



The Striker Torch

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

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Iron Knights To

Insurgents: Check-Mate



Hometown
Support



TF 2-6 IN Soldiers
honored with ceremony



4th of July
In Iraq

STRIKER 6

On Line

By Col. Pat White
2nd BCT Commander



Let Freedom Ring

On June 23, the Iron Brigade lost two heroes: Capt. Gregory Dalessio and Pfc. Bryan Thomas both died of wounds sustained from small arms fire in Salman Pak. The same incident resulted in three other Striker Soldiers wounded in action, Pvt. Derravius Strawder, Pfc. Thomas Williams and Cpl. Joseph Browning.

History and this particular incident, remind us that freedom and independence from tyranny most often comes with a heavy price.

Capt. Dalessio and Pfc. Thomas will be missed. We will not forget the valuable contribution both made to their country and the impact they left on the Iron Brigade and the Army. We express our deepest condolences to the families and friends of these two fallen warriors.

This month, we celebrate our Independence. In 1776, the Founding Fathers signed the Declaration of Independence and by signing the Declaration of Independence they risked everything to guarantee the right to "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness."

These brave men with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence mutually pledged to each other their lives, fortunes and sacred honor. The cause of freedom requires bravery and sacrifice by individuals. We celebrate Independence Day to remember and honor those who fought to ensure that the ideals of freedom and liberty never fade.

Freedom has allowed the citizens of our great nation to live in the wealthiest and most powerful country in the history of the earth.

Yet the Declaration of Independence did not make America independent from England- the Colonial Army did.

The Army, which is the oldest of the Armed Forces and one year older than the nation, has been at the center of the call to freedom.

On this Fourth of July, we celebrate the signing of a declaration that led to the improbable victory of our fledgling country as it defeated the most powerful Nation on earth at the time and brought us Independence.

The Army enforced the ideas of liberty and freedom, and now through the strength of our people and the courage of our Soldiers, we continue history. We will triumph and declare victory over the tyranny of terrorism so that Soldiers like Capt. Dalessio and Pfc. Thomas will not have died in vain.

I ask that everyone take time to remember our Nation's fallen heroes. Please take the time to thank those around you for being a part of a history that will chart a path towards freedom for all. And please don't forget to take time to send a message to your Soldier, thanking him or her for their service, and sacrifice.

The Iron Brigade thanks you for your dedication and service to your Soldier. We miss you, and will be thinking of you as we celebrate on our Forward Operating Base and Combat Outposts.

Strike Hard!

Striker 6



STRIKER 7

On Point

By Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Eyer
2nd BCT Command Sgt. Maj.



Don't Forget Nothing

The Iron Brigade continues to take the lead in all we do. Even in our darkest times we manage to set the example. The loss of Capt. Gregory Dalessio and Pfc. Bryan Thomas from TF 2-6 Infantry was a loss felt by all of us - every deployed Soldier and Family Member at home felt the pain. Yet in these sad times our Iron Soldiers stood tall and proud. I would like to thank all the people involved in the Memorial ceremonies here in Iraq and in Baumholder; our great Soldiers deserve nothing less.

The Brigade is continuing to improve our fox hole at all locations in sector, from sleeping areas to motor pools our Iron soldiers are making their mark. I would also like to thank everyone involved in the preparation and execution of our 4th of July Independence Day celebrations.

There were many activities during the day which the Soldiers participated in. We had several sport competitions throughout the day for the Soldiers to play in. It was great to watch the Soldiers work so well together as a team and temporarily forget about Iraq and the war.

Our cooks and S4 managed to put a little piece of home on every FOB, COP and PB with a menu of barbeque ribs, steaks, hamburgers, near-beer and other traditional Independence Day trimmings. The FOB Hammer dining facility decorations were fantastic. Kudos to Chief Warrant Officer Three Ted Marcus and his crew for the hard work and

attention to detail in making the dining facility look like a little piece of home.

We also had a hot chicken-wing eating contest in the evening which was a hoot to watch - it rivaled the Coney Island Hot Dog eating contest. All of the Soldiers who participated did a great job in eating a tremendous amount of wings.

Our very own FOB Hammer rock band performed magnificently for us. We learned of some singing talents from Soldiers we never knew about. The band had the crowd rocking and had a tremendous finale with the song

'Proud to be an American' as the fireworks exploded over head. A salute goes out to the Mayor's Cell and HHC for the fireworks which were a spectacular event. It was a great way to end the evening.

All of your efforts contributed to the high morale of the Soldiers celebrating our first Independence Day at FOB Ham-



mer.

The 4th of July Holiday was a well deserved break in these trying times. To all at home, thank you for your continued support and to the troops deployed, keep up the great work.

Strike Hard!

Striker 7



HHC Medics Find



TF 1-6 IN

By 1st Lt.

Jesse Moncivais

New Home in Iraq

The medics of Task Force 1-6 Infantry recently came into their own i.e. their own home.

They had been operating their Forward Aid Station out of a small corner of a building the Task Force had occupied on a small base near Sadr City. The building was crowded due to the influx of Soldiers into the area, making any space or privacy a luxury.

However, on May 14 the medics were provided space in a different building allowing them to set up a fully functioning Forward Aid Station, complete with air conditioning and room for three patient beds.

Cpl. Luis Riosbaez, a treatment non-commissioned officer, said "A great deal of help came from the 851st Engineers who supplied the Aid Station with wood and helped by making litter stands and shelving for supplies and books."

The Forward Aid Station is staffed by one Physician Assistant, three treatment NCOs and three Health Care Specialists. They are also equipped with a new Army Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle and two evacuation NCO's. The Task Force Aid Station is conducting split operations throughout their area.

After visiting the newly operational Aid Station Sgt. 1st Class Luis Labrador said, "They have set the standard that has been to the highest caliber, and I'm not surprised that Staff Sgt. Watts (FAS NCOIC) has created a medical treatment facility that will serve the Task Force Regulars to the highest standard of field medical treatment."

To date the Task Force medics have processed and treated over 115 patients ranging from daily sick call patients to battlefield injuries; proving their ability to complete any mission, anywhere. The future plan to assist the medics is to provide a landing zone which would give them the capability to rapidly evacuate any seriously injured personnel by air to the next level of care.

Capt. John Davinson, the Task Force PA said "We are coming along well and everyone works well together".

Each day more space opens up and improvements to the Joint Security Station are made. Some of these improvements include MWR computers and phones for Soldiers to stay connected to the families at home.



From Left to right Task Force 1-6 IN Medics: Spc. Josh Thompson, Cpl. Blake Hofer and Sgt. Hector LaTorre enjoy getting familiar with their new Aid Station. (Photo by: Sgt. 1st Class Luis Labrador, Medic)



Little shop of Chaplain Barber

By Chap. (Capt.)
John Craven



TF 1-35 AR

From the Chaplain side of the house, we have had some really exciting goings-on since we've made it to Iraq. Most of which have not happened exclusively inside the Chapel. Some things have happened inside my office late in the evenings, and other times at all the other locations 1-35 Soldiers live and work at. I have found Soldiers that just want to be encouraged. As the Chaplain, I get to be the hands and feet of that encouragement no matter where the location, and I love it.

Inside my office, when counseling sessions and service times permit, I offer free haircuts to the Soldiers. It has proven to be a great time for Soldiers to chat with the Chaplain, while receiving a pretty good haircut. Without exaggerating this little 'barbershop' has already done over 80 haircuts. I have always had a joy in just talking to Soldiers. This just allows an opportunity to get to know them better without the 'appointment.'

In addition to a good haircut, many of the soldiers also visit the office to get personal hygiene items, snacks, books and other assorted "goodies" they might want.



I receive all sorts of boxes of great gift items from several organizations and families—it allows me to be able to distribute quite evenly and easily. It is not odd at all for a Soldier to drop by after a tough day, grab a handful of candies and chips, say 'Thanks Chap!', and head out. They truly appreciate all that has been given.

Apart from just the hands and feet ministry aspect, our Chapel Service have been splendid. We are currently going verse by verse through the book of Hebrews. We have had some great times of hymn singing. Plus, we have had some good transparent times of prayer. Our services, manuscripts, and weekly shout-outs to family members are available for download at www.cravencadence.com.

God has truly blessed me with this unit. I pray that He continues to give me creative ways to minister and encourage to the Soldiers.

God Bless



Narhwan Economic



By Capt.
Jim Beam

Restoration

Task Force 4-27 FA has completed its second month of deployment and is already starting to see some of the effects of their efforts.

