marhaba! Regulars!



TF 1-6 IN

Dear Families, Friends, and Soldiers of Task Force 1-6,

I could not be more proud of you and all you have accomplished thus far. Though the media may not see clearly what you have done, I certainly have. The Army senior leadership, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and Congress sees it too. You are the reason the biggest market in Iraq is flourishing. You are the reason the people feel secure for the first time. You are the reason the enemy has lost its grip on the area. Your efforts are truly amazing and I appreciate what you do every day. May God continue to protect you and provide the tools you need to accomplish your mission daily.

The winds of change are blowing again inside Baghdad and for good reason. The folks back home have probably heard in the news about troop reductions and



An Iraqi boy with no shoes, cools his feet from the steaming hot sand by standing on SSG Fred Hampton's boots. (U.S. Army Courtesy Photo)



Admiral Michael Mullen, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff patrols with Commando 6, CPT Erik Oksenvaag in the Jamilla Market. (U.S. Army Courtesy Photo)

the “surge coming to an end”. That is directly tied to progress (yes, our deployment is still 15 months). As some units in Iraq redeploy they are either not replaced or replaced by Iraqi forces. This causes units to rearrange themselves across the area—much like we have done a couple of times already. Well, to keep us on our toes, we have made some more moves. Though we all remain in Sadr City, HHC (Horsemen), A Co (Renegade) and C Co (Commando) have all made some changes to their areas of responsibility.



A Co (Earthquake), 40th Engineers and C Co 1-35 (Warlord), however, both remain in their territories.

We also have gained an additional company: C Co (Steel) 1-68 Combined Arms Battalion from the 4th Infantry Division. They are a great company that we worked with closely during the “Battle of Route Gold” building the wall. And yes, that means we now have three Charlie Companies!

This month’s visitors to the Regulars include the Army Chief of Staff, GEN Casey, U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, Ryan Crocker and a Congressional Delegation, all of whom applauded our efforts in Sadr City. Never before has it been secure enough for these VIPs to safely walk the streets in southern Sadr City.

The Task Force remains in good shape and as focused as ever. In the first 90 days of our deployment, 40 exceptional Soldiers have already reenlisted and we have received over 70 awards for valor! I am truly inspired being amongst such great Soldiers every day. You are truly amazing.

We continue to push hard to defeat the enemy in the area and make enough progress to enable us to turn much of our area over to the Iraqis when we redeploy. We have refurbished nearly all of the schools in our sector (about 38!) that were in horrible condition and created over 15 parks/soccer fields! We continue to revitalize the community with over 5000 jobs and started refurbishment contracts in the area. More importantly, we have spent the U.S. equivalent of over \$8 million provided to us from the Iraqi Government towards these projects.

To our families back home, I know that without your Soldier there with you, keeping everything going is an enormous task. You endure a different hardship, but equally as tough as ours. May God bless you and provide for your needs. I want to especially thank those of you that have reached out to help others in need or helped the Family Readiness Groups. We cannot do it without you.

REGULARS, BY GOD!!

Brian S. Eifler
Lieutenant Colonel
Infantry
Commanding



Regulars Reenlist at the Palace. (U.S. Army Courtesy Photo)



Intel Drives Operations

By 1LT
Sean J. Vreeland



TF 1-6 IN

Any Soldier patrolling the streets of Baghdad will tell you July was a relatively quiet month. In fact, July 2008 totaled the fewest deaths and injuries to coalition personnel since the war began in March of 2003.

The signs of a more peaceful Iraq are not only visible in the statistics of attacks on coalition forces; other signs of improvement cannot go unnoticed such as the ever so important oil production that is at the highest output since the U.S.-led invasion.

Other considerable improvements include economic gains as local businesses flourish, security forces operating independently of U.S. aid, and probably the most important, fewer U.S. troops on the streets.

Although all these factors sum up a peaceful Iraq, there is one aspect that isn't so quiet—*intelligence*. Second only to the Soldier on the ground, intelligence is the most important asset on the battlefield today.

In the current counter insurgency (COIN) era, nearly all of the kinetic operations are driven by intelligence feeds and from numerous sources.

This deliberate planning is usually formatted in the five paragraph operations order. This format allows leaders to ensure the operation is conducted in a timely and complete manner.

The first step in planning an operation is determining what the enemy situation is. Once the enemy's situation is defined, leaders can plan what assets will be needed to defeat that enemy. Leaders

rely on highly skilled service members to provide the enemy situation through intelligence.

Even though attacks in Iraq are down to record lows, information flows through the battlefield at a rapid pace. This fast moving stream of intelligence has been challenging personnel to defeat a fairly new weapon used against coalition forces.

The Improvised Rocket Assisted Mortar (IRAM) has been used against coalition forces 9 times. Unlike Improved Explosive Devices (IEDs), which are found almost half the time before they detonate, IRAMs are highly lethal, and are expertly employed against coalition personnel.

However, thanks to numerous intelligence collection assets, multiple individuals suspected of facilitating IRAMs have been detained and linked to IRAM attacks.

Sgt. Jonathon Gregoire, team leader in Company A, 1st Battalion, 35th Armor Regt., takes a picture of an Iraqi citizen's iris with a handheld inter-agency identification equipment (HIIDE) system during the raid of Al Batta village just north of Four Corners, Iraq June 20. (Photo By Pfc. Michael Schuch)



Most of these collection assets compliment maneuver commanders on the ground to defeat enemy tactics such as the IRAM.

One of these assets is known as "Fusion Cells". This term is used in many instances throughout the military community, however many combat arms battalions place smaller groups of intel gathering personnel at the company level as opposed to having a much larger group of intel analysts at the battalion level.

This allows patrol leaders to inject the intel they gathered their patrols into the community much quicker and efficiently for exploitation. Many of these company fusion cells are manned by the Fire Support Officer, which as of late, haven't been doing many "call for fire" missions.

As mentioned above HUMINT (human intelligence) Collection Teams (HCTs) are vital in delivering information to commanders about the enemy. Much like company fusion cells, HCTs are small groups of intelligence personnel that focus on the human aspect of intelligence gathering. They provide commanders with a specialty that requires a lot of practice and technical knowledge.

The intelligence gathering doesn't stop once the bad guy is captured. Some

of the most valuable intelligence is gathered once he is in the hands of coalition personnel. The soldiers that make this happen are part of the detainee operations cell. These Soldiers are tasked with the extremely sensitive job of processing the detainee and preparing them for transportation to the Detainee Holding Area Annex (DHAA). At the DHAA is where the detainee is interrogated by certified interrogators and the evidence they were arrested with is exploited by another team of highly-trained personnel. These interrogations and the exploitation of the evidence detainees are caught with are usually what provide the most valuable and useful intelligence.

Although the assets discussed here are not the only intel gathering platforms on the battlefield today, these assets combined provide a highly profitable product that maneuver commanders use on the ground to find, fix and destroy the enemy.

