

COALITION CHRONICLE

Volume 3, Issue 11 November 2008

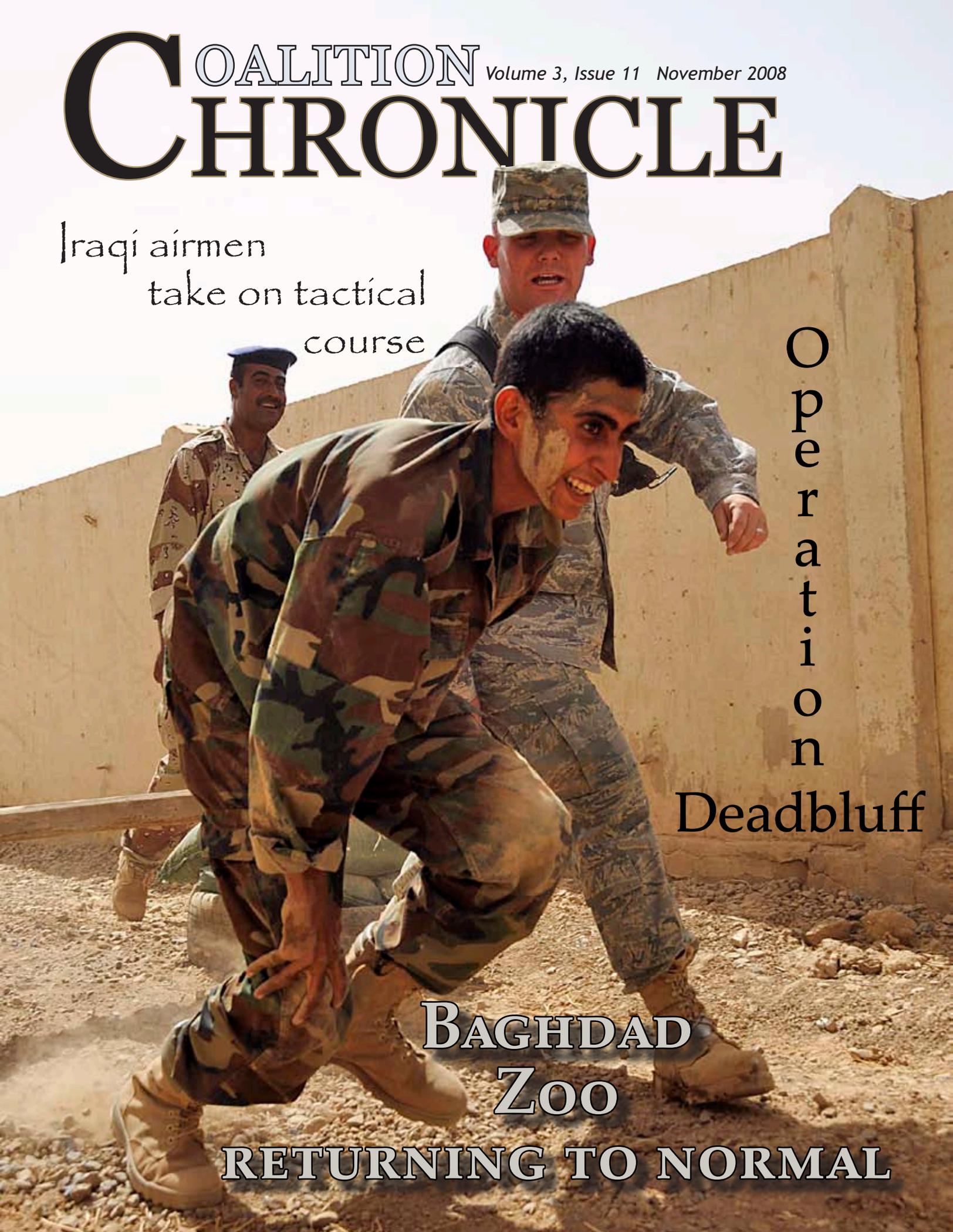
Iraqi airmen
take on tactical
course

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Deadbluff

BAGHDAD
Zoo

RETURNING TO NORMAL





Staff Sgt. Matthew Coltrin motivates an Iraqi warrant officer as he runs the basic military training tactical course Sept. 27 at al-Taji Air Base, Iraq. (Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Paul Villanueva.)

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The Baghdad Zoo at Zarwa Park is open and back in full swing.



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Armenian forces conduct an end-of-mission ceremony at Camp Victory in Baghdad.



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The "Wolfhounds" of 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, strike it big on a weapons cache hunt in the rural areas outside of Baghdad.