One of the main focuses of the Task Force is to reestablish the economy of Narhwan so that the Iraqi people can better support their families. By giving the people a secure place to live, along with the ability to work and provide for their families, the likelihood of them helping insurgents greatly reduces.

The efforts of TF 4-27 in building a strong local economy are key in fighting the insurgency. It slows the insurgent planner's ability to prey on unemployed Iraqis. Lowering local unemployment rates reduces the number of Narhwan citizens willing to help the insurgents. For Narhwan that success depends largely on the local brick factories.

The Narhwan brick factory complex is a series of 167 small brick factories used to make clay bricks for local construction. Due to the war and extremist activities, most of these factories have remained dormant over the last few years, employing little and providing less.

The combined effort of the local government, Iraqi Police, the Sons of Iraq, and Coalition Forces have stabilized the community by providing the security necessary for the factories to operate again. Just over a year ago, these factories employed only about 3,000 employees, with only a small fraction of the factories in operation. Currently, the factories are employing over 25,000 Iraqi civilians from Narhwan and surrounding communities.

There are three goals, Lt. Col. Michael Mammay, TF 4-27 commander, maintains to assist the owners of the brick factories. First, assist the Iraqis with the acquisition of heavy fuel oil for the kilns. Second, help the locals obtain the necessary fuel to operate the trucks and equipment. And finally, work to ensure the constant and reliable flow of electricity needed to keep production steady.

When these three basic needs are met, the factories will be able to reach full production potential, equating to roughly 50,000 bricks per day per factory, and the employment of 35,000 Iraqi civilians.

Another major benefit in reestablishing the brick factories and providing jobs for so many Iraqi citizens are the benefits it brings to the community as a whole. These factories not only provide jobs to Narhwan, they introduce much needed money into the local economy. When the people have money to buy food and supplies, the demand for food, construction materials, and consumer goods will continue to steadily increase. Families will have enough money to purchase more than just their basic needs. Shops are starting to emerge in Narhwan with inventories gradually increasing in order to meet the growing demands.

The economic restoration in Narhwan continues in this same positive direction, soon it will become a fully self-sufficient and productive Iraqi city. Soon the memories of war will be replaced with new memories of a safe, secure, and prosperous Iraq.



Bricks being made at one of the Narhwan brick factories. (Photo by Capt. Jim Beam, 21 May 2008)



One Team,

One Goal

By 1st Lt.
Joshua Light



Charlie Battery, Task Force 4-27 FA, continues its hard work in Narhwan and the surrounding areas. It performs several weekly patrols as it strives to bring security and stability to the area.

The Cobras continue to conduct 24 hour operations in support of their mission, they also receive assistance from a select group of Iraqis who share the goals of the Coalition Forces for a safer and more secure Iraq.

This group of citizens is known as the Sons of Iraq (Sol). The Sol's primary mission is to man checkpoints along heavily trafficked routes to provide additional security. There are dozens of checkpoints throughout the OE with plans to build more.

The goal in manning these checkpoints is to assist Coalition Forces in identifying and curtailing criminal and suspicious activities before they harm Coalition Forces or the citizens of Narhwan. Recently, the Sol were instrumental in the apprehension of three criminals operating within the area. At a routine traffic stop at an Sol checkpoint, near the Narhwan Brick Factory Complex, Sols identified three known criminals and turned them over to the Iraqi Police. "The Sols have been extremely helpful, over watching the routes and relaying any pertinent information to us while we are on patrols," said 1st Lt. Luke Barber, 2nd Platoon Leader.

The Sols work closely with both Charlie Battery and the Iraqi Police as they aim to assist in the overall battle against insurgents. Charlie Battery conducts a several patrols to various Sol checkpoints per week.



Sgt. 1st Class Michael Cabrera from Bronx, New York, C Battery of TF 427 poses with some of their new Sol allies at one of the Sol checkpoints. (Photo by Sgt. Dremer)



1st Lt. Guy Allsup from Charlotte, NC, C Battery, of TF 4-27 works with Sol at a local checkpoint. (photo by Sgt. Dremer)

Pfc. Lance Zaverl, who has been on several of these patrols said, "The Sol have been very respectful to us and give us information when we need it." The mission of these patrols is to collect intelligence, check on the welfare of the Sol, and offer any additional assistance needed. Additionally, Charlie Battery Soldiers provide water and other necessities to the Sol Checkpoints in an effort to assist them to better accomplish their mission.

The Sol initiative plays an integral part in the overall mission to bring security to the citizens of Iraq. Having Sol in place serves to foster an Iraqi sense of independence; allowing the citizens to play a key role in their country's development.

Charlie Battery will continue to work side-by-side with this group of concerned citizens; building a safer, more secure, and independent Narhwan.



Mercury Rising

By Staff Sgt.
Alan W. Caldwell



TF 2-6 IN

The temperature continues to climb further into the triple digits at COP Cahill and the surrounding area. With balmy and uncomfortable temperatures of over 100 degrees Fahrenheit, Soldiers take to the shade and air conditioned buildings whenever possible.

Constant dust storms, and heat stresses more than troops, it stresses the equipment we hold dear for our life support.

Generators are constantly maintained by teams from the Ghost Troop Tactical Operations Cell. Ensuring cold air and electricity are a number one priority for life support at COP Cahill. Despite the dust storms and oppressive heat, Soldiers of the Brigade Reconnaissance Troop continue ensuring safety and productivity in the greater Mada'in region.

Operations have increased in variety, with actions as the Division Rapid Readiness Force, Medical Support to the local populace and conducting a census of the local population.

The change provides a different angle on the combat scheme, allowing Soldiers to see the people through a different perspective.

Getting the medical support into the local area is surprisingly simple. Knowing how many people will be treated is the tricky part. Men, women and children of all ages stop by to get a check-up and receive treatment for ailments. The area has a substandard infrastructure for health care and the medical staff of Task Force Gator has its work cut out for them. It also helps that the local security personnel and the National

Police are working together in these types of operations.

The mission of cataloguing a region marked by constant migrations of displaced peoples from all sides of the greater Baghdad metropolis has proven to be difficult.

Each village possesses its own identity; its own families and tribes; its very own microcosm. Tracking down hundreds of people and fingerprinting them is a lengthy and massive task. With some of the best trained personnel in the battalion hard at work, indexing over 80 people in a mere matter of hours, in intense heat, is the order of the day. Each platoon in Ghost Troop takes great strides in meeting the intent of cataloguing each village.

Ensuring the local schools are improving, providing medical assistance, cleaning up the canals, providing clean drinking water or stabilizing the villages' security plans continues turning the area into a scene of normalcy.



Capt. Seery, TF Gator PA, providing medical care to local Iraqis. (Photo Courtesy of Task Force 2-6 Infantry.)



Capt. Jon-Paul Hart oversees HIIDES enrollments of local Iraqis during a patrol with his Troopers from Ghost Troop, Task Force 2-6 IN. (Photo Courtesy of Task Force 2-6 Infantry.)



Anything, Anytime, Anywhere

By Capt.

Seth R. Norman



47 FSB

It's 5:30 a.m. and the sun is already shining down on Sgt. Anthony Leerar and his Soldiers. With only a scant few hours until mission time, Leerar and white squad of the convoy security platoon fight the rising heat as they prepare to escort rations, water, fuel, ammunition and tanks, as well as Iraqi trailers, on a six hour round trip—all within the same convoy.

"What we do is definitely a challenge, given how many different places we go and how many different types of things we escort," said Leerar. "We not only take care of the BCT (Brigade Combat Team) by ensuring their equipment and supplies arrive intact and on time, we also take care of our brothers in the 47th by ensuring they arrive safe and sound."

The Guardians are divided into red, white and blue squads and provide exactly what their name suggests to all combat logistics patrols and personal security detail operations originating from the Modern Pioneer's chain-of-command.

The squads are made up almost entirely of volunteers with more than ten different Military Occupational Specialties represented within the platoon, which has trained together since the Mission Rehearsal Exercise at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany.

"With the exception of training in a forest, up to our knees in snow, the JMRC rotation really provided us with the realistic training we needed to accomplish this mission in Iraq," said Sgt. Hartung, a squad leader for blue squad. "It also gave us the time to come together as a cohesive unit. All of my Soldiers are prepared to act and make decisions from a variety of different job positions in a variety of different scenarios."

The Guardians are trained and proficient on all personal and crew served weapon systems up to and including the MK 19 grenade launcher. The Guardians also conducted additional training on counter IED systems and the latest communication and navigation systems.