SPC Aaron Yeh of the TF 1-6 detainee operations cell, said "It's a great feeling to be part of the process that gets terrorists and their associates off the streets. The more of these guys we catch and put away, the faster we'll be able to stabilize this country."



Census Operations:

By 1LT
Mark Searles

A Who's Who of the Mada'in



TF 2-6 IN

Since arriving in Iraq just over three months ago, one of the first orders of business for the Alpha Company "Assassins" of TF 2-6 IN was to conduct a census on the population in Area of Operations (AO) Assassin.

The Census Bureau in the United States conducts a census once every ten years. The last time the Government of Iraq conducted a census on its citizens is unknown.

Therefore the Assassins have been going out en masse to gain a better understanding of the local population in AO Assassin.

According to the COIN strategy that TF 2-6 Infantry has adopted, a census is one of the initial steps in taking the COIN fight to the insurgents. An insurgent's main goal is to influence the local population; by first understanding the local population and then influencing them in our direction, TF 2-6 is denying insurgents freedom of maneuver in our AO.

A typical census patrol lasts anywhere from four to eight hours and usually covers several kilometers across AO Assassin. Alpha Company's AO is unique in that we have a large combination of populated villages and rural farmland to cover. De-



SGT Daniel Escamilla from 1st PLT Alpha Company entering the biometric data from a military-aged male into the HIDES database during a census patrol. (US Army Courtesy Photo)

pending on whether we are conducting a census operation in a populated area or not greatly affects the time of the patrol.

On several occasions during census operations, Assassin platoons have been to areas which have never seen Coalition Forces for as long as we have been in Iraq. Many of the Soldiers like to give the children in these areas candy and pencils because it will be their first and probably longest lasting impression of an American Soldier.

Census operations provide a great medium through which Assassin leadership gets to explore every corner of our battlespace, and get a true grasp of the living conditions and way of life in AO Assassin. Census operations also give the local nationals in AO Assassin a chance to voice their opinions, concerns, and problems to Coalition Forces— the largest ones being inconsistent electrical power throughout the day and a general lack of water.

The paramount step in the census process is when the biometric data of all military-aged males in each home is entered into our database. This provides Coalition Forces the opportunity to know background information on local nationals entered into the system during future operations.

Census operations are also a great way to monitor population trends such as mapping which families live in certain areas, which areas have Sunni and Shia religious sects as the majority and minority, and lastly which areas displaced families are moving back to in order to reclaim land and houses that were once theirs.

Despite census operations being a framework operation, the Assassins of Alpha Company continue to work diligently day in and out on census operations in order to work towards a more peaceful AO Assassin and a more stable Mada'in Qada. Remember the Regiment, Gators!



The Knight

By CPT
Sean Nolan

DFAC



TF 1-35 AR

With half the Task Force conducting Operation Knight Pursuit, the remaining Soldiers at COP Cashe South have an occasional break from pulling double-duty to keep OE Knight secure in the form of the Hicks-Ornsby DFAC. Named in memory of two Soldiers from 3-1 CAV, the COP Cashe South “chow hall” provides a delicious 4 meals each day.

While most military dining facilities offer a similar Breakfast-Lunch-Dinner dining schedule, the Hicks-Ornsby DFAC of COP Cashe South offers an additional hour, from 2330-0030, for Soldiers who missed dinner or know they won't be able to make the breakfast schedule. This “Midnight Express” meal offers Soldiers flexibility in shaping their daily routines and allows many to obtain their necessary calorie intake despite a work schedule that might not make room for a particular meal.

Also available are the crucial “to-go” plates that allow Soldiers to pick up food for their buddies on mission, on duty, or otherwise unavailable to grab chow themselves. They also provide the alternative of taking one's food back to his office to work through a meal, or to his own living area to enjoy his meal in the comfort of familiar surroundings. However, the Hicks-Ornsby DFAC provides many similar amenities found in many household kitchens in the United States, with televisions for a little mealtime entertainment.



PFC Jake Bauman and PFC Joseph Stehle take a break (US Army Courtesy Photo)



DFAC Personnel ready to serve from the Main Line (US Army Courtesy Photo)

Even on our smaller Battalion-sized COP, away from the bustle of FOB Hammer, our Soldiers are able to dine in a professional, well run dining facility. With a wide selection of alternatives, the Hicks-Ornsby caters to a range of tastes, always offering fruit and sandwich materials for those whose preferences may not agree with the current meal choice. Hicks-Ornsby DFAC—it's not your dad's “Army chow.”



Paradise Lost but Not for Long

By 1LT
Joshua Light



Just north of Narhwan, Iraq lies a small village called Kasaleyah. Once a strong agricultural community, Kasaleyah was described as “Paradise” and “The nicest place to live in the Eastern Baghdad area.”

A reputation maintained until early 2006 when citizens were driven out by al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) insurgents. The devastation that followed turned this small oasis into a barren wasteland. Houses were destroyed, irrigation systems ruined, and Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) were placed along the roads.

In a joint effort to regain control of Kasaleyah, Coalition Forces, Iraqi Police, and the Sons of Iraq were able to liberate the town from AQI. Now the mission has shifted to assisting the Kasaleyah Sheik Council to re-establish the community. Task Force 4-27, C Battery (Cobra) Soldiers are playing a lead role in Kasaleyah’s cleanup and re-settlement. Cobra Soldiers expect to see the town restored during their deployment.



CPT Ed Rodriguez & 1LT Luke Barber with two members of the Kasaleyah Sons of Iraq (Photo by SPC Drew Kelly)

C Battery’s biggest contribution to Kasaleyah’s rebirth is to provide security for the citizens as they return. Cobra Soldiers patrol this village frequently, meeting with the local leaders, citizens, and Iraqi Security Forces to coordinate the cleanup and rebuilding of the small town.

Future projects, which require Cobra’s oversight, include repairing the town’s irrigation canal allowing water from the Diyala River, and wells to provide clean drinking water.

“These projects are an excellent step toward bringing the people of Kasaleyah back to their village,” explained 1LT Luke Barber. Water is one of the biggest problems in this area. We give out water bottles to the security forces as often as we can. This, of course, is just a short term fix to alleviate the current water problem.

Kasaleyah’s resettlement is still in the initial stages and there is still a lot of work left to do.

Local leaders and Coalition Forces are developing plans to provide (in addition to clean water) electricity and building materials for new homes and other vital infrastructure.

Currently, Kasaleyah is inhabited solely by Sons of Iraq, but Task Force Thunder has taken the initiative to identify and restore Kasaleyah’s Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) back to the village.

The first groups of IDPs are expected to return to Kasaleyah within the next two to three months. Given time, and with Cobra’s assistance, there is hope that Kasaleyah will once again earn the right to be called an “Iraqi paradise” and one of the “Nicest places to live” in the Eastern Baghdad area.



