

THE D GGER EDGE

December 2008 Volume 1, Issue 9

90+ Years of history: the Dagger Brigade adds to the BRO's legacy

**It's official:
Dagger takes charge!**

**Danger 6: "All will remember the victories
achieved by the Dagger Brigade."**

More messages from home

Thanksgiving in Baghdad

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The Dagger Edge
Informing the Dagger Community on the
issues and events throughout the brigade.

December 2008; Vol. 1, Issue 9

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A MESSAGE FROM DANGER 6



▲ Brig. Gen. Perry Wiggins,
commanding general, 1st Infantry
Division and Fort Riley

Daggers, today, the 2nd Brigade Combat Team begins another chapter in the proud history of the 1st Infantry Division. Professional Dagger Soldiers are patrolling the streets of Northwestern Baghdad - you have operational control over the capitol's most strategic terrain - Dagger units will partner with and enhance the proficiency of the Iraqi Army, National Police, and local Police - and most importantly the return of the Big Red One shoulder patch to the muhallahs provides confidence to law abiding Iraqi citizens.

The Warrior Ethos displayed by Soldiers within the Dagger Brigade over the next year will enable the Iraqi people to hold successful provincial elections and meet the governmental / security milestones that will set the conditions for a stable Iraq. When historians write about America's involvement in Operation Iraqi Freedom, all will remember the victories achieved by the Dagger Brigade.

DAGGERS - READY NOW!

*No Mission Too Difficult
- No Sacrifice Too Great -
Duty First!*

**BG WIGGINS
1ID,
COMMANDING GENERAL
DANGER-6**



◀ The Lady Victory statue
located at the 1st Infantry
Division Headquarters,
Fort Riley, Kan.

DAGGER SIX

2HBCT COMMANDER
COLONEL JOSEPH M. MARTIN



Holiday greetings from Baghdad!

On behalf of Command Sergeant Major Battle and I, to all the members of the Dagger Brigade Combat Team—Happy Holidays to All!

This last year has been turbulent and focused on training for our role in Iraq. In 2009, we'll see a multitude of transitions and new roles for American Forces here in Baghdad. It's impossible for me to think of a finer team to lead the way in our mission than with all the uniformed and civilian professionals deployed under the colors of the Dagger Brigade!

Last month, Dagger units earned the distinction of being authorized to again wear a combat patch for service in the Big Red One. That's a permanent award, folks—you may not understand what you've done yet to deserve it, but I guarantee that in 11 months time, you'll have no problem defining the sacrifices and rewards embodied by the patch. Remember, 91 years ago, Soldiers just like you were serving in France for World War I, and they also were authorized to wear the patch for the very first time in 1917. You're all members of an elite fraternity of veterans that welcomes you with open arms.

Our mission here has not changed, regardless of the recent

signing of the Status of Forces Agreement between the Governments of the United States and Iraq. Known as the "S.O.F.A.," it's been the buzz of news reports for several weeks. Our mission remains to secure the Iraqi people alongside our Iraqi Security Partners—and all that will change is some of the methods and techniques that we employ to be successful. As I circulate throughout the area, I'm continually amazed at how well you've embraced the combined nature of our operations with the Iraqi Army and Police. You truly are America's finest as evidenced by your quick transition to combined operations with the 6th Iraqi Army Division units and local/national police. They've reflected my pride in their own comments and compliments about working with Dagger forces—truly, a powerful team which will not fail!

Stay focused throughout the coming holiday season. Take a moment to write or call a loved one back home. Share holiday cheer and greetings with your fellow Daggers, and each Soldier should stop for a moment and remember silently our fallen comrades who've given the ultimate



▲ Col. Joseph M. Martin, commander, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, wishes a "Happy Thanksgiving" to Sgt. Eric Madrid, Troop C, 5th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment Nov. 27 in Ghazaliyah.
(Photo by Spc. Dustin Roberts, 2HBCT PAO)

sacrifice for our freedom and the Iraqi way of life. Stay safe—keep focused on reducing risks each day. The enemy is never as dangerous to us as we can be to ourselves when it comes to accidents and non-battle injuries.