Most recently they have certified drivers on the new Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle, used on escort missions around the BCT area of operations. The culmination of these training events has made each of the Soldiers in the platoon a technical and tactical expert in the field of convoy operations.

To date, the Guardians have participated in over 60 Combat Logistic Patrols and Personnel Security Detail missions, completing the BCT's earliest successful operations of the deployment after sending its first Soldiers into theater with the embed party from Kuwait. The Soldiers have escorted all nine classes of supplies on military, contractor and local national trucks to every Forward Operating Base and Combat Outpost in the AO.

Beyond the scope of their regularly scheduled escorts, out-of-sector runs have provided the team with some of its most challenging missions to date.

Soldiers from the Guardian platoon have supported emergency recovery operations for several of the Task Force's, as well as for the Air Force, operating along some of the most active routes in the AO. Recently, they have been called on to provide security during the construction of check points and patrol bases to be used by the Iraqi National Police and the Sons of Iraq.

"What the Guardians have done is given us the freedom to move about the battlefield so we can complete our support mission," said Capt. Andrew Brandon, the Bravo Company Commander. "Nothing like the convoy security platoon has existed in the 47th FSB before, and it makes us more efficient and confident knowing we have competent, professional Soldiers from our own ranks making these missions safe and secure until completion."

With mission requirements increasing, security for the Modern Pioneers, by the Modern Pioneers will continue to adapt and improve throughout the deployment.

Given the nature of their success and the dedication of their Soldiers thus far, the 2nd BCT 1st Armored Division knows that when it comes to getting what it needs, it will never be asked "how" only "how much and how fast."



A Mission Never Failed a Task Never Too Big

By 1st Lt.
Theresa Biolosi



The Head hunters of Headquarters and Headquarters Company have been busy since their arrival on FOB Hammer. The Mayor Cell and Base Defense Operations Center (BDOC) on FOB Hammer are just some of the responsibilities of HHC, along with many other duties that Headquarters companies normally have their hands in.

HHC Soldiers working in the Mayor Cell and BDOC are often times wearing two hats; one hat of their new base defense or standard of living job and the other of their actual Military Occupational Skill.

The Mayor Cell hit the ground running as soon as the 2nd Brigade Combat Team arrived.

The Mayor Cell is in charge of housing all the tenants of FOB Hammer as well as working to improve the conditions of Soldiers living and working at COPs Carver, Cahill, Cash North, South and Salie.

HHC, 40th EN BN, also coordinates all the FOB improvements such as AAFES, MWR, Education Center and Gym, working along side the Air Force's Red Horse team and KBR.

Several HHC, 40th EN BN Soldiers coordinating base defense operations at the BDOC are working with high-tech, state of the art equipment that constantly scans the outskirts of FOB Hammer. Additionally, they are in charge of issuing badges to all Foreign Nationals on FOB Hammer, Entry Control Points (ECP's) and Quick Reaction Force (QRF) on the FOB. Their mission is crucial, and the Soldiers of HHC, 40th EN BN, who occupy these vital jobs quickly adapted to their mission set, often times working outside their MOS to ensure it never fails.

HHC, 40th EN BN's Maintenance teams are working diligently to build a motor pool from scratch. They are maintaining twice the amount of equipment with less than half of their normal assets, and all without complaint.

Maintenance teams are also busy learning the ropes of maintaining construction engineer equipment on equipment they have never worked with while in Baumholder, Germany. Mechanics have even been tasked out to the surrounding COPs and COS' to assist in rebuilding the surrounding areas.

Lt. Col. Dominic Sparacio and Command Sgt. Maj. Keith Whitcomb's Command Security Detachment, formerly known as the Engineer Reconnaissance Platoon, are also busy taking to the roads of South East Baghdad.

They have been maintaining a hectic schedule of multiple patrols to better familiarize themselves with the surrounding area as well as to escort the command team to meetings with Sheik's and Iraqi VIPs. They are truly a necessary asset to the complex mission of HHC, 40th EN BN.

It will be a long, strenuous tour for the Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company and their myriad, diverse, daily tasks, but their dedication is unwavering and they are well on their way to worthwhile achievements over the coming months.



Soldiers from the Mayor's Cell oversees a Red Horse crew busy paving a road which is utilized by several large trucks each day. It took this crew less than 10 days to complete this project, further improving FOB Hammer. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Sharon Knickerbocker.)



Task Force Ram's Command Security Detail rises early and prepares for the day's mission. (Photo taken by Spc. Esse Agnegue.)



47th FSB trains Iraqi soldiers on vehicles

By Spc.
Justin Snyder

Iraqi soldiers practice using the joy sticks on an International Harvester Recovery vehicle during a training course held at the Besmaya Range Complex June 19. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Justin Snyder)

Soldiers of the 12th Brigade, 3rd Iraqi Army Division, received training on the M936 wrecker vehicle and the International Harvester Recovery vehicle from Soldiers of the 47th Forward Support Battalion at the Besmaya Range Complex June 18 and 19.

After graduating basic training, Iraqi soldiers come through the Besmaya Range Complex to receive advanced individual training and are issued the equipment necessary to perform their jobs.

Upon completion of their individual training, the 12th Bde. soldiers received three wreckers, used for towing and lifting, and three International Harvester Recovery vehicles, also used for towing. Until now, their training did not cover the vehicle capabilities or proper use.

In an effort to improve training, Soldiers of the 47th FSB have conducted a one-time course which covered vehicle familiarization, vehicle maintenance and recovery procedures.

The purpose of this training was to create a lasting skill among the students. Those that participated in the course can now train future Iraqi soldiers on the techniques they learned.



An Iraqi soldier sits inside a M936 wrecker vehicle while Sgt. 1st Class Ignacio Ortega, of Cypress, Calif., explains the functions of the vehicle during a training course held at the Besmaya Range Complex June 19. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Justin Snyder)



“The goal is to incorporate the training we are giving the soldiers to the employees here (Besmaya Range complex),” said Chief Warrant Officer Julian Price, Melbourne, Fla. “This way, they can train future soldiers who come through and receive these vehicles.”

The program allows the Modern Pioneers of the 47th FSB to demonstrate the proper use of all facets of the equipment. Through an interpreter, the Iraqi’s are able to ask questions and are given the chance to conduct hands-on training with the vehicles.

Maj. Rich Meyer, senior adviser to the 3rd Iraqi Army Division, is tasked with the job of helping to prepare and train the 12th Bde. soldiers, ensuring that they can effectively use the equipment.



Chief Warrant Officer Damien Bozza, of Ringwood, N.J., demonstrates how to hook up chains from an International Harvester Recovery vehicle to an Iraqi soldier during a training course held at the Besmaya Range Complex June 19. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Justin Snyder)



An Iraqi soldier watches as Soldiers from the 47th Forward Support Battalion explain the functions of the International Harvester Recovery Vehicle during a training course held at the Besmaya Range Complex June 19. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Justin Snyder)

“This program provides these (Iraqi) soldiers with a lot of material that they have never had before,” said Meyer, of Roscommon, Mich. “It’s nice to have the 47th FSB helping to make these Iraqis better, so they can ultimately take over the mission in Iraq.”

Sgt. 1st Class Ignacio Ortega, Cypress, Calif., conducted several demonstrations during their training. He fielded questions from the Iraqi soldiers and said that they were very attentive and willing to learn.

Meyer agreed and believes that this training will pay off in the long run. He said that teaching can be a long process, but the Iraqi soldiers are catching on quickly.

“These guys want to learn any thing we are willing to teach them and are some of the best students you will find,” said Meyer. “Their ability to work with the U.S. Soldiers shows their cooperation.”

Iraqi citizens receive

chance to start new lives

By Pfc.
Michael Schuch

An Iraqi citizen tells a story to his son and family while waiting to be released after a reconciliation ceremony at the Joint Security Station in Jisr Diyala, Iraq June 25. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Michael Schuch)

Iraqi citizens were released from the Jisr Diyala Joint Security Station after a reconciliation ceremony June 25.

The ceremony, which is held once a month, is a chance for the one-time detainees to reunite with their families, and celebrate their return to their villages. They were greeted with hugs and cries from loved ones, unable to hold back their emotions.

The 18 men had been detained after being found guilty of criminal acts. During the ceremony they were offered the chance to forget about the mistakes of their past, and start fresh.

"I ask that when you begin to build your new life, establish it on the new Iraqi laws," said Salem Bedin, Jisr Diyala city council leader.