Sappers at



40 EN

By SFC
Raymond Brown

the Breach

Task Force Ram Soldiers recently had a unique opportunity to construct a bridge using “Field Expedient” methods during Operation Iron Pursuit. This is military lingo for ‘use what you got, but make it happen’.

While the Task Force moved forward to engage the enemy in Diyala province it came upon a deep canal which vehicles could not cross and blocked onward movement for future operations. The Engineers of Task Force Ram were given the mission of finding a way over the watery canal using whatever assets were on hand. In true creative form the 40th Engineer Battalion made it happen.

CSM Keith Whitcomb formulated a bridge design on the spot quickly drawing a sketch of the bridge. His plans called for using supplies which were available from stocks on hand.

HESCO bastions were used as the primary construction material, a unique answer to a difficult question. The foremost requirement of the bridge was the ability to cross M-1 tanks and to allow the



From left to right, CSM Keith Whitcomb with SPC Clement Bongham, SPC Anthony May and CPL Sergio Cortez, supervises the work done on the Field Expedient Bridge. (U.S. Army Courtesy Photo)

water to flow through to the other side, ensuring support to the local farming community.

A team of Soldiers from the Task Force was formed and with the assistance of equipment operators from KBR and the Iraqi construction platoon, the unit moved out to accomplish the mission of constructing the bridge.

But in order to get the heavy equipment to the construction site over 25 kilometers of road required improvement to allow for the passage of the required heavy equipment. This process took seven hours to complete before the first shovel of gravel could be thrown into the bridging process.

The next important issue was to secure the site before the Engineers were able to get started. The Soldiers began to work as the sun rose over the horizon and the heat began to build.

The first step was to lay a base of gravel. After the base was set three layers of HESCO was used to construct a channel lined with PVC pipe, which allowed the water to continue to flow. As a result, five dump truck loads of gravel and over a dozen loads of fill dirt were moved, primarily by hand, to complete the project.

Thirteen hours and a considerable amount of sweat later, this 17 feet deep, 52 feet wide gap had been turned into a flow-through bridge. The design was tested by crossing a 10 ton dump truck and roller over the bridge for the first crossing. The bridge held.

Many elements of the Iron Brigade continued to use this “field expedient” bridge in support of Operation Iron Pursuit until the mission was complete. The Sappers of Task Force Ram were able to get the job done by using some ‘old school’ knowledge and a can-do attitude,



From the Ground Up



47 FSB

By 2LT
Conrad Cablay

The Iron Brigade continues to expand its sphere of influence and aid the Iraqi Army in eradicating the al-Qaeda threat in Iraq. In order to continue progress, the Iron Brigade has been required to construct multiple patrol bases.

This construction was possible due to the combat service support of the 47th FSB and the Iraqi Engineer Platoon (IEP).

The IEP is ready to accomplish the mission with construction and material handling equipment consisting of forklifts, dump trucks, bucket loaders, bulldozers, excavators, a steel roller, and a grader. Patrol bases of today consist of a complex architecture of HESCO barriers, concrete barriers, scud bunkers and berms that allow a unit to maintain a staunch defense.



Bucket loader filling HESCO barriers. (US Army photo by MAJ William Ellis)

Transitioning a plot of land into a patrol base requires a concerted effort of vehicles, materials and personnel. The IEP has worked on the construction of multiple patrol bases under the guidance of the Support Operations Officer, Major William Ellis. There is no shortage of support from the Iraqi Engineer Platoon, who are on the ground within hours of an objective being secured by the maneuver units. Two patrol bases, recently constructed, were operational within hours of the IEP being on the scene. The effort continues on after initial construction as the improvements and adjustments are made.

To allow freedom of maneuver for the Task Forces, the IEP has also been enlisted to construct land bridges and improve the avenues of traffic around the 2BCT operating environment. The forward progress of the Second Brigade has been followed by a group of Iraqi engineers with their equipment and a penchant for hard work.

As we move through our time here in the Diyala Province, we can look to the labor and dependability of the Iraqi Engineer Platoon to help in improving Iraq's ability to secure and govern themselves without undue duress from enemy forces.



Iron Soldiers mourn fallen brother in arms



By PFC
Michael Schuch

Seven soldiers from the 40th Engineer Battalion fire a 21 gun salute in tribute to Sgt. James McHale during a memorial held on Forward Operating Base Hammer, Iraq, Aug. 3. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Evan Loyd)

SGT McHale; SGT McHale; SGT James Allen McHale," said 1SG Ricky Cliatt during the final role call, but his calls went unanswered.

The memorial service in honor of SGT James McHale, a team leader for Company B, 40th Engineer Battalion, was held at Forward Operating Base Hammer, Iraq Aug. 3.

McHale suffered severe wounds when his vehicle was struck by a roadside bomb during a route clearance mission July 22.

On July 30, McHale passed away at the National Naval Medical Center at Bethesda, Md.

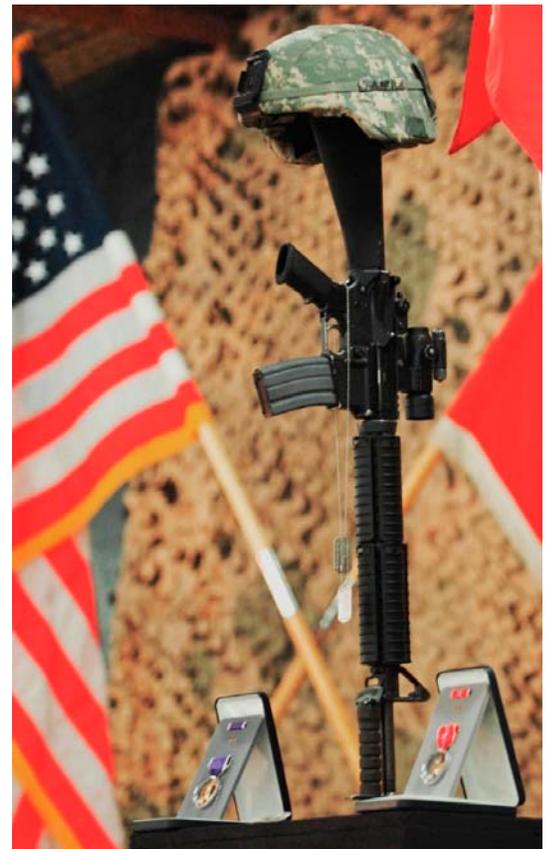
A native of Fairfield, Mont., McHale was serving his second tour of duty in Iraq with Co. B, 40th En. Bn., in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

CPT John Holcombe, a native of Shawnee, Okla., and the commander for Co. B, 40th En. Bn., said that McHale was an exceptional leader, sentiments echoed by his peers and leaders.

"SGT McHale was a man of few words; intelligent and hardworking," said PFC Jonathan Dewitt, of East Brunswick, N.J. "He would want us to smile and remember him as I do now: a funny, loyal and all around great guy."