COALITION CHRONICLE

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Freedom's Focal Point

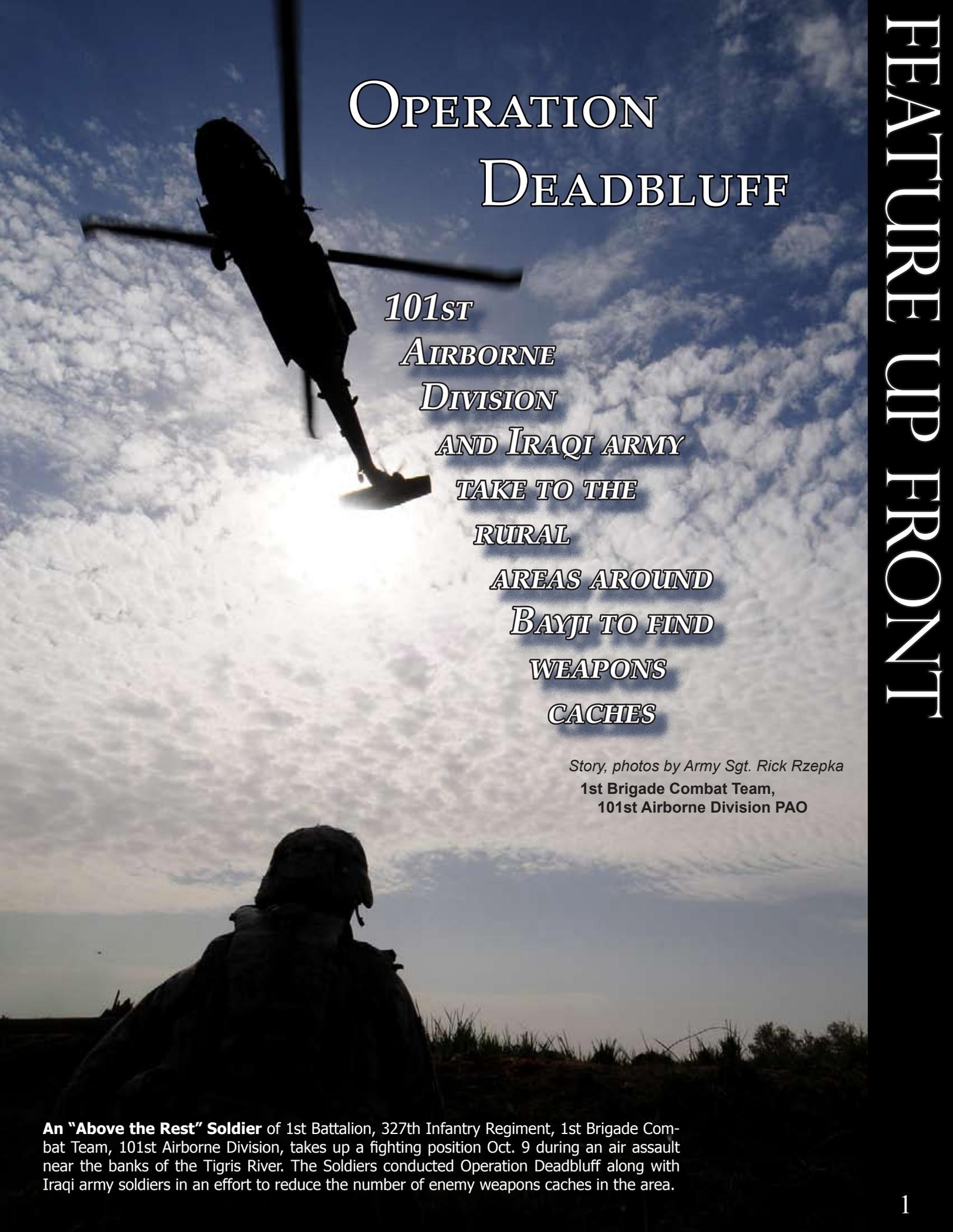
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OPERATION DEADBLUFF

*101ST
AIRBORNE
DIVISION
AND IRAQI ARMY
TAKE TO THE
RURAL
AREAS AROUND
BAYJI TO FIND
WEAPONS
CACHES*

*Story, photos by Army Sgt. Rick Rzepka
1st Brigade Combat Team,
101st Airborne Division PAO*

An "Above the Rest" Soldier of 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, takes up a fighting position Oct. 9 during an air assault near the banks of the Tigris River. The Soldiers conducted Operation Deadbluff along with Iraqi army soldiers in an effort to reduce the number of enemy weapons caches in the area.

FEATURE UP FRONT



A Soldier with 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division takes up a fighting position Oct. 9 during an air assault near the banks of the Tigris River. The Soldiers conducted Operation Deadbluff along with Iraqi army soldiers, in an effort to reduce the number of enemy weapons caches in the area.



"Above the Rest" Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, search the banks of the Tigris River Oct. 9 during an air assault mission near Bayji, Iraq.

As security continues to improve across Iraq, insurgent networks are becoming desperate in their attempts at proliferating weapons and ammunition. Because they have been marginalized within Iraqi society and

A Soldier with 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, throws a smoke grenade Oct. 9 during an air assault mission near the banks of the Tigris River.



are under constant pressure from Iraqi security forces and coalition soldiers, enemy fighters are frantically seeking to hide large quantities of weapons in the hinterlands of Iraq's north.

"Often the insurgency will attempt to utilize rural areas to hide weapons," said Capt. Michael Sykes, 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment. "What they don't realize is that we are highly mobile through the use of the air assault and are training the Iraqis to do the same."

A recent air assault mission, conducted by Iraqi army soldiers and Soldiers from the 1st Bn., 327th Inf. Reg. of the 101st Airborne Division, aimed to track down enemy weapons caches being stored along the lush banks of the Tigris River.

"Our intent is to deny them a place to call home," said Capt. Jeffrey Rottenberg, whose 'Mad Dog' Company has been battling extremist fighters for more than a year. "The enemy here goes to sleep at night wondering if this is the night that the 101st will come to

pay them a visit." The mission, dubbed Operation Deadbluff, was one of many operations carried out by the battalion in order to sever enemy weapons trafficking in the area.

"The enemy doesn't just stick to cities," Rottenberg said, "so we don't either."

In utilizing the air assault, Rottenberg's 'Mad Dogs' have gained the upper hand. By taking the fight to the enemy, the Soldiers of the 327th go after them from all sides, Rottenberg said.

"The major advantage gained through air assaults is the ability to move a lot of Soldiers quickly, with little warning to the enemy," he said.

The element of

surprise is one brick on the road to success here. Another is having the intelligence on enemy weapons locations from sources on the ground.

"The key to finding caches is the Iraqi people," Rottenberg said. "Unless you have someone inform you

about them, it becomes somewhat of a guessing game."

The battalion – in more than a year's time – has detained hundreds of suspected insurgents and has taken thousands of weapons out of the hands of the enemy here.