Maj. Khadem, Iraqi National Police commander for Jisr Diyala, Iraq, gives a speech during a reconciliation ceremony at the Joint Security Station in Jisr Diyala, Iraq June 25. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Michael Schuch)

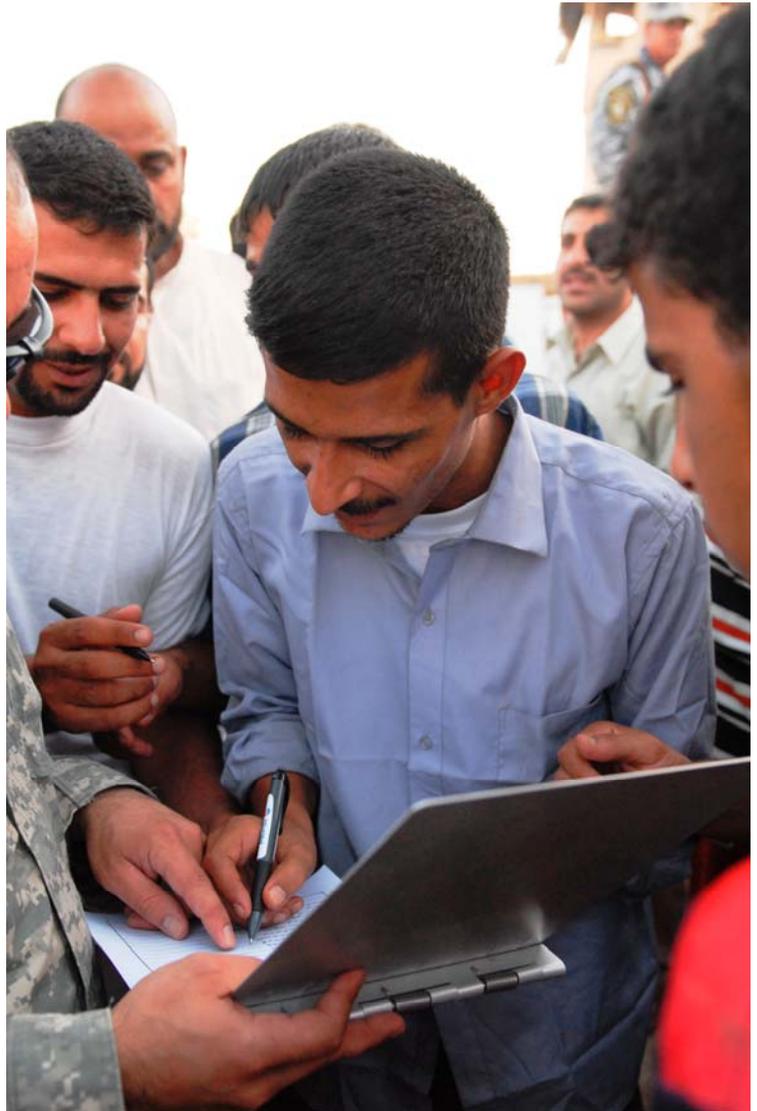


The men were urged to help continue the fight against terrorism and extremists in their area as they integrate back into their villages.

"I ask that you join us in the Iraqi security forces, and help us continue our fight," said Mahmoud Abdulla Jablawe, Tuwaitha North Sons of Iraq leader.

The men were then asked to form a line, so that the Iraqi National Police, Sons of Iraq, and city council leaders could shake the hand of each man and welcome him back into Jisr Diyala.

After each man had been congratulated by the local leaders, they signed out of the JSS log book, and were reunited with their families to return to their homes.



An Iraqi citizen hugs his father after being released from custody during a reconciliation ceremony at the Joint Security Station in Jisr Diyala, Iraq June 25.

(U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Michael Schuch)



An Iraqi man signs out of the Joint Security Station log book, making him a free Iraqi citizen after being released from custody during a reconciliation ceremony at the Joint Security Station in Jisr Diyala, Iraq June 25.

(U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Michael Schuch)



ePRT helps supply

By Pfc.
Evan Loyd

Mada'in Qada schools

The students at Al-Shaheed Khalil High School and Al-Mujtabha Secondary School will have plenty of classroom equipment when the new school year begins in Narhwan.

The embedded Provincial Reconstruction Team, known as Baghdad Eight, delivered \$9,500 worth of chairs, tables, lockers and other classroom equipment to the schools June 21.

Narhwan is more secure than it has been in years, thanks in part to the presence of the Sons of Iraq and Iraqi Police.

The security gains have allowed the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division and the ePRT to focus on helping the Iraqi government repair critical infrastructure.

"During Saddam's (Hussein) rule, the education system took a major hit," said Richard Hawkins, team leader of Baghdad Eight. "He did not promote secondary education... as a result, almost a generation has lost out on education."

The Government of Iraq plans to renovate 72 of the 117 schools in the Mada'in Qada, and build 24 new schools during the next year.

"We plan on making the experience of education not only physically tolerable but, also mentally rewarding," Hawkins said.

The ePRT's efforts improve the economy of the Mada'in Qada, and many future projects

planned will continue to impact the area.

"If we want to go home, we have to leave in place a government and population that can manage their own affairs," said Hawkins. "We can't do it for them – we have to do it with them."



Narhwan families welcome delivery of school furnishings and equipment June 24. (Courtesy photo)

Coalition forces help displaced families

By Spc.
Justin Snyder

U.S. Soldiers donated water and school supplies to two internally displaced Iraqi families at the al-Nabaha School complex in Narhwan, June 5.

"This area of Narhwan is one of the (poorer) sections," said 2nd Lt. Guy Allsup, 3rd Platoon leader, Company C, 4th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery. "To be able to get out there and help out these families, it shows that we really are listening to their needs."

In the past, local families and Iraqi Police helped these families by arranging for jobs and living quarters for them. Allsup said it was important to build on that foundation.

"(IPs and local families) have been helping out these families before we got here and they are very proud of what they have done," said Allsup, of Charlotte, N.C. "We had Iraqi Police and locals come up to us and thank us for helping out. That is huge for us. Building trust can be a slow process and these are the types of things that will help speed that process up."

Allsup said the children were extremely excited to receive the school supplies and the families were appreciative of the water.



Soldiers of the 4-27th FA deliver water to two displaced families at the al-Nabaha School complex, June 5. (Courtesy photo)



The father of one of the displaced families living at the al-Nabaha School complex receives water from a 4-27th FA Soldier, June 5. (Courtesy photo)

The school complex contains a water purification system that the Soldiers inspected. The pump system on the purification unit is broken, so a project has been scheduled to repair it.

Since arriving in the Mada'in Qada in April, the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division Soldiers have been supporting efforts to improve the health and welfare of the Iraqi people and enhance their quality of life.

"We realize the importance of clean water and are working hard to get the pump fixed as soon as possible," Allsup said. "Not only will they have clean water, but it will cut down on water drops, helping them become more self-reliant."

Father's influence helps

By Spc.
Justin Snyder

Iron Brigade Soldier



Captain Shawn Kapoor, 4-27 FA Regt. battalion surgeon, performs a checkup on an Iraqi child in Narhwan. (Courtesy photo)

Captain Shawn Kapoor, 4th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery Regiment battalion surgeon, may tell you he joined the military because he was interested in the medical field. But in actuality, his decision to join the Army is much more personal.

"My father and mother immigrated to the United States from Afghanistan in the early 70's," said Kapoor, of Crafton, Md. "The U.S. provided my dad with a better life for our family, so he's a huge supporter of the country and the Army. Me joining the Army allowed him to give back to his country somewhat."

Civil war erupted in Afghanistan in the 1970's. In the mostly Islamic nation, Shawn's father, Doulet Kapoor, was growing tired of the persecutions he and his wife endured on a daily basis for being Hindu.

"My father wanted a better life for himself and his family," Kapoor said. "He knew he had to get out if he wanted opportunity."

He and his wife packed up their belongings and left. The next few years found them bouncing from country to country in search of a better way of life. Eventually, Shawn's parents found a home in the United States.

They settled in Maryland and Doulet took on many jobs to support his family. He worked as a dishwasher and a cab driver, until he discovered his niche in the business world. Kapoor was young at that time, but his father's patriotism was not lost on him.

Kapoor studied medicine at the University of Maryland and joined the Army in 2000. He felt his decision would make his father proud.

Kapoor then spent seven years as an inactive Soldier while he attended medical school and completed his internship and residency.