"He was quite a character," said LTC Dominic Sparacio, a native of Marlton, N.J., and commander of the 40th En. Bn. "He was a fun, but capable leader. He was an expert in his craft."

McHale is survived by his mother, Bonnie McHale; his father, Joel McHale; and his brother, SGT Michael McHale, who is currently serving in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom with the 27th Brigade Support Battalion in Tallil, Iraq.



A fallen Soldier's memorial sits in honor of Sgt. James McHale during a memorial ceremony on Forward Operating Base Hammer, Iraq, Aug. 3. McHale was critically wounded when his vehicle was struck by a roadside bomb July 22 and passed away while under medical care July 30. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Evan Loyd)



A Soldier from the 40th Engineer Battalion takes a moment of silence to pay his final respects to Sgt. James McHale during a memorial held on Forward Operating Base Hammer, Iraq, Aug. 3. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Evan Loyd)



SGT James McHale
1977 - 2008

Month Three

By CPT
Katherine St. Martin

for the 502 MI

The month of July marks the 502D Military Intelligence Company's three month anniversary at FOB Hammer. The processes for intelligence collection and distribution, equipment maintenance, and personnel management survived the growing pains of the initial setup and are now in full swing.

Intelligence Soldiers and Support Soldiers alike are settling into their battle rhythms and receiving much needed on the job experience as they go about their daily mission.

Congratulations to the following 502 Military Intelligence Company Lieutenants on their promotion to Captain on June 30, 2008, CPT Nicole Noyse, CPT Katherine St. Martin, and CPT Tanilla McDaniel .

LTC Dominic Sparacio, the 40th Engineer Battalion, Task Force Ram Commander, hosted the mass promotion ceremony for a total of six lieutenants who moved up the ranks to assume greater responsibility as junior Captains.

Congratulations are also in order for the newly promoted SGT Joshua Frazer. The Commander and First Sergeant welcomed him to the Noncommissioned Officer Corps on July 3, 2008. SGT Joshua Frazer holds the position of STG Team B Team Leader, Night Shift NCOIC, and Baghdad Fusion Cell LNO during night shift operations.

The platoon welcomed one new Soldier, SPC Gabriel Quinones, a prior-service reservist from San Diego, California. He is currently experiencing the joys of SIGINT in processing as his credentials are thoroughly verified and he is granted access to the sensitive information privy to all SIGINT Soldiers who maintain the moniker: "Guardians of the TSCIF".

The 502 Military Intelligence Company SIGINT Platoon and the SIGINT Terminal Guidance (STG) Team have been busy with target development and target acquisition. The analysis and development of time sensitive targets resulted in the detainment of six Brigade High Value Targets and two High Value Targets from other Brigades within these first three months. Each analyst for these teams are assigned a specific battalion and acts as the SIGINT LNO to their respective Battalion S2s, thus providing a customized intelligence service to 502 Military Intelligence customers.



SPC Mariya Rice quickly learns the role of being guidon bearer for SGT Joshua Frazer's Promotion Ceremony (US Army Courtesy



2BCTs Modular Signal Company

By CPT
Abdul Smith

The Iron Brigade welcomed their Signal Company, the 589th, in May of 2007, just in time to prepare for deployment. The 589th Signal Company, is still a mystery to those that do not know firsthand the company's mission and capabilities.

One of the most distinct aspects of the 589th is their equipment. The life blood of modular Signal Companies are: the Joint Network Nodes (JNN), Command Post Nodes (CPN) and the Satellite Transportable Trailers (STT).

With their multimillion dollar shelters and commercial over the shelf equipment, the 589th can provide secure/unsecure data and voice services to more users over greater distances with greater bandwidth compared to its predecessor, Mobile Subscriber Equipment (MSE).

In today's kinetic battlefield, maneuver brigades rely heavily on shared data and collaboration tools down to the company level. This would not be possible without the reliable and transportable JNN package that can support the bandwidth intensive Army Battle Command Systems (ABCS).

Another unique aspect of the 589th is the diversity of their MOSs. There are 10 different Signal MOSs and eight Signal Support MOSs within a unit of 83 Soldiers. The JNN and CPN sections require several different skill sets, from satellite and line of sight systems operators, to nodal switching and automations.

Most Soldiers are cross-trained to perform several jobs within their section. The Signal Support MOSs play a very vital role in maintaining the Brigades wide area network. The generator mechanics have been by far the busiest this summer keeping over fifteen 10,000 watt generators operational. One JNN requires two 10Ks, while a CPN requires one 10K. With two JNNs and six CPNs, it is critical that 589th generators stay serviced and operational.

The command and control center for the brigade's Wide Area Network (WAN) is the Network Operations (NETOPS) section, led by WO1. Brian Henriksen and SSG Paul Hirsh. The NETOPS section resides in the brigade headquarters and main-



NN 87 Team set up the AN-50 line of sight antenna to connect with the BDE TAC during Operation Striker Pursuit. (US Army Courtesy Photo)

tains watch over all JNNs and CPNs within the 2nd Brigade footprint.

Maintaining the Brigade's wide area network also requires the 589th to maintain the brigade's FM retransmission sites. The 589th has two deployed RE-TRANS teams that support both Gator and Iron Knight's area of operations. These sites enable the brigade's FM traffic to extend to areas that are restricted due to distance and terrain.

In addition to extending the FM for AO Striker, the network support company provides automation Soldiers for the brigade's S6 Helpdesk. These 25Bs MOS Soldiers fix and troubleshoot any issues that are computer and network related. There is never a dull moment at the Helpdesk.

As the Iron Brigade's Network Support Company, the 589th is constantly busy doing all these aforementioned things and much more. Wherever Iron Brigade Soldiers are set up, there are 589th Lightning Soldiers supporting. Whether they are monitoring a battalion Command Post Node at COP Cache South or running fiber optic cables to connect buildings on FOB Hammer, the Soldiers of 589th have their hands full.