"Our guys have performed at a

high level, under austere conditions," Sykes said. "While there has been some adversity, there has also been a great deal of success. Our barometer for success is the Iraqi people, and right now they are enjoying a sense of security and liberty that they have not known before."



An "Above the Rest" Soldier of 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, pulls security near a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter during an air assault mission Oct. 9 near the banks of the Tigris River.

Baghdad Zoo – returning to normal

Story, photos by Army Staff Sgt. James Hunter

2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division PAO

BAGHDAD – The Baghdad Zoo opened its doors to Iraqi citizens in 1971. Since then, it has been a key centerpiece to the lives of many Iraqis. Many travel from throughout Iraq to enjoy a peaceful day at the zoo with their families.

Due to the potential threat of violence and security issues in Iraq however, the last several years have not brought many people to the zoo as many feared leaving their neighborhoods and the safety and security of their own homes.

“After coalition forces pushed into Iraq, ousting the Saddam Hussein regime in 2003, the zoo and surrounding park were left unattended and desolate,” said Staff Sgt. Paul Sanford, 2nd Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad. “Animals were abandoned, stolen or freed by looters and the park grounds were vandalized.”

It was nearly two years before coalition forces began to seriously focus their efforts on the zoo after troops gained a foothold on the adjacent International Zone, which provided the opportunity for Dr. Salah, the Zawra Park director, and Dr. Adel Mousa, the zoo’s director, to truly begin rebuilding the area.

Their efforts, combined with the efforts of MND-B, have brought life back into the zoo.

“The people of [Iraq] visit the zoo quite frequently,” said Sanford, who works closely with the zoo’s director. “It is a central location that helps them see the future of Iraq as a revitalized society and continues to build family relationships and a sense of normalcy in an area so often torn by hardship and conflict. Visiting the zoo and the surrounding Zawra Park area is as much a family outing here in Iraq as it is in the United States.”

This time to forge friendships and strengthen family ties would not be where it is today without the efforts of Iraqi security forces and MND-B troops positioned throughout greater Baghdad.

When Iraqi security forces and MND-B cracked down on special groups extremists and sent many fleeing the area, it brought new life

and a sense of normalcy back to the Iraqi people. “The current security situation has been one of stabilization and peace in the area, drawing more families from their home and into the park and zoo for leisure and recreational activities once thought to be too risky to chance,” said Sanford. “The continued efforts of both coalition forces and the Government of Iraq have allowed people who once only ventured out for necessity to stray far from their homes at times, even if just to see the new tigers, Hope and Riley, now being proudly displayed.”

Mousa said he now sees a secure place for people from all over Iraq to visit.

“The people are all smiling; they are happy,” the zoo director said.

The security situation has made many Iraqis happy people, but none may be as happy as those children who walk through the gates of the Baghdad Zoo daily to see the lions, tigers, bears, an array of fish, flamingos, crocodiles, alligators or even a little girl’s favorite, a pony.

Many are seen smiling, maybe some a bit frightened by those larger animals, as they walk across the green grass or the natural or manmade paths during their leisurely strolls.

Sitting atop the freshly cut green grass are many families with picnic baskets and soda cans in tow. The children seem to run endlessly until exhausted from the heat of the sun.

When Sanford visits the zoo to meet with his Iraqi counterpart, he too feels a difference in his surroundings.

As he walks onto the grounds on the zoo, just as many do daily, he finds himself walking along a marble walkway with an array of birds and fowl on either side surrounding him.

“As you walk from cage to cage, you will almost definitely notice the significant difference in cleanliness of the area,” Sanford said. “Trash is placed in trash cans and sidewalks are kept swept and clean.

“As you make your way around, you will see families laughing and smiling, couples holding hands and children tugging on their parents to point out some fascinating creature,” he added. “It is truly an experience.”



A young Iraqi couple sits and talks while enjoying the sites of the Baghdad Zoo, Oct. 11. With the current security situation in Baghdad, more Iraqi people are visiting the zoo daily.



Iraqi children look on as a camel makes a funny face at the Baghdad Zoo, Oct. 11. With the current security situation in Baghdad, more Iraqi people are visiting the zoo daily.



An Iraqi family takes a break at the Baghdad Zoo Oct. 11 while fellow Iraqis walk around enjoying the sites.



Iraqi airmen take on tactical course

Story by Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Trish Freeland
United States Air Forces Central, Baghdad

AL TAJI AIR BASE, Iraq – Military training instructors saw an unmet need in the Iraqi air force basic military training program and found a way to fill the need.

For Staff Sgt. Matthew Coltrin and Tech. Sgt. Chris Ramsdell, MTIs deployed from the 322nd Training Squadron, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, no BMT course is complete without a ‘warrior week.’ The two men are air advisors assigned to the coalition air force transition team where they advise Iraqi air force basic military training instructors.

“When we came out here to be advisors, one of our first objectives was to establish a warrior week program similar to the one we have back at Lackland,” said Coltrin,

a Lake Charles, La. native. “The [Iraqi air force BMT] had two days set aside for the course but only about a day and half of curriculum written into the course.”