Soon after returning to active duty in 2007, Kapoor received orders to deploy in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

While he was eager to start his assignment, he had some jitters about deploying for the first time.

"I was a little anxious about deploying," said Kapoor. "But my dad was behind me all the way. He's a very proud American, and I knew how proud he was of me."

Kapoor's work helping Iron Brigade Soldiers keeps him busy. He sees Soldiers at both Combat Outpost Salie and the FOB Hammer Troop Medical Clinic. He is also part of a cooperative medical operation with Iraqi's to tend to the sick and needy in the Narhwan area of Iraq.

"We military doctors have a saying that says 'Conserve fighting strength'," said Kapoor. "I try and live by that saying. That way I'm doing my part to help our Soldiers complete their mission."



Captain Shawn Kapoor, 4-27 FA Regt. battalion surgeon,, performs a checkup on an Iraqi local in Narhwan. (Courtesy photo)



Community Rallies to Support Deployed Couple



By Pfc. Evan Loyd and
Maj. Wayne Marotto

Maj. Laura Calese, Senior Lawyer for the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, from Palmer Lake, Colo., speaks with an interpreter before a mission on June 27, 2008. Calese spends many days traveling the Mada'in Qada to meet with Judges to discuss legal issues. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Evan Loyd)

Major Laura Calese never realized that when she and her husband deployed to Iraq she would receive a response of outpouring support from her home town of Palmer Lake, Colo.

"The support seemed to come from everyone," said Calese. "It was totally unsolicited and a surprise."

Calese is the mother of four daughters ranging in age from one to ten years old. All are living with her parents in Palmer Lake, Colo.

Each passing day her thoughts are on her daughters' well being. To say that she has a lot to think about is an understatement.

She has a tremendous amount of work to do as the senior lawyer for the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, not only in helping to establish the local Iraqi legal system but also advising her command on the law of armed conflict, international law and fiscal law.

Her work involves dealing with the Iraqi government court system. Her legal experience and education did not prepare her for the Iraqi court system which is based on an inquisition system and is much different than the American system.

A striking difference is the role of judges and the police in Iraq. In Iraq some judges function as investigators who work with the police and direct them to get both sides of the story. The judge then decides whether to forward a case to a criminal trial. The police have limited powers of arrest and to investigate crimes. The Iraqi police have historically had a limited role in investigating crimes. Calese helps these judges to implement their own system by going over laws and procedures with them.

Another important concept Calese is attempting to inculcate is the Rule of Law in Iraqi Society. Americans have been taught from their earliest schooling that no American is above the law and that they are all equal before the law. Americans by and large respect the concept of letting the criminal and legal system work.

In Iraq that is not the case. Often times tribes or individuals take matters into their own hands and administer their own form of 'justice'.



"This has been a relatively lawless society and we want to get judges to apply the laws without being in danger of assassination or coercion," Calese said. "I am working with the 2/1AD brigade to improve security for the court house and help develop partnerships between the IP (Iraqi Police) and judges. That is a fundamental connection in Iraqi criminal law."

Calese also writes and reviews the contracts for the local Sons of Iraq to ensure they comply with the law and policy guidance from all levels of command.

Another important job is to take care of the Soldiers legal needs and criminal law. "We give legal services to Soldier clients on any of their personal matters (wills, power of attorney, etc.). This allows them to keep their mind in the fight."

Criminal law is one of the most enjoyable attributes of her job. "I like prosecuting cases because I really believe that we have one of the most disciplined forces in the world." The criminal law mission is one of the commander's tools to achieve this end state.

Calese's husband is Lt. Col. Gary Calese, who is the Battalion Executive officer for the 40th Engineers. He is on his second deployment to Iraq. She knows about the difficulties of being left behind while someone you care about has been deployed. She was taking care of the home front in Baumholder when her husband deployed with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team in 2006.

"It is harder to be without my kids even though I am with my husband every day," she said. She feels bad for her husband because she doesn't want to let her emotional veneer down. She said she has to maintain her formal Army position even with her husband. "If I let that down and act like husband and wife-mom and dad- then that reminds me of the kids and how much I miss them."

But this deployment is different as both parents were called away to serve their country and the kids were left behind with her parents in Colorado.



Maj. Laura Calese, Senior Lawyer for the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, from Palmer Lake, Colo., discusses the rule of law with Judge Razak (left) during a visit to his office. (Courtesy photo)



Maj. Laura Calese, Senior Lawyer for the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, from Palmer Lake, Colo., looks at a photograph of the son of Judge Ahmer (center). Ahmer is the investigative judge for the Mada'in Qada. Judge Razak (right), the Chief Judge for Mada'in Qada is also shown. Calese was in Ahmer's office to discuss turning over criminal detainees to the Iraqi criminal system. (Courtesy photo)

"It is an Army retiree community and my dad is retired Army. That military network helped out," she said. But it wasn't just the military community which came to her support, it became much more.

The people from the local church, whom she did not really know, helped her mother out by offering to watch the kids and providing toys. The local school went out of their way to show the kids support when Calese enrolled them. The teachers worked extra hard to make the transition from Baumholder, Germany schools to a new school thousands of miles away easy.

"Even the dental office, which I had never been to, surprised me with support. The ladies reached out to my ten-year old offering hugs and phone numbers to call any time she missed her mom," said Calese.

Calese is able to phone her children twice a week with 15 minute phone calls all Soldiers are allowed through a morale program. She calls it her time to recharge her batteries. "It's hard to be away from my children," said Calese. "My girls are my batteries; they are what keeps me going through everything."

Knowing she has the support of not only her family but her community is the only thing that sustains Calese by ensuring her that her children are being taken care of well.

"I would not do what I am doing here without the support back home. It's really amazing how many people helped out without being asked to," said Calese. "I really saw the good in people come out."





Soldiers Celebrate Independence Day

Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade combat Team, 1st Armored Division, celebrated Independence Day on FOB Hammer with sports tournaments, a prayer lunch, a live band and fireworks.

Events lasted throughout the day, starting early with football, softball and volleyball before lunch.

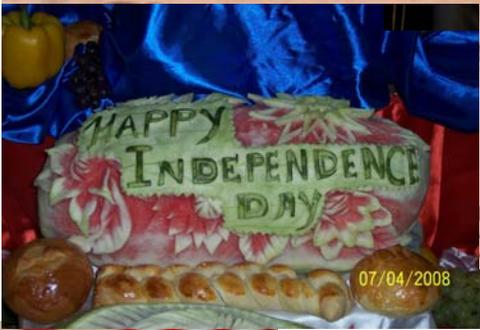
At noon the brigade held a prayer lunch with Spc. Aaron Perkins starting off the service by singing the national anthem. Lt. Col. Jason Kirk, the executive officer 2nd BCT, 1st AD, delivered a speech on the history of prayer in the Army.

After lunch, soccer and basketball tournaments were held along with a "Hotter than Hades" mile run at 1300.

Night festivities started at 1900 with a hot wing eating contest with a sudden death eat off between the two top contenders. The contest ended with Sgt. 1st Class Troy Ramos, a soldier of TF 4-27 FA won when his competitor was disqualified.

After the contest, a band composed of members of 12 Leads and White Eyer, sang for the troops. Their song list went from rock to rap. After the band finished, the perfect ending to the day was the fireworks display over FOB Hammer.

Independence Day



FOB Hammer

Not your average reenlistment ceremony



By Pfc.
Michael Schuch

Staff Sgt. Brutis, a military working dog, waits patiently for the beginning of a reenlistment ceremony held at FOB Hammer June 9. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Michael Schuch)

Soldiers of the 178th Military Police Detachment celebrated the reenlistment of four Iron Brigade Soldiers June 9. Unlike other reenlistments, this ceremony featured two unique Soldiers – military canines.

Sergeant 1st Class Freida, a 2-and-a-half year old Belgian Malinois, and Staff Sgt. Brutis, a 7-year-old German Shepherd, reenlisted with their partners, Staff Sgt. Robert Springmann, of Boston, Mass., and Sgt. Joshua Campbell, of Leesville, Ohio.

Freida, a specialized search dog, has been serving in the Army for more than a year. She is trained to detect improvised explosive devices, weapons caches and ordnance before they can be used to cause harm.

“Though this is her first deployment, she is well trained and is a vital asset to the team,” said Springmann, a specialized search dog handler and kennel master.



Brutis is trained to track and detain suspects, and sweep through villages and cities searching for weapons, ammunition and explosive devices. He has been serving in the Army for six years.