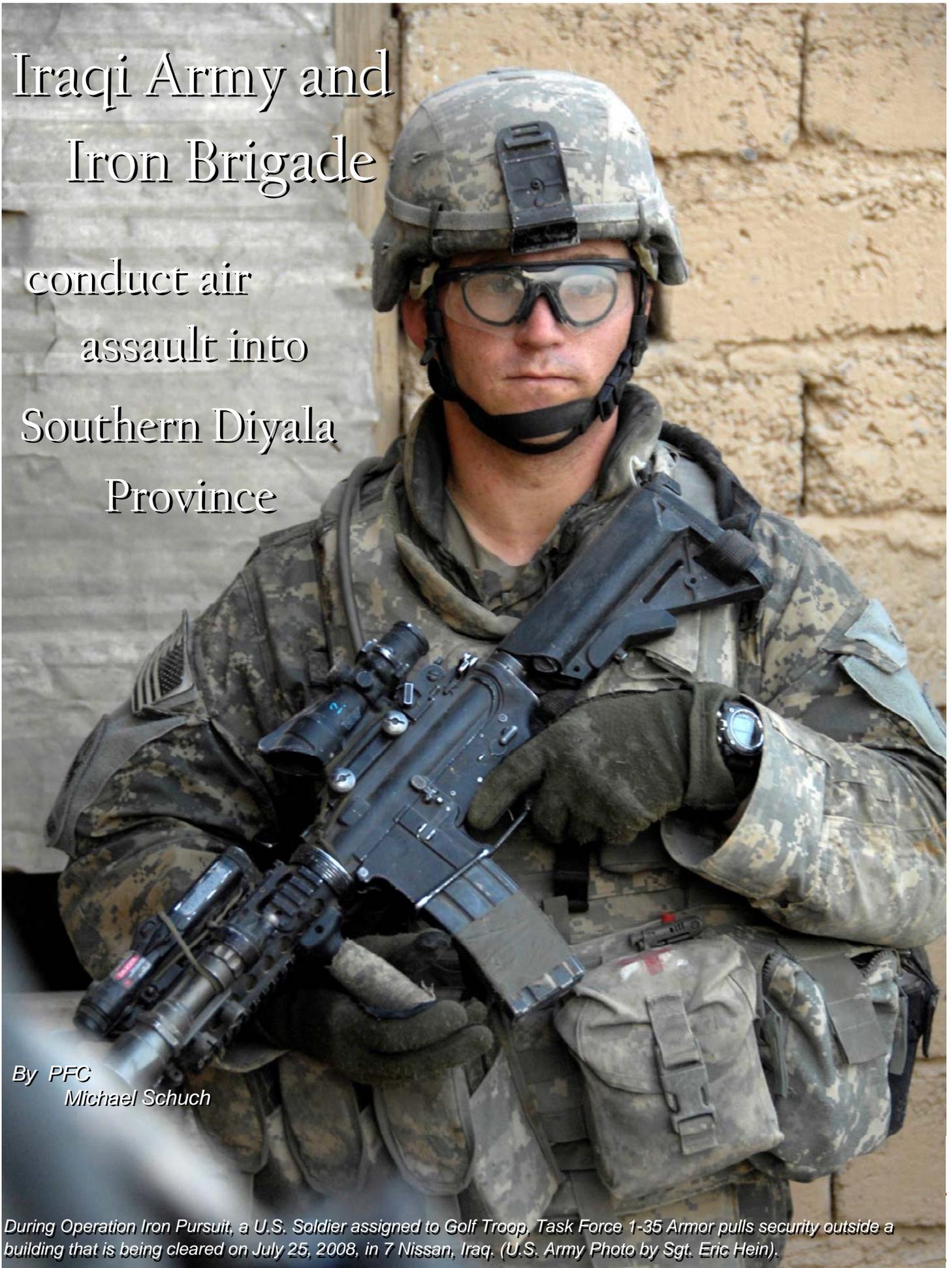


Iraqi Army and Iron Brigade

conduct air
assault into
Southern Diyala
Province

By PFC
Michael Schuch

During Operation Iron Pursuit, a U.S. Soldier assigned to Golf Troop, Task Force 1-35 Armor pulls security outside a building that is being cleared on July 25, 2008, in 7 Nissan, Iraq. (U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. Eric Hein).





U.S. Soldiers from Task Force 1-35 AR set up a hasty defense after exiting a CH-47 Chinook ride to their landing zone for the opening assault of Operation Iron Pursuit on July 25, 2008. (U.S. Army Photo by SGT Eric Hein)

Soldiers from Task Force 1-35 AR conducted a massive air assault operation into the southern Diyala province of Iraq July 26.

The air assault is the first operation of its kind for the 1st Armored Division and allowed the movement of a large body of soldiers from the 2nd Bat., 32nd Bde., 8th Iraqi Army Div., Coalition Forces and supplies to an area of Iraq left untouched for years.

In the late night hours of July 25, Soldiers from TF 1-35 AR and the 8th IA Div. made their final preparations for the operation, ready for whatever lay ahead.

The mission to rid the area of Al Qaida and other extremists played on the minds of the Soldiers as the Chinook helicopters began to land, though the Soldiers were prepared to do whatever was needed to support the IA in establishing lasting security of the area, permanently denying AQI and other extremists sanctuary or bases of support in the area.

As the helicopters landed in the southern Diyala province, Iron Soldiers and soldiers of the 8th IA Div. expertly operated in unison exiting the aircraft, scanning the area for any dangers or threats before quickly securing the field used as their landing zone.

The quick reaction and pin-point precision shown by the IA during the joint operation demonstrated the effect and outcome of their rigorous training and skills.



Once the landing zone had been cleared and secured, the joint force quickly established a checkpoint along the road entering a nearby village before skillfully moving forward, clearing nearby abandoned buildings and remnants of old houses in an effort to secure a base of operations.

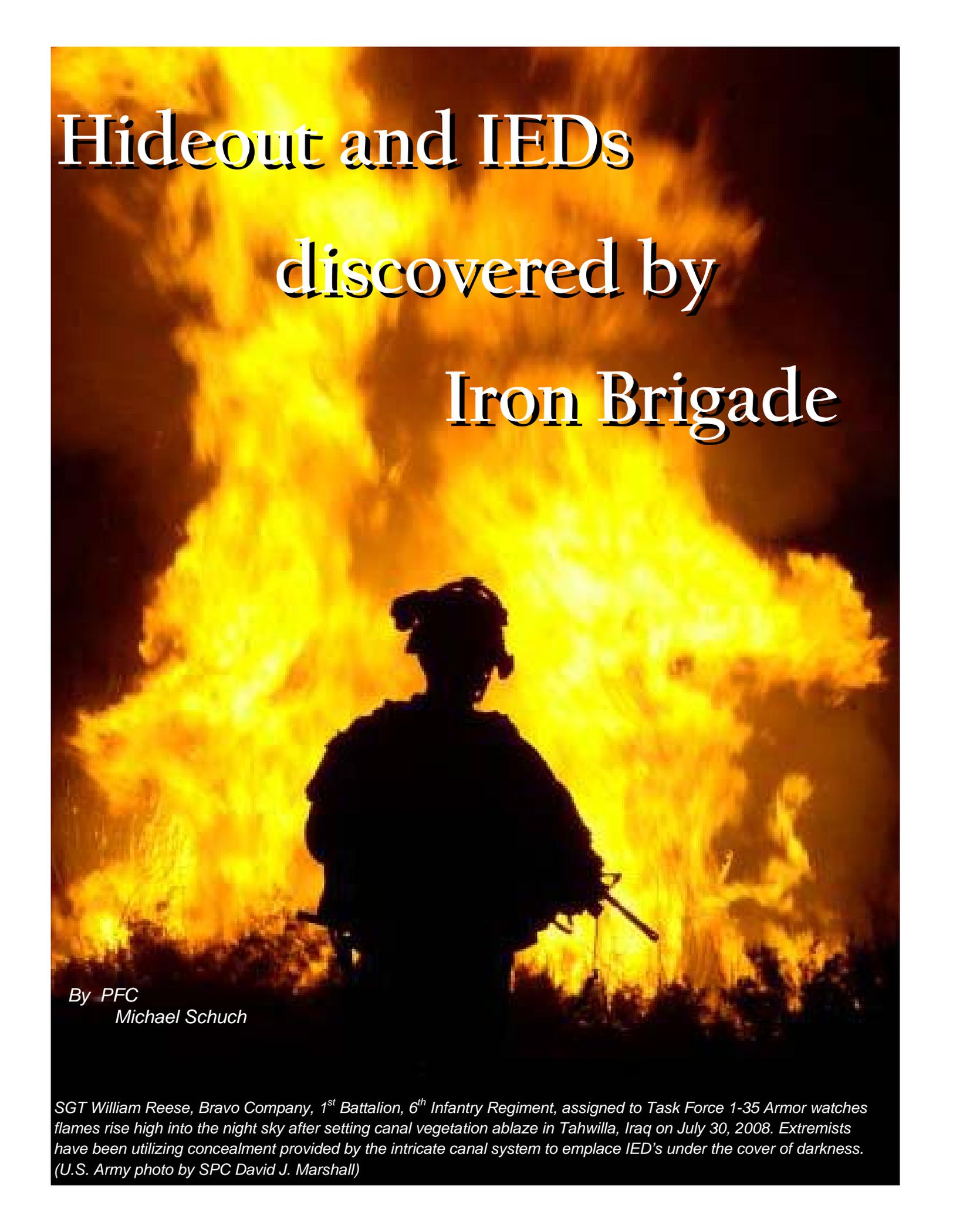
The day soon came to a close, offering the successful completion of the beginning stages of Operation Iron Pursuit, marking the beginning of future safety and security for the citizens of the area by the IA.