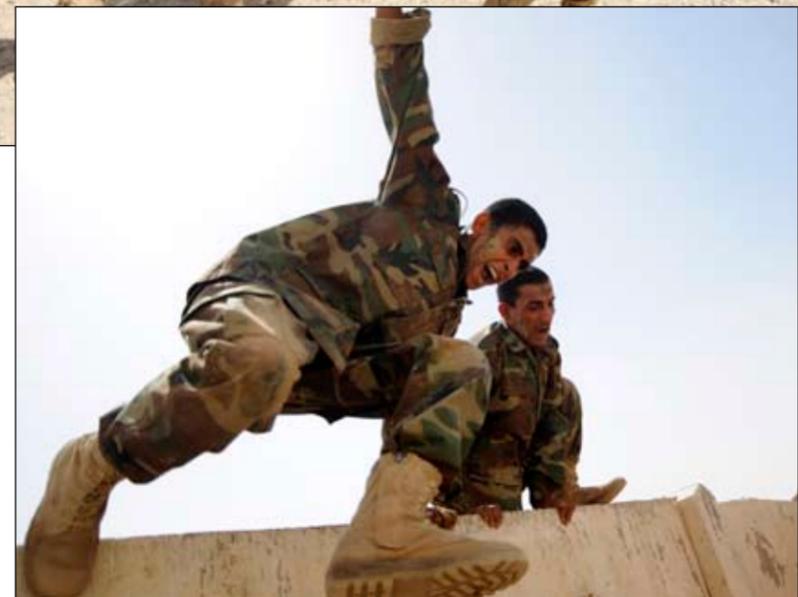
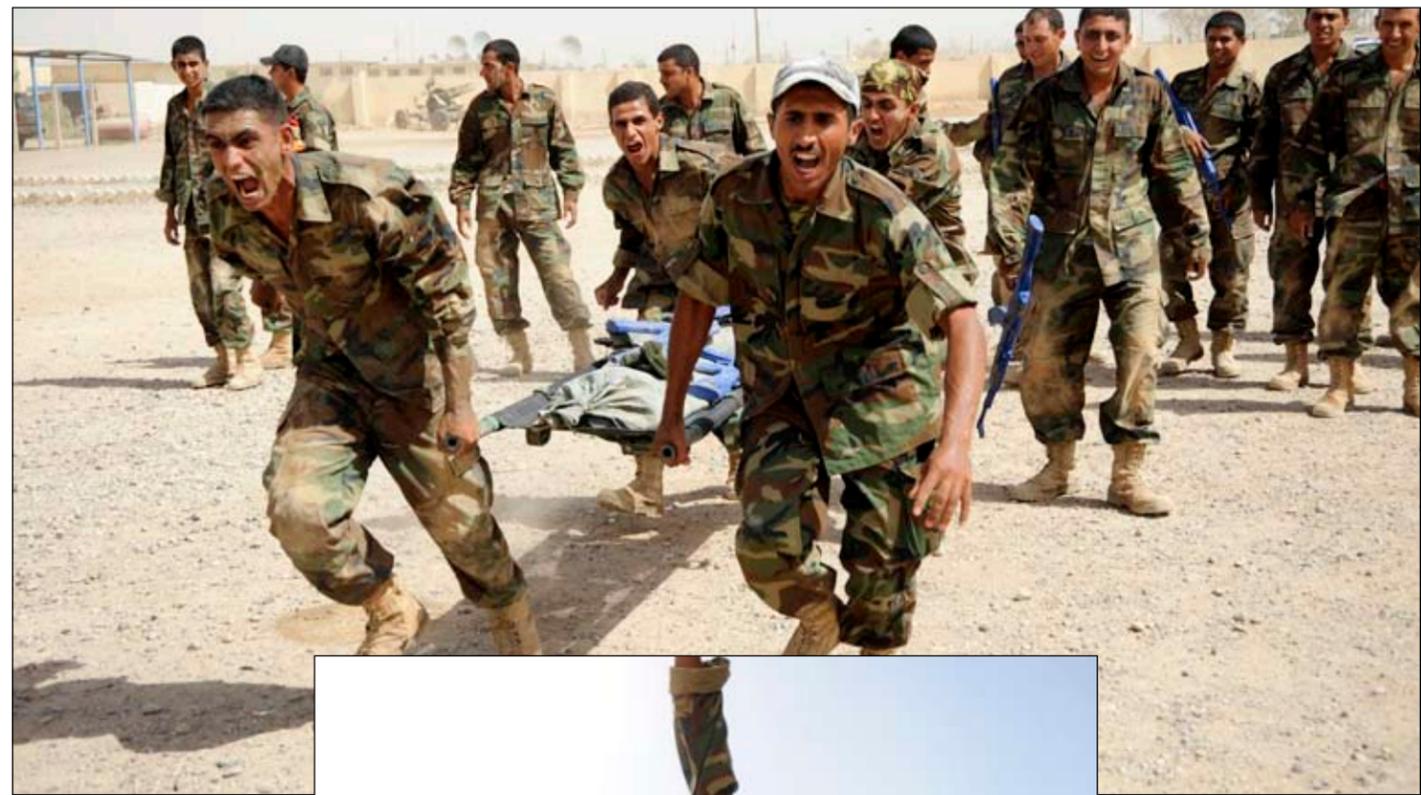
The goal of a tactical course is to help trainees learn basic movements with a weapon while in combat conditions. The duo wanted to build a Lackland-style obstacle course but knew they’d be limited by the resources available.

“We knew we could not come up with money for bringing materials in from all over the place: so we improvised,” Ramsdell said. “We looked in junkyards and trash piles and found tires along the way.”

Sandbags were in big supply all around the base, and local construction companies donated wood and other equipment.

Once the men had all supplies in hand, they got busy designing the layout of the course.

Photos by Air Force Staff Sgt. Paul Villanueva II



“It took about a week of planning to decide where we were going to put the course,” Ramsdell said. “Then we had to ensure there weren’t safety issues like sewage running through the area.”

Ramsdell and Coltrin had a lot of help from their BMT teammates, but especially Tech. Sgt. Brent Warren, who performed a huge chunk of the manual labor.

“I was very excited when I first heard of the prospect of building an obstacle course,” said Warren, a Gloversville, N.Y. native. “Plus just to be outside building stuff from scratch I thought would be a lot of fun.”