"Brutis is highly trained," said Campbell, a military working dog handler. "Whenever he is in a new area, whether it is an office on the FOB or walking down an Iraqi street, he is constantly searching."

Brutis is currently serving his fourth deployment, having previously served twice in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and once in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"The dogs depend on us and will save our lives," Springmann said. "We in turn depend on them and keep them safe."

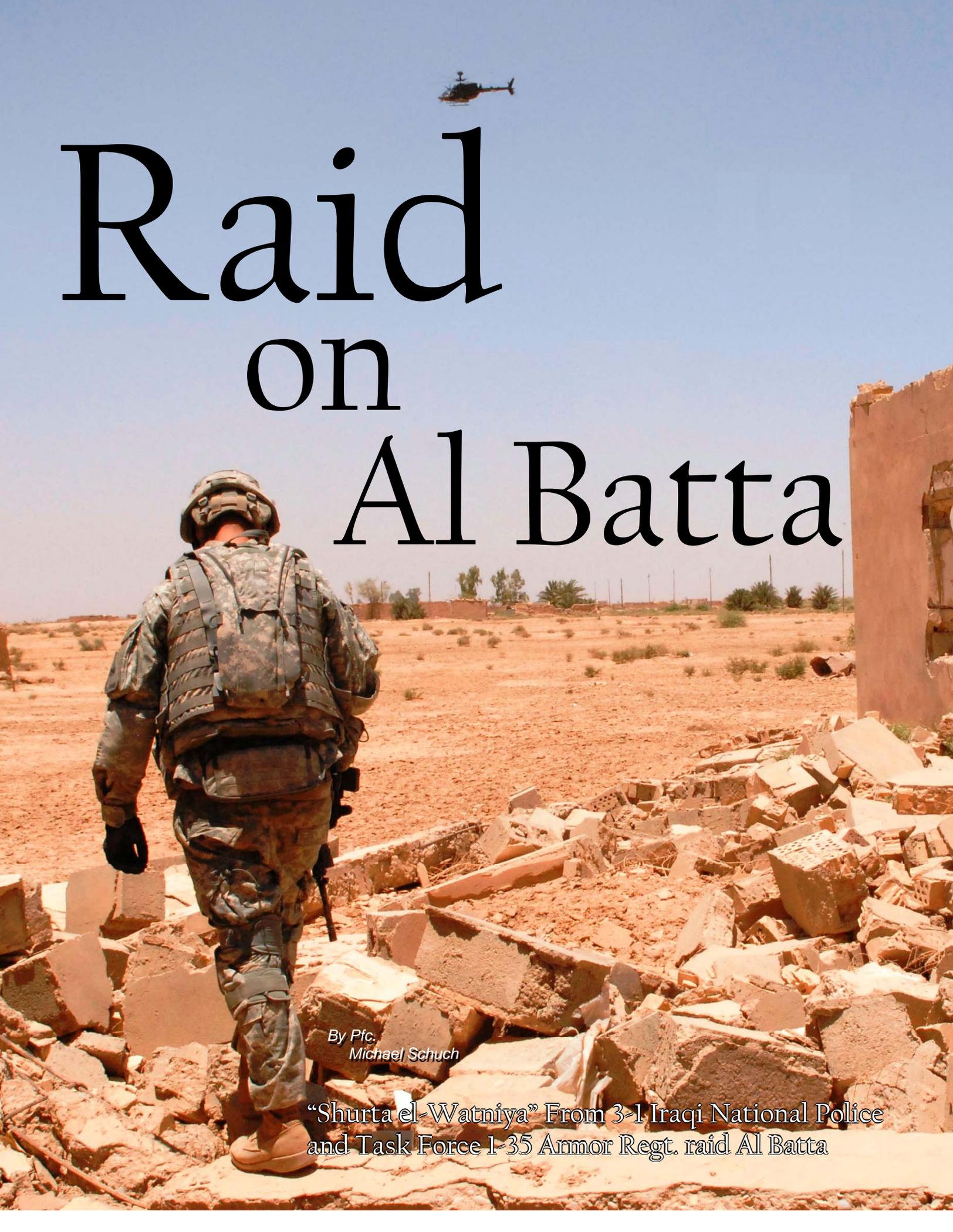
Freida and Brutis will remain on active duty status until they can no longer effectively perform their duties.

Once they reach the end of their military career, they will be considered for adoption by dog trainers and handlers, though there is no set age limit for the dogs to retire.



Staff Sgt. Robert Springmann and Sgt. 1st Class Freida, a specialized search dog, recite the Oath of Enlistment during a reenlistment ceremony at FOB Hammer June 9. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Michael Schuch)





Raid on Al Batta

By Pfc.
Michael Schuch

“Shurta el-Watniya” From 3-1 Iraqi National Police
and Task Force 1-35 Armor Regt. raid Al Batta



An Iraqi woman turns in an AK-47 assault rifle to Coalition Forces and Iraqi National Police for a serial number check during the raid of Al Batta village just north of Four Corners, Iraq June 20. (Photo By Pfc. Michael Schuch)

The day was young as Soldiers from Company A, 1st Battalion, 35th Armor Regiment, along with “Shurta” (policemen) of the Raid Platoon, 3rd Battalion, 1st Iraqi National Police Division, made their final preparations for a raid on the village of Al Batta, Iraq.

The mission was simple; perform a raid on the village to gather any information on extremists in the area, search for weapons caches and perform human terrain mapping to help create another secure and stable area for the Iraqis. What wasn't immediately obvious was exactly how many moving parts were involved in the operation.

Two elements, consisting of Company A, 1-35 AR Regt. and Raid Platoon of the 3-1 NP, conducted the initial raid of Al Batta. As they moved into the village, OH-58 Kiowa observation helicopters provided air security. Along with the Apache helicopters, a team of U.S. Soldiers and NP shurta mounted UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters to provide additional

assistance through air assault if the ground forces ran into trouble.

As the Soldiers exited their vehicles into the early morning heat, they looked at the village which lay ahead. Families were beginning to stir in their homes; the sun starting to beat down on top of them as they started to move about.

The Soldiers made their way slowly into the village, and approached the first house. One team of Soldiers circled the house, securing a perimeter, as a second team in the squad moved inside to talk to the family and to take a look around.

The head of the household, a middle aged man that explained through an interpreter that he was working to provide food for his family, explained that he was the leader of the Sons of Iraq checkpoint outside the village, and was working to keep his village and the surrounding area safe. To show his cooperation, he offered to walk with the Soldiers during their raid, pointing out key structures and ensuring

As the day grew hotter, the Soldiers moved deeper into the village. With every house they came to, Sgt. Jonathon Gregoire, a team leader for Company A, 1-35th AR Regt., had the responsibility of taking every military aged male aside to input them in the handheld inter-agency identification equipment, HIIDE system.

The HIIDE system, a device resembling a digital camera, allows the Soldier to scan the person's iris and fingerprints, take a picture of the person and input any known information.

This information ranges from name and village, to occupation and known aliases. The in-

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)



Soldiers from Company A, 1st Battalion, 35th Armor Regiment, and members of the 3rd Battalion, 1st Iraqi National Police division, move on line through a field in search of weapons and unexploded ordnance during a raid of Al

formation is then readily available to Coalition Forces throughout Iraq and Afghanistan.

After three hours the raid came to a halt. The Soldiers and NP platoon had searched through nearly thirty buildings, talked to every citizen in the area to give them a chance to step forward with any information or concerns and combed through vast amounts of farmland and fields.

The Soldiers that were involved in the mission felt that the raid was a success.

“I believe it made the villagers feel a lot safer,” said Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Etheridge, of Virginia Beach, Va. “They know now that we are actively working to keep extremists out of the region.”

The road that passes alongside the village has been a vital route in the area, having been a major target for roadside bombs and sporadic gun fire on Coalition Forces convoys.

“Usually when they see us, they (villagers) will run out and attempt to engage us,” said Etheridge, platoon sergeant for Company A, 1-35 AR Regt. “But now that they have seen and talked to us and we have taken note of the issues in their area, we are more than just another Soldier to them.”

During the raid, information about the living conditions, unusual people in the area and suspected extremists was obtained.

“We were a lot further north than we normally operate,” said Pfc. Nathan Lorange, of Woonsocket, R.I. “We found out that there wasn’t much going on in that particular area, which gave us a better idea of where to look and expect things from in the future.”