U.S. Soldiers from Task Force 1-35 Armor aboard a CH-47 Chinook ride to their landing zone for the opening assault of Operation Iron Pursuit on July 25, 2008. (U.S. Army Photo by SGT Eric Hein)

U.S. Soldiers from the Time Sensitive Target Platoon, Task Force 1-35 Armor move out after a patrol to search for weapons cache during Operation Iron Pursuit on July 28, 2008 in 7 Nissan Village Diyala province Iraq. (U.S. Army photo by PFC Evan Loyd)



A soldier in silhouette, wearing a helmet and holding a rifle, stands in the foreground, looking towards a massive, intense fire that fills the night sky. The fire is bright yellow and orange, with thick black smoke rising from it. The scene is set in a dark, outdoor environment, likely a canal area in Iraq.

Hideout and IEDs

discovered by

Iron Brigade

By PFC
Michael Schuch

SGT William Reese, Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, assigned to Task Force 1-35 Armor watches flames rise high into the night sky after setting canal vegetation ablaze in Tahwillia, Iraq on July 30, 2008. Extremists have been utilizing concealment provided by the intricate canal system to emplace IED's under the cover of darkness. (U.S. Army photo by SPC David J. Marshall)



U.S. Soldiers from Task Force 1-35 Armor and Iraqi soldiers search for evidence of extremists activity in Bezel, Iraq on July 30, 2008. Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces scoured the area in support of Operation Iron Pursuit, an effort to disrupt extremist activity in the region. (U.S. Army photo by SPC David J. Marshall)

The sun had barely risen over the horizon when soldiers of the 8th Iraqi Army Division and Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, received the word to don their gear for a foot patrol through a village in the southern Diyala province of Iraq. The patrol had been ordered to search for weapons caches and insurgents.

This mission was part of Operation Iron Pursuit. Its objective was to clear the region of al-Qaeda, insurgents, and anti-coalition forces. This would allow follow on forces from the Iraqi Army to move into the province and occupy the area in the “hold and build” phases.

The mood was intense as the Sol-

diers, weighed down by body armor, ammunition and water, stepped onto the remnants of an old road, the heat of the Iraqi desert already making the Soldiers sweat.

The Soldiers began their foot march, scanning the terrain intently for anything that appeared out of place. They were especially wary of improvised explosive devices that insurgents had buried in numerous places. In the early days of the operation nearly a dozen IEDs had exploded, hitting several vehicles and wounding several Soldiers. The Iron Brigade lost one warrior, SGT James McHale who died from wounds he suffered when his vehicle encountered an IED.

The patrol made brief stops to talk with the local villagers about anything they might know about insurgent activity as well as to discuss their living conditions and improvements in the distribution of electricity and quality of water the area may need.

The local Iraqi citizens composed of mostly women, children and old men appeared hesitant at first to speak with the Soldiers, but soon realized the good intentions of the Iraqi Army and Coalition Forces. They began providing the Soldiers

with tips to the whereabouts of IEDs that had been hidden throughout the area.

The Soldiers moved from house to house, surveying the needs of the local villagers as they investigated the claims of IEDs and weapons caches.

As they neared the end of their march, the Soldiers were informed to check one final location a short distance away. As they pushed toward the building, they noticed a small opening in the ground, leading into the tunnel normally used for transporting raw sewage.

U.S. Army SPC Torey Neden, Combat Observation Liaison Team, assigned to Task Force 1-35 Armor, utilizes a magnetic locater to search for evidence of extremist activity in Bezel, Iraq on July 30, 2008. Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces scoured the area in support of Operation Iron Pursuit, an effort to disrupt extremist activity in the region. (U.S. Army photo by SPC David J. Marshall)



As the Soldiers examined the tunnel, it became clear it was used as a hideout. They discovered a small stockpile of supplies, including a change of clothes, canned food and 7.62mm ammunition.

“No one was inside when we found it,” said 1st Sgt. Ramiro Hernandez, of Raeford, N.C. “It looked like it had been used recently though.” This would be the norm for the day; no insurgents would be found, only evidence of their phantom existence.

The Soldiers, worn out by the blazing mid-day heat, secured the hideout and began to look into more claims of buried IEDs.

After checking several locations, including roadsides, fields and houses, and finding explosives in each location, the Soldiers cordoned off the area and placed a call to the Explosive Ordnance Disposal mobile unit.

Upon arriving at the scene, EOD evaluated the devices, searching for any evidence that could lead to the fabricator. They documented the device and properly disposed of it before it could be used to harm Iraqi Security Forces, Coalition Forces or local Iraqi citizens.

The Soldiers finally marched back to their base of operations with the peace of mind that even though there is still work to be done, their efforts have saved countless lives.