It took about 12 hours-a-day of physical labor during a two-week period to build the various obstacles. A break Iraqi airmen take in the middle of training helped free the advisors to finish construction faster.

“We slowly built each obstacle on our own time when we weren’t dealing with the trainees,” Coltrin said. “We would stay late and build an obstacle here, build an obstacle there and then come back later and make improvements.”

The trainees began asking questions as the course slowly became a reality.

Iraqi air force warrant officers jump over the high wall portion of the basic military training tactical course Sept. 27 at al-Taji Air Base, Iraq. The tactical course was put together by two U.S. Air Force Airmen after realizing Iraqi recruits didn’t have a tactical course.

“When we told them they’d be the first class to go through the course, they jumped down to the ground and started high crawling on it because they were so excited,” Coltrin said.

Warren and Coltrin ran the course first to show the Iraqi instructors and the trainees how it should be done.

“Sergeant Coltrin and I were pretty tired after running it, so we knew it would be a challenge for them,” Warren said. “It was tough but they were up for it.”

The trio was quick to praise each other’s contributions toward the course. But as far as feedback goes, the Iraqi airmen who made the first test run gave them the best endorsement of all.

“The first time they went through the course, they were pretty pumped and excited,” Ramsdell said. “That’s all the feedback we really needed.”



Story, photo by Army Spc. Shannon Black
4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division PAO

Staff Sgt. Ariel Ruiz, a native of Colon, Panama, and one of the driving instructors assigned to Company A, 27th Brigade Support Battalion, reviews his class roster with Romanian troops.

Long Knives, Romanians hit the roads

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE ADDER, Iraq – A team of 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division driving instructors demonstrated how coalition forces in Iraq are focused on partnership.

Soldiers assigned to Company A, 27th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div. taught five Romanian soldiers assigned to Romania's 341st Infantry Bn. how to operate a five-ton M923-series cargo truck in a week-long class.

"The Romanian army was preparing to use a certain vehicle for a certain mission that they were not properly trained on, and so they asked us to train them on how to operate the cargo truck," said Staff Sgt. Ariel Ruiz, instructor, Co. A Driver's Training Academy.

The 27th BSB initially provided the course to thoroughly familiarize the Romanians with driving techniques and procedures, so the 341st soldiers could go back to their unit and train other Romanians how to operate the M923.

In early September, after the first

five Romanian soldiers were trained, they taught the vehicle-operator class to their own

personnel. Then the Romanians asked the 4th BCT troops to certify their new drivers during a two-day certification.

Ruiz explained that the two-day test was designed to review the driving fundamentals and vehicle capabilities of the Romanian soldiers. The 14 new drivers had to conduct correct preventive maintenance inspections on the first day of the test.

The real challenge was on the second day, when the Romanians drove the vehicles on a highway. They were tested on their driving skills and the use of proper turn signals, along with maintaining proper distance during actual missions.

"They were surprised when they actually got in the vehicle because the

“
This training event was a learning experience for both armies.
”

Sgt. 1st Class Willie Graham
Driving Course Supervisor
27TH BRIGADE SUPPORT BATTALION,
4TH BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM,
1ST CAVALRY DIVISION

steering wheel turned so easily," Ruiz added. "Most of the vehicles that they drive don't have power steering. The other thing they liked about the truck was that it had a lot of power."

The 14 Romanian soldiers passed their tests with ease, and were presented certificates of completion.

"This training event was a learning experience for both armies," said Sgt. 1st Class Willie Graham, the company's truck master and the driving course supervisor and coordinator. "It helped to build good relations between our company and their unit."

Armenians end mission

Story, photos by
Army Pfc. Eric J. Glassey
MNC-I PAO

BAGHDAD – The eighth Armenian Contingent had an end-of-mission ceremony at the Joint Visitor's Bureau on Camp Victory, Oct. 6.

The Armenian forces were surprised by their early end of mission which was made possible by increased security across Iraq.

"The Iraqi government deemed there was no need for this coalition force due to security gains," said Lt. Col. Randy Harris, operations officer, Multi-National Corps – Iraq Coalition Cell.

The 46 Armenians worked in support of the Polish Brigade, Multi-National Division – Central South, as medical staff, transportation and explosive ordnance disposal personnel. Armenia has supported Operation Iraqi Freedom since 2005.

"The Armenian peacekeeping and humanitarian mission in Iraq began in January 2005," said U.S. Marine

Corps Maj. Gen. Paul Lefebvre, deputy commanding general, Multi-National Corps – Iraq. "Since that time, the Armenian Armed Forces have rotated 380 personnel through Iraq and have provided first-class support to Operation Iraqi Freedom in the areas of transportation, engineering and medicine.

The Armenian transport component has successfully executed more than 60 convoys, and the engineering component has removed more than 9,000 pieces of unexploded ordnance and cleared more than 130,000 sq. miles of terrain. In addition, the Armenian medical component has performed more than 300 surgeries and provided ambulatory healthcare to over 450 military personnel and 700 civilians, thus bolstering ties between the nation of Iraq and coalition forces.

"For a small contingency, they have made a huge impact," Harris said.

"Never forget what you have accomplished here," Lefebvre said. "You will be able to look back and know that you were part of something



Armenian servicemembers stand in formation Oct. 6 during the Armenian end-of-mission ceremony at the Joint Visitor's Bureau, Camp Victory, Iraq.

great; something that shaped the world for future generations. You have represented your country to the highest degree."