This was an important operation for the area and Soldiers of Company A, 1-35 AR Regt. are no strangers to these types of missions. They operate with soldiers of the 3-1 NP on a regular basis, teaching them different tactics and methods, and slowly integrating them into a lead role so that in the future, they may start to perform these missions on their own.

“It was good working with the National Police again,” said Etheridge. “It shows that we have a good working relationship with the Iraqis, and prepares them even more for taking over control of the area.”

Iraqi National Police lead Coalition Forces from an abandoned building to the next house involved in the raid of Al Batta village just north of Four Corners, Iraq June 20. (Photo By Pfc. Michael Schuch)



TF 2-6 IN Soldiers honored with ceremony



By Pfc.
Michael Schuch





Soldiers from the Personal Security Detachment that worked alongside Capt. Gregory Dalessio and Pfc. Bryan Thomas remember their fallen comrades during a moment of silence at the memorial ceremony on Combat Outpost Carver June 28. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Michael Schuch)

A memorial service was held in honor of Capt. Gregory Dalessio, an Infantry Officer serving as the battalion Civil Affairs Office for the 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, and Pfc. Bryan Thomas, a Soldier in the personal security detachment for the 2-6 IN Regt., at Combat Outpost Carver June 28.

Dalessio and Thomas were killed in action after their squad came under attack from small arms fire as they were leaving a local council meeting in Salman Pak, Iraq on June 23.

Attending the ceremony were leaders and Soldiers from the 10th Mountain Division, the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division and the Task Force 2-6 "Gators."

Dalessio, a native of Cherry Hill, N.J., was commissioned in the U.S. Army on May 29, 2004 and was serving in his second deployment to Iraq.

Thomas, a native of Lake Charles, La., enlisted in the U.S. Army on Jan. 23, 2006 and was serving in his first deployment to Iraq.



Chaplain (Capt.) Charles Lahmon, Chaplain for the 47th Forward Support Battalion, gives the benediction at the memorial ceremony on Combat Outpost Carver June 28. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Michael Schuch)



Sgt. 1st Class Ky Betts, of Storm Lake, Iowa, plays Taps at the memorial ceremony on Combat Outpost Carver June 28. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Michael Schuch)

The ceremony concluded with the playing of Taps and a rifle salute in honor of Dalessio and Thomas. Soldiers in attendance then paid their respects to them by lining up in pairs and proceeding to salute and hold a moment of silence at the fallen soldier memorials set up for their fallen comrades.

Dalessio is survived by his mother – Maureen Pagano and his stepfather – Thomas Pagano, of Cherry Hill, N.J. and his father – Robert Dalessio, of Philadelphia, Pa.

Thomas is survived by his daughter – Brenasia Marie Thomas, mother – Diane Faye Thomas and his father – Saundrus Jacobs, of Lake Charles, La.

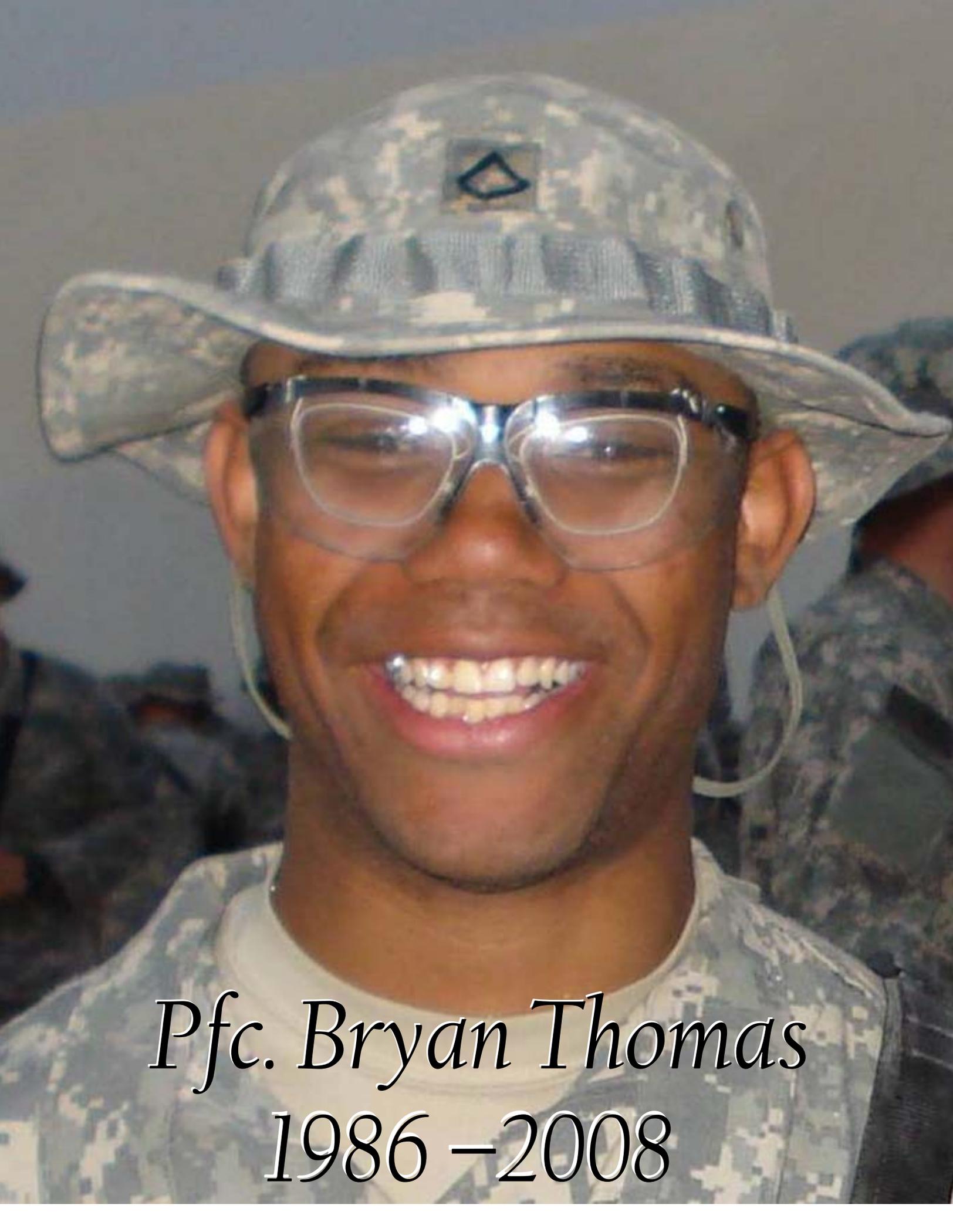
Distinguished guests included Maj. Gen. Michael L. Oates, commander of the 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry), Col. Pat White, commander of the 2nd BCT and Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Eyer, Command Sgt. Maj. of the 2nd BCT.



Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment fire a 21 gun salute in honor of fallen comrades Capt. Gregory Dalessio and Pfc. Bryan Thomas at the memorial ceremony on Combat Outpost Carver June 28. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Michael Schuch)



Capt. Gregory Dalessio
1977 - 2008



Pfc. Bryan Thomas
1986 – 2008

S1 Personnel

By Spc. Walkiria Pagan



Battle Field Promotions

The Army approved and will implement a pilot program designed to promote enlisted Soldiers, from PV2 up to the rank of Staff Sgt., based on extraordinary performance of duties while serving in combat or under combat conditions.

The Battlefield Promotions program becomes effective on April 1, 2008 through April 1, 2009. Promotion authorities established for the Battlefield Promotions pilot program are the Commanding General, Multi-National Corps Iraq for OIF, and Commanding General, Combined Joint Task Force-82, Afghanistan, for OEF. Further delegation of this authority is not authorized.

Soldiers must display exceptional leadership and performance that clearly distinguishes them from their peers, and is expected of the next higher pay grade than currently held. Soldiers must be in a promotable status on the effective date of promotion, meaning not flagged, and the Soldier must be assigned and utilized in a position of increased responsibility. Each packet must contain a letter of recommendation signed by their Brigade Command Sgt. Maj. and the MND-C Command Sgt. Maj.; DA Form 4187 routed through the chain of command, DA Form 4187-R-1 routed through the NCO support Channel, and the enlisted record brief. Allocations will be distributed on a quarterly basis and disseminated down through MND-C to Command Sgt. Maj. Eyer.

This is going to be a very rewarding program for all eligible Soldiers. As many of you already know it is almost impossible to be promoted in some MOSs with consistently high cut-off scores. This program will enable outstanding Soldiers who truly go above-and-beyond the opportunity to be promoted.