U.S. Army SSG Thomas Keller (right) and SGT William Reese, both from Bravo Company, 1st Battalion 6th Infantry Regiment, assigned to Task Force 1-35 Armor douse reeds with accelerant before burning canals in Tahwilla, Iraq on July 30, 2008. Extremists have been utilizing concealment provided by the intricate canal system to emplace IED's under the cover of night. (U.S. Army photo by SPC David J. Marshall)





SGT William Reese, Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, assigned to Task Force 1-35 Armor watches flames rise high into the night sky after setting canal vegetation ablaze in Tahwillia, Iraq on July 30, 2008. Extremists have been utilizing concealment provided by the intricate canal system to emplace IED's under the cover of darkness. (U.S. Army photo by SPC David J. Marshall)



U.S. Army 2LT Sabastian Engel Golf Troop, Task Force 1-35 Armor calls for his team leaders for an assessment of the area while clearing the village of 7 Nissan in the Diyala province of Iraq on July 25, 2008 during Operation Iron Pursuit. (U.S. Army Photo by SGT Eric Hein).



Rule of Law team

By PFC
Michael Schuch

Visits Salman Pak

Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Rule of Law team paid a visit to Iraqi attorneys and judges in Salman Pak, Iraq, on August 6.

The Courthouse was bustling with activity. Local Iraqis filled the lobby and the courtyard, waiting to meet with attorneys and judges to help them with a variety of legal issues. During the meeting, the local judges and attorneys presented their issues such as the lack of space to operate and a shortage of office supplies.

All of the attorneys of Salman Pak occupy one small office. In an effort to provide the citizens that seek help more privacy and confidentiality, the leaders of the Rule of Law team surveyed potential nearby areas which could be used for additional office space.

"The shortage of space is a good sign," said CPT Bradley Crockett, of Spokane, Wash. "They are constantly busy handling marriage certificates, divorces, property disputes and criminal cases, so it shows how much the Iraqi people are utilizing the judicial system."



CPT Bradley Crockett, of Spokane, Wash., shows an Iraqi judge how to assemble Motorola radios which are being given to the Iraqi judges so they may communicate with the Iraqi Police during their investigations while in Salman Pak, Iraq, August 6. (U.S. Army courtesy photo)



Iraqi citizens wait outside of the Salman Pak courthouse seeking legal guidance in Salman Pak, Iraq, August 6. (U.S. Army courtesy photo)

Judges explained that because of a rise in Iraqis utilizing the judicial center, they were also experiencing numerous office supply shortages.

The Rule of Law team provided the judges with instructions on the proper use and assembly of Motorola radios. The judges will now be able to communicate and coordinate investigations with the local Iraqi Police. In the Iraqi legal system, the Investigative Judge plays a much more active role in investigating crimes. They are responsible for directing the Iraqi Police and investigating crimes themselves.

As public use of the courthouses becomes more frequent, the Rule of Law team will continue making visits to ensure the capabilities of the Iraqi legal system constantly improves and expands.

Local Leaders move to

Improve Schools in the Mada'in Qada

By PFC

Michael Schuch

Dr. Nahid, the Iraqi Deputy Minister of Education, and Mushen Nasser, Mayor of the Mada'in Qada, met with local leaders in Salman Pak, Iraq, to discuss the status of education August 3.

Schooling has been a problem in Salman Pak for some time, with dilapidated buildings, a lack of supplies and a shortage of teachers. Now that the area has been secured and the Iraqi citizens are safe, the local Sheikhs and leaders are free to work on improvements.

Dr. Nihad said that he would like to model the plan used in the Abu Ghraib Qada, where 50 Iraqi students from all school levels were sent to visit schools in the United States.

During the visit, the students were given a chance to see how U.S. schools operate and Iraqi officials were given plans on building design, instructional methods States and curriculum.

Upon return, Dr, Nihad proposed building two schools in Salman Pak based upon the models viewed in the United States.

As planning for this project continues, Dr. Nihad is also planning to build two adult education centers. Of the centers, one is slated to educate the Iraqi Security Forces and Sons of Iraq, while the second is dedicated specifically for Iraqi citizens, including women.

While each project is implemented, the local leaders are striving to provide computers and computer labs to schools throughout Salman Pak to assist further development of the Iraqi youth.



Dr. Nihad, Iraqi Deputy Minister of Education, discusses some of his ideas for improvements to the education system of Salman Pak with LTC Matthew McKenna just before a meeting with local leaders August 3. (U.S. Army photo by SSG Damian Sower)

Each project is still in the planning phases and is expected to take time to develop and implement. The Government of Iraq intends to fund this project, increasing educational opportunities and providing lasting jobs such as landscaping and maintenance to many of the Sons of Iraq in the area.

Dr. Nihad said during the meeting that he believes much of the extremist activity in Iraq is a direct result of unemployment and hopes that as these projects progress, more jobs will be available to those in need.

Dr. Nihad said during the meeting that he believes much of the extremist activity in Iraq is a direct result of unemployment and hopes that as these projects progress, more jobs will be available to those in need.



S1 Personnel

By CPT Ashley Salkowski



Be Smart, Do your Part—Vote!

Would you like to have your vote counted in determining who the next President of the United States is? It's not too late. Voting is the right of every American citizen no matter where you are located.

Both family members and Soldiers are given the opportunity to request an absentee ballot and have their vote counted in the 2008 elections.

November 4, 2008 is quickly approaching in order for you to participate, a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) SF-76 must be filled out and sent to your registering county before September 7th. The SF-76 can be used for both registering to vote and requesting an absentee ballot. The earlier you send your SF-76 out, the earlier you can receive your absentee ballot.

Don't know where to send your ballot? The Federal Assistance Voting website has all the information you need on how to fill out your where to get your SF-76, how to fill it out, and where to send it to. Just go to <http://www.FVAP.gov> or see your voting assistance officer for more information.

Most states send their absentee ballots out 30-45 days prior to an election. If you have not received your absentee ballot two weeks before the

election, then there is a backup program for select states. The back-up Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) is only for personnel who sent in an SF-76 prior to the elections. You can receive a copy of the FWAB off the voting assistance website, <http://www.FVAP.gov>.

For your absentee ballot to be counted, your absentee ballots must be sent in no later than the date established by your state to be post-marked. A postmark is a postal marking made on a piece of mail indicating the date and time that the item was delivered into the care of the postal service. For further questions about voting see the Federal Voting Assistance website, <http://www.FVAP.gov>, or your Company/Battalion Voting Assistance Officer.



Safety Bulletin

By Jerrold Scharninghausen



Workplace Safety and Hazard Recognition Proper Planning Prevents Accidents

Many Soldiers are seriously injured each year due accidents. People still believe that accidents "just happen." But, accidents do not just happen! Less than 10% of accidents are caused by uncontrollable hazards in the workplace.

What goes wrong? Usually, an error that is *within the control* of one or more people is at the bottom of things. When we analyze accidents, we focus on which aspects of a task were controlled and which were not. Most accidents that do occur are due to haste and improper planning. Don't take shortcuts to get the job done! Shortcuts often lead to a bad decision making process, poor choices and put you and others at a high risk.