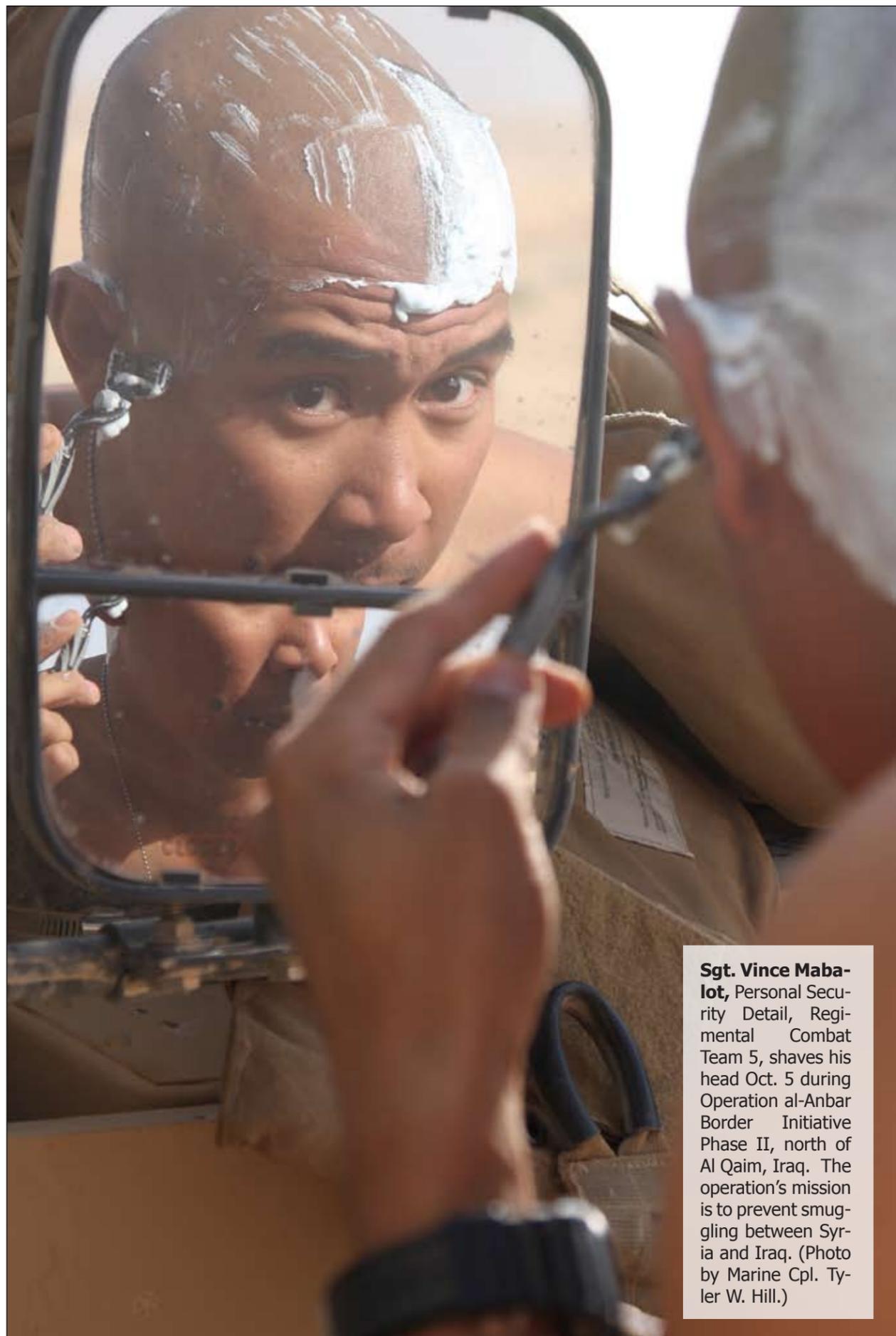


Polish mission complete ... more on pg. 16

Polish General Bronislaw Kwiatkowski, operational commander of Polish land forces (left), and General Mieczyslaw Bieniek, military advisor to the Polish minister of defense, render salutes as the Polish flag is raised for the last time during the Polish Multinational Division – Center South End-of-Mission Ceremony held Oct. 4 at Camp Echo, Iraq. (Photo by Air Force Airman 1st Class Matthew Plew.)

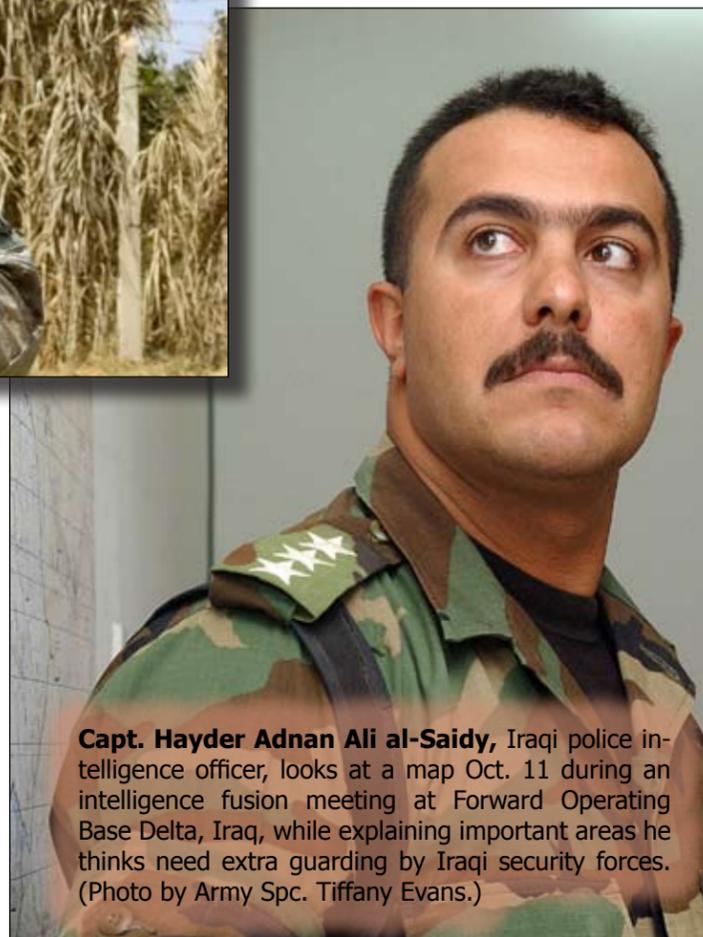


Lance Cpl. Christian Clevenger, of Lubbock, Texas, 2nd Squad, 3rd Platoon, Company C, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 1, performs a back flip at Outpost Delta, Karmah, Iraq, Oct. 12. U.S. Marines were present to train local members of 5th Provincial Security Forces in components of physical fitness and the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program. (Photo by Marine Lance Cpl. Geoffrey T. Campbell.)