The Battlefield Promotion pilot program is based solely upon individual merit and demonstrated leadership skills. The program is designed to enhance and improve upon the existing promotion system, ensuring the best combat leaders are recognized for advancement.

The Battlefield Promotion pilot program allows Soldiers to truly shine and be recognized for serving in higher positions of responsibility and authority. For more information contact your Battalion S1 office or the BCT S1, Spc. Pagan at DSN: 856-2318 or VOIP 778-7013.



Safety Bulletin

By Jerrold Scharninghausen



Fueling Operations & Static Electricity

The discharge of static electricity while dispensing fuel is a serious hazard that can potentially result in a catastrophic fire or explosion.

To help you understand the need for bonding and grounding of fuel dispensing equipment, the following information is provided to help you identify conditions and situations that are hazardous and provide you with the knowledge to make decisions that you can (literally) live with.

All piping, tanks, valves and dispensing equipment must be bonded continuously so that all non-current-carrying metal parts have the same potential to ground. This is especially important at the dispensing hose and nozzle because fuel passing through a hose creates static electricity.

The risk of static electricity discharge is greatest when the nozzle is being removed from the tank being filled. All dispensing equipment including pumps, hoses and nozzles must be Underwriters Laboratories (UL) listed for the intended usage. This UL listing ensures that the hose and nozzle are designed to provide a continuous bond from the equipment to the tank being filled, which allows

static electricity to flow to ground. When the hose and nozzle are not bonded to equipment, static electricity dissipates slowly. Under these conditions, when the nozzle is removed, a spark is likely to occur.

NOTE: When a bonding wire is not present, a static discharge can be prevented by:

1. Ensuring that the metal dispensing nozzle is in contact with the metal neck of the vehicle's gas tank.
2. By touching the nozzle and a metal part of the vehicle during the fuel dispensing, using yourself as the grounding wire. Be careful here that you are using bare hands to do this and not a nonconductive substance such as leather gloves.

To avoid static electricity discharge, all equipment must be bonded. Pumping from a truck requires that a bonding wire be attached anytime flammable liquids are discharged into a top fill tank. Trucks are insulated from ground by rubber tires.

The differing potentials caused by the movement of the fuel must be equalized. This is the reason for the bonding wire or the connection between the fuel dispenser and the vehicle being fueled. Once a charge is built up (which involves the movement of a positive charge to either the nozzle or the vehicle) the potential for a static discharge exists between the two unequally charged items. This charge will dissipate naturally over time. But the length of time required for static electricity to dissipate varies.

If the bonding wire is removed before static electricity is dissipated, a spark is likely to occur; therefore, grounding the truck in addition to bonding to the tank being filled addresses this issue. Grounding trucks during fuel dispensing is prescribed in National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) guidelines. Allowing a few minutes before removing nozzles when the pumping is complete also helps assure that static electricity has dissipated.

Many people are aware of these requirements but for some reason do not take the time to follow them. Static electricity is "an accumulation of electric charge on an insulated body." Don't set it free to disperse and create havoc in the presence of flammable and combustible fuels.



Chaplain's Corner

By Chap. (Maj.) Nana Bassaw
2nd BCT Chaplain



The Dream of Peace

Billy Graham once told about something that happened a long time ago when teachers could talk about religion in the classroom. A teacher was talking to her class of young boys, and she asked, "How many of you would like to go to heaven?" And all the hands instantly shot into the air at once, except one. She was astounded. She asked, "Charlie, you mean you don't want to go to heaven?"

He said, "Sure, I want to go to heaven, but not with that bunch."

It is intriguing that a young boy will conclude that it is worth being left behind than to enter into heaven with people he did not really like.

Of late we've had our share of trouble spots in the world, and those of us in uniform have always been called upon to bring a semblance of peace to these areas.

This cycle of violence, of conflict, of war and rumors of war begs the question: when will peace come at last?

In the beautiful poetic passage of Isaiah 65: 17-25, he share's with us his thoughts on when peace will come. He envisions a day coming when relationships between people will be marked by peace and harmony. And the cause for such a new spirit is the pervasive presence of God which will reshape hearts and minds, replacing conflict with cooperation, hate with love, division with unity, segregation with genuine integration. Evil will be taken over with goodness, sadness with joy, cold heartedness with compassion and oh yes! the sojourner will be treated with respect and dignity, remembering that we are all pilgrims in this land, and that only the merciful God can scoop us in his hand and land us safe on Canaan's side.

Even though we might feel trapped in this cycle of violence, when we allow God's rule to be established on earth, then we can begin to experience a fore-taste of the glories to come even now as we walk with the Lord.



Striker Justice

By Sgt. Natasha N. Stevens
2nd BCT Detention Operations Paralegal NCOIC



BOLT Action- A Paralegal Perspective

Many Soldiers might not understand all of what we do as members of the 2nd Brigade Operational Law Team. There is more to the legal office than just the stereotype that we only get people in trouble and give out Powers of Attorney. Even though we are not the pugilist members of our infantry force, or the intelligence masterminds of the S2, we are paralegal warriors that always bring something to the fight.

Sgt. 1st Class Emanuel Mines is our Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge and the cohesive element of our team. Along with taking care of the Soldiers and Officers in our team, he also serves as the Brigade's Claims Pay Agent and Rewards Manager, which involves the management of \$37,000 in reward funds and the handling and payment of over \$30,000 in claims funds.

Staff Sgt. Melker Johansson serves as the NCOIC of Military Justice and GOMORS. Since we have been in theater, he has processed 102 Article 15's, has assisted in facilitating 3 courts-martial, and is currently processing 16 GOMORS. Staff Sgt. Johansson hails from Sweden and this is his third tour in a combat environment.

Spc. Ciaran Cupples was recently deemed the TOC's "Stud of the week", his duties include drafting appointment memorandums for AR 15-6 Investigations and reviewing FLIPLS and PR&C's. No one would guess Spc. Cupples is an Ireland-educated attorney, which is why his capabilities are so frequently utilized.

As for me, I am the NCOIC of Detention Operations. My job is supporting the Task Forces with guidance in processing a detainee into the DHA-A, facilitating the detention review board bi-weekly, and assisting in the successful CCC-I prosecution of detainees through witness procurement. Since we first arrived we have processed 29 detainees into the DHA-A, and this is my second tour to Iraq.

We are only missing Sgt. Odane Morgan, who is currently serving as the paralegal NCO for Task Force 1-6. But we think of him constantly, since our team is like no other and we celebrate that every day by serving the Soldiers of 2nd Brigade in an effort to support our overall mission in Iraq.



Doctor's Desk

By Cpt. (Dr.) Shawn Kapoor,
2nd BCT Surgeon



Take Care of Yourself

As we get deeper and further into the summer months, our families and loved ones are out and about enjoying their vacations and countless other summer activities. The children will be swimming at the pool, riding bikes, exploring nature or playing with friends. In many ways, the summer months are the busiest of our lives.

Being so far from your spouse during this time may be especially difficult and stressful, especially when your spouse is deployed to a combat zone. Here are some tips to offer our spouses and significant others on warding off stress and maintaining a healthy and positive attitude during the remainder of this deployment.

1. Take care of yourself. Exercise and eat right, and set regular bedtimes and wake up times.
2. Develop friendships. Have someone to confide in and avoid people who reinforce bad or negative feelings.
3. Manage your time. Set realistic goals and do "must" tasks first.
4. Take time for yourself – not everything has to be done today. When you get through half the list put it aside do something relaxing. Take time to stretch, go for a walk or do breathing exercises.
5. Set limits. Learn to say no. Don't overtax yourself with social functions.
6. Limit your work hours. Those who work long hours burn out quicker.
7. Change your diet. Avoid sweet foods and sugars. Try eating carbohydrate foods instead like potatoes, cereals, and pasta. Your body will break these foods gradually. Avoid alcohol and tobacco.
8. Let your mind rest. Find an exercise you enjoy and do that activity for 20-30 minutes three times a week.

Finally, rest assured that we are taking good care of our Soldiers deployed here in Iraq. Our number one priority is to keep our Soldiers strong and healthy, and to return them safely to their families!

These tips and many others can be found on two great websites to assist with deployment: Hooah4health.com and militaryonesource.com.



STRIKER TORCH

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articles, comic strips or artwork, and photographs. Please email articles in Microsoft Word and send photos as JPEGs (Please do not send photos embedded in PowerPoint and Word)

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