It is a leadership responsibility to make sure Soldier's accomplish the mission in the safest way possible. That means taking time to review the task that must be accomplished and conducting a proper risk assessment. For example, if Soldiers are sent out on a "Clean Up" detail you should make it a habit to examine the area and identify any existing hazards.

The following questions are just *some* of the questions that should be asked, to help predict what could go wrong and how risks might be controlled:

- Are there **enough workers** to handle the job?
- Have they all been **trained** to properly execute the mission?
- Are the necessary **materials/proper tools** available to perform the task(s) at hand?
- Have the tools/equipment been **inspected** to make sure they are in good repair or do they need to be replaced?
- Have they all been issued the **proper personal protective equipment (PPE)**?
 - Are the materials provided sufficient or is there a need for additional personal protective equipment such as: safety glasses, gloves, hardhat, respirator, etc.?
- Is everyone **aware of the hazards** associated with the tasks or materials?
- Are there **too many people** in the area to work safely?
- Is there a **safer** way to accomplish the task?
- Are **written procedures** and being followed?

Soldiers should remain alert to their environment. If an unsafe condition is identified, they should immediately stop what they are doing, report to leaders and ask for further guidance. Remember safety is everyone's responsibility.

Anticipate, Evaluate and Control Hazards!



Chaplain's Corner

By CHAP (MAJ) NANA BASSAW
2nd BCT Chaplain



Service to Others

Most of us are tempted to find success in life by “looking out for number one.” We sometimes look out for ourselves out of a sense of self-protection, or self-promotion.

We want to protect ourselves by making sure that our interest and needs are met before we take care of others. However, this approach to success as a leader, friend, or family member never adds up – here’s why.

Great leaders are always those who are the best servants of others. America’s greatest leaders, such as George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Martin Luther King, Jr. were great because of their service to others.

These great men sought to serve others before they thought of power, position, or prestige. The same is true of our greatest heroes. The greatest military honor that the nation has to offer is the Medal of Honor. The Medal of Honor is awarded for acts of valor usually in saving the lives of others, not one’s own life.

In fact, the Medal of Honor is often given posthumously. It is always given to those who put the lives of others before their own safety.

In our military organizations we can easily spot the great leader vs. the “looking out for #1” leader. The great leader is the person who takes care of Sol-

diers.

This leader is worried about training, teaching, mentoring, and rewarding their Soldiers. The “looking out for #1 leader,” on the other hand, is overly preoccupied with visibility, self-aggrandizement, and safety from their Soldiers.

The answer for the “looking out for number one” problem is to understand correct math. To become top-notch people we must understand that other numbers exist.

We must often times forget “number one” and seek to understand and take care of other “numbers” around us. The same formula works in families and with friends.

Families and friendships work when people care more about the other person than they do about themselves.

Marriages work when husbands put wives as their number one priority, and when wives put husbands as their number one priority.

In our military and society we need leaders, families and friends who are less worried about self and more worried about selfless service.

In short, we can become number one leaders, with number one families and friends, only when we forget ourselves and look after the needs of numbers 2, 3, and 4.



Striker Justice

By SFC Emanuel Mines
2nd BCT Legal NCOIC



Claiming Victory

Since the beginning of May 2008, I have been running the claims mission from FOB Hammer to all of the BCT's COPs.

The claims mission is very rewarding because it allows me to interact with local Iraqis and make payments to them for their claims for property damage or land leases. Iraqis appreciate the ability to file their claims and receive just compensation from it.

It is not often when they see Soldiers sit with the local nationals, listen to them, take their claims and express sympathy for the damage or loss they incurred.

All in all, the claims mission allows the U.S. Army to maintain friendly relations with the local Iraqi population. While the claims mission is very rewarding, it is also very busy.

Iraqis usually file up to 10 claims per day at some locations. These claims have to



SFC Emanuel Mines pays an Iraqi National for property damage claims. (U.S. Army Courtesy Photo)

be translated, logged in, investigated, adjudicated and submitted for payment.

Even after they are paid, the paperwork still must be sent to the United States Army Claims Service for storage. This takes a lot of time and effort. However, because everyone is willing to help out, the claims mission has been successful and it has paid out over \$22,000.00 in foreign claims so far during this deployment.



Doctor's Desk

By CPT (Dr.) Joseph May
2nd BCT Surgeon



Combat Medicine at its Finest

During our recent air assault operation into the Diyala Province of Iraq, the 2BCT medical team once again demonstrated its excellence. A group consisting of one physician, 3 physician's assistants, one mental health provider, a preventive medicine officer, and numerous skilled combat medics delivered seamless and exceptional medical care, despite harsh and austere conditions.

Several of the team members moved into the new objective by helicopter and carried on their backs everything needed to set up a rapid aid station which could provide immediate treatment for any injuries sustained during the early phase of



The medical team established a forward aid station in the Diyala Province to support the Warfighters of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team.

the operation. The remaining members of the medical team moved up by ground convoy and brought with them the infrastructure to establish a robust treatment facility in the middle of an isolated desert. Capabilities included X-ray, limited lab, routine and sick call care, and trauma and critical care resuscitation.

Medics and providers delivered exceptional care from start to finish. Our brigade was fortunate to have minimal serious trauma, however, we did treat and stabilize a number of Iraqi patients with conditions ranging from a gunshot wound to appendicitis. We furthermore conducted several cooperative medical engagements within the local community, in which we helped treat more than 125 local national patients—mostly children.

This type of outreach made huge gains for our efforts in the Diyala Province, demonstrating that our military, while powerful and resolute, also has compassion and empathy for the communities we work in. For many in this mostly Sunni population, this was the first face-to-face encounter they had with Western forces. We were received with hesitation that eventually turned into smiles and gratitude when we showed that we were willing to help them improve the health of their families.

This was combat medicine at its finest.





“Operation Honor Heroes”



Classification: Top Secret for Students. We would like for the kids to be surprised!

The Wetzel School/Home Partnership Committee would like to start SY 08/09 out by honoring our Military Moms and Dads. Here at Wetzel, we have a very high deployment rate. However, we would like to honor all of our service members. We need your help in doing so. We are trying to make a wall in which a photograph and small message from each service member will be displayed. We would like for you to send us a 4X6 or smaller picture and a message for your child. Below is an example size and message spot. You have 2 options for delivery:

1. Drop it off to our office here at Wetzel. OR
2. Mail it back to Wetzel ES Unit 2318 Box 40 APO, AE 09034 * Just write MPS in the stamp spot. It's free!

Our goal is to have the wall completed by Open House which is August 22nd, so the kids will be SURPRISED to see their family member there the first day of school. The pictures will remain on the wall the whole school year. Even though our family members may be away, the children will be able to “see” them every day!

If you have any questions, please contact ruth.jimenez@eu.dodea.edu.

Thank you for your support, The Wetzel SHP Committee

Message:

Name and grade of student:





STRIKER TORCH

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