Sgt. Vince Mabalot, Personal Security Detail, Regimental Combat Team 5, shaves his head Oct. 5 during Operation al-Anbar Border Initiative Phase II, north of Al Qaim, Iraq. The operation's mission is to prevent smuggling between Syria and Iraq. (Photo by Marine Cpl. Tyler W. Hill.)

Staff Sgt. Michael Hall, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, takes a minute to pet a puppy while on patrol in Iraq's Owja Desert Oct. 10. (Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Micky M. Bazaldua.)



Capt. Hayder Adnan Ali al-Saidy, Iraqi police intelligence officer, looks at a map Oct. 11 during an intelligence fusion meeting at Forward Operating Base Delta, Iraq, while explaining important areas he thinks need extra guarding by Iraqi security forces. (Photo by Army Spc. Tiffany Evans.)



Spc. Steven Davis, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, takes a quick minute to pump some iron while on patrol in Iraq's Owja Desert, Oct. 10. (Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Micky M. Bazaldua.)



Cpl. Jeffrey Moorfier, 27, from Richmond, Ind., an aircraft maintenance administration specialist with Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 2, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, throws the hammer during the Scottish games as part of a cultural heritage day at Camp Taqaddum, Iraq Oct. 2. (Photo by Marine Sgt. Jason W. Fudge.)



The names of fallen brothers-in-arms adorn the guitar of Staff Sgt. Aaron Hignight, a native of Ft. Smith, Ark., at Joint Security Station Hurriyah One, Iraq, Sep. 28. Hignight is a member of Company A, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division. (Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Manuel J. Martinez.)



God Bless Our Troops...
Especially Our Snipers.

Staff Sgt. Adam Buck (left), a native of Terre Haute, Ind., plays the harmony of a song while Staff Sgt. Aaron Hignight, a native of Ft. Smith, Ark., plays lead guitar and sings inside the gym at Joint Security Station Hurriyah One, Iraq, Sep. 28. The U.S. Soldiers are members of Company A, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division. (Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Manuel J. Martinez.)



Polish Maj. Gen. Andrzej Malinowski, commanding general, Multi-National Division – Center South, renders a final salute to the troops at the MND-CS Polish End of Mission Ceremony Oct. 4. at Camp Echo, Iraq.

MISSION ENDS WITH SUCCESS

Story courtesy MNC-I PAO
Photos by Air Force Airman 1st Class
Matthew Plew
1st Combat Camera Squadron

The Polish army declared a successful mission complete during a ceremony Oct. 4 at Camp Echo, Qadasiyah Province.

Polish forces transferred the operating area of Multi-National Division – Center South to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division.

During their rotation, MND-CS soldiers destroyed more than 18 million pieces of various munitions, manned 42,000 checkpoints and conducted more than 70,000 patrols and convoys.



A Polish color guard detail retires the colors of the Multi - National Division – Center South flag to be presented to the Polish Minister of Defense, Mr. Pan Bogdan Klich, during the Polish end-of- mission ceremony Oct. 4, at Camp Echo, Iraq.



General Raymond T. Odierno, commanding general, Multi - National Force – Iraq, and Command Sgt. Maj. Marvin L. Hill, senior enlisted advisor, MNF-I, each render a salute during the Polish end-of-mission Ceremony Oct. 4 at Camp Echo, Iraq.

MND-CS, while under Polish command, conducted more than 22,000 humanitarian and civil assistance projects to purify water, improve electrical power stations, re-establish educational infrastructure and rebuild medical facilities and administrative buildings.

“You should be enormously proud of all that you have accomplished,” said General Ray Odierno, commander, Multi-National Force – Iraq. “You came not to conquer, but to liberate. You sought not personal gain, but liberty, and you build not an empire, but a sovereign nation. You created hope where terror reigned, and you have made history.”

Soldiers of Polish Military Task Force Falcon march through the parade field as they lead one final pass-and-review at the Polish Multination Division – Center South End-of-Mission Ceremony Oct. 4, at Camp Echo, Iraq.



Weapons Hunt

*Photos by Army Spc. Daniel Herrera
55th Signal Company (Combat Camera)*

Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, “Wolfhounds,” out of Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, searched the rural area of Zoba, Iraq, for hidden weapons caches – and found them. The Soldiers located and subsequently looked on as their find was detonated Oct. 4.

The Wolfhounds are part of the 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, and are currently serving under Mult-National Division – Baghdad in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Soldiers from 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, lay out the contents of a weapons cache for future disposal after conducting a cache search in the rural region of Zoba, Iraq, Oct. 4, 2008.



Staff Sgt. Irvin Tous-saint, Company C, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, observes the movement of traffic at a temporary checkpoint set up by his unit Oct. 4 in the rural region of Zoba, Iraq. The Soldiers conducted a cache search in the region as it has been historically known to hold countless hidden weapons caches.



Soldiers from Company C, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, watch as a days worth of weapon cache finds are disposed of through a controlled detonation, Oct. 4.

Cpl. Matthew Dortch, Company C, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, takes a knee in a field in the rural region of Zoba, Iraq, Oct. 4. Dortch and fellow Co. C Soldiers conducted a weapons cache search in the area which has been known to hold countless hidden weapons caches.

OPERATION WIDOW PROVIDES FOR RUTBAH FAMILIES

Story, Photos by Marine Capt. Paul L. Greenburg
Regimental Combat Team 5

Reserve Marines from 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment and 2nd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, both attached to Regimental Combat Team 5, spent Sept. 24 delivering food supplies for economically disadvantaged families in Rutbah, a town of about 17,000 residents in western al-Anbar province.

Navy Lt. Ray Rivers, the 2nd LAR chaplain, created "Operation Widow" in June to provide non-perishable food items as well as fresh fruit, milk and juice to widows and their families in Rutbah.

"This has definitely improved relations between the coalition forces and the Iraqis," said Rivers, a native of Sumter, S.C. "It has helped those who are the most helpless. It shows not only the generosity of the United States, but it gives the [Rutbah] City Council credibility in the people's eyes."

Operation Widow, with the help of the Iraqi Police who deliver

the food directly to the families' homes, has provided parcels for more than 110 families since June. Each parcel contains enough nourishment for a family of four to eat well for several weeks.

Rivers explained that the program, in addition to providing needed aid, breaks down religious barriers between people of different faiths. After the food is taken to the Rutbah City Council, Rivers personally meets with the city's imam, a key Muslim spiritual leader who has great influence on the city's 17,000 residents.

The two men look for common ground between the different faiths and troubleshoot any issues that arise between Coalition forces and local residents.

"The imam was key in forming this relationship," said Rivers. "By opening up and trusting us, he was key in making this program work."

"According to the Koran," said Mahmoud Ahmed Nudin Obid, the gray-bearded imam of Rutbah, "if you help the crying of the widows, God will bless you. We must take care of them ... this is our religion. We love everybody. Our God orders us to open our hearts toward others. There is no

difference between Christians, Jews and Muslims. Our goal is to live and work in peace."

As Rivers' seven-month tour in Iraq comes to a close, he took the opportunity Sept. 24 to introduce 2nd Bn., 25th Marines' Chaplain, Lt. Cmdr. Kobena Arthur, to the city council leaders.

"This is not a new beginning," stated Arthur. "This is a continuation of the work my predecessor has done."

Arthur pledged his commitment to continuing Operation Widow, and he plans to work on making it into a larger program.



Navy Lt. Ray Rivers (center), the chaplain with 2nd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, Regimental Combat Team 5, introduces Lt. Cmdr. Kobena Arthur (front, left), the chaplain for 2nd Battalion, 25th Marines, RCT-5, to Capt. Mohammed Atalla, an Iraqi Police officer, Sept. 24. Atalla supervises the delivery of weekly food supplies which 2nd LAR Bn. donates to widows and their families in Rutbah, a remote Iraqi town of about 17,000.



Lt. Cmdr. Kobena Arthur, chaplain, 2nd Battalion, 25th Marines, Regimental Combat Team 5, unloads a box of food at the City Council building in Rutbah, Iraq, Sept. 24. The Marines and Sailors of 2nd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, RCT-5 delivered about 60 boxes of perishable and non-perishable food, to less fortunate families in Rutbah.

IN MEMORIAM

NAMES OF COALITION SERVICEMEMBERS WHO DIED BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 10
AND OCTOBER 15, 2008 WHILE SERVING IN OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

**GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS: THAT A MAN LAY
DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIENDS.**

JOHN 15:13

Sept. 10

Sgt. 1st Class Daniel R. Sexton, 53.

Sept. 14

Staff Sgt. Darris J. Dawson, 24.

Sgt. Wesley R. Durbin, 26.

Lt. Col. Ralph J. Marino, 46.

Col. Sidney Marceaux Jr., 69.

Sept. 17

Pfc. Leonard J. Gulczynski I, 19.

Capt. Darrick D. Wright, 37.

Sept. 18

Chief Warrant Officer Corry Edwards, 38.

Sgt. Daniel M. Eshbaugh, 43.

Staff Sgt. Anthony L. Mason, 37.

Sgt. Maj. Julio C. Ordonez, 54.

Chief Warrant Officer Brady J. Rudolf, 37.

Cpl. Michael E. Thompson, 23.

1st Lt. Robert Vallejo II, 28.

Sept. 21

Staff Sgt. Matthew J. Taylor, 25.

Sept. 23

1st Lt. Thomas J. Brown, 26.

Sept. 24

Capt. Michael J. Medders, 25.

Sept. 25

Staff Sgt. Ronald Phillips Jr., 33.

Sept. 27

Pfc. Jamel A. Bryant, 22.

Sept. 29

Spc. Christopher T. Fox, 21.

Sept. 30

Spc. Christopher A. Bartkiewicz, 25.

Oct. 2

Pfc. Tavarus D. Setzler, 23.

Oct. 5

Sgt. William P. Rudd, 27.

Col. Michael R. Stahlman, 45.

Oct. 7

Sgt. Michael K. Clark, 24.

Oct. 11

Sgt. Reuben M. Fernandez III, 22.

Oct. 12

Spc. Geoffrey G. Johnson, 28.

Oct. 14

Spc. Christopher A. McCraw, 23.

Oct. 15

Spc. Justin A. Saint, 22.

Spc. Larissa Reed, a metal worker assigned to Company B, 4th Support Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, cuts a piece of steel plate at the battalion motor-pool Oct. 12 at Forward Operating Base Falcon in southern Baghdad's Rashid District. Reed is a native of Vacaville, Calif. (Photo by Army Spc. Justin Carmack.)