Stay focused and on task – DAGGERS keep up the great work and happy holidays!

READY NOW!

DAGGER 6
JOSEPH M. MARTIN
COLONEL, ARMOR
COMMANDING



DAGGER SEVEN

2HBCT COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR
DONALD L. BATTLE



I can't stress enough how impressed I am each and every day by the soldiers of the Dagger Brigade. It has been two months since we said goodbye to our loved ones and deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and the intensity and desire to be the best can still be seen on the faces and actions of this great Brigade. I do want to wish each and every one of you a happy holiday season. Just remember these are the times we will be tested by the mental aspect of being away from our families. Remember you are amongst family with your fellow Soldiers.

We also can't, for one second, lose focus and let complacency set in. I ask that each of you remain vigilant and keep your priorities, security and safety. We do have a tough and challenging mission at hand; however, we have the most skilled and proficient Soldiers in the work to accomplish any mission to the fullest.

The brigade commander has stressed in the past that we are making history. One can understand his meaning when you see the people of Iraq on the streets, in school openings, and participating in reconstruction projects. We are indeed setting a brand new democracy up for success and that is truly historic.

I will leave with you one last message this month: You are all leaders. Don't allow Soldiers to take shortcuts and put themselves and others at risk. Continue to maintain the standards set forth by Multi-National Division -- Baghdad and the Brigade. You are part of one of the greatest divisions in the United States Army, The Big Red One.

COMMAND SGT. MAJ.
DONALD BATTLE

Dagger 7

The Chaplain's Corner



▲ Chaplain (Maj.) Peter Johnson (right) speaks with Soldiers Nov. 27 at Joint Security Site Yarmouk. (Photo by Spc. Dustin Roberts, 2HBCT PAO)

Wherever you are, be all there

By Chaplain (Maj.) Peter Johnson, 2HBCT Chaplain

Jim Elliott was more than a man of conviction; he was a man of deep faith. While he was in college he felt a profound call to live his life on the edge for God. He did not want an ordinary life, but an extraordinary life. His personal motto was “Wherever you are – be all there.” Jim’s college record verifies his motto. He was a straight A student and a premier athlete in football, wrestling, and all other sports he pursued. All his peers thought he had everything going for him – he was the campus “stud.” No doubt upon graduation he would marry well and set straight off to a successful

career. Jim, however, marched to a different drum and his plans would be drastically different from what friends and family expected. He did marry well but his calling took him to the most remote and hostile Indian tribe in the Amazon jungle to bring them the news of the gospel.

Jim made headway into the tribe’s village via a small piper cub plane sending the tribe gifts and messages of his peaceful intentions. One afternoon he and four others landed on a sandbar in a river adjacent to the tribe’s village. When the men never returned all understood the news

For your local worship service coordinate with your unit chaplain for location and times.

couldn’t be good. When a search party was sent all five were found dead in the river speared to death. Some might say what a waist of a life so full of potential, but the story does not end there. Shortly after their deaths the widows of each man returned to the village and brought the gospel to the village. Elizabeth Elliot, Jim’s wife, actually converted and befriended the very man who killed her husband.

There is a quote that states: “All men die, few really live” I think Jim understood this. God only knows the number of days to our lives so let us live each day well. An extraordinary life is not always about the spectacular, but more often about doing the ordinary things well. Spiritual fitness is vital in living an extraordinary life, for scripture tells us that “He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion.” So whatever role you serve within the brigade serve on the cutting edge of a life lived well. Wherever you are – be all there!

Familiarize yourself with the IFAK

By Capt. Kenneth Johnson, 2HBCT Surgeon

It is every Soldier's responsibility to maintain personal preparedness. Emergencies happen without notice and the enemy will wait to catch you off guard. Your weapon should be clean; your gear organized; and your IFAK stocked.

The Improved First Aid Kit was

developed to treat life threatening battlefield casualties in the first moments of injury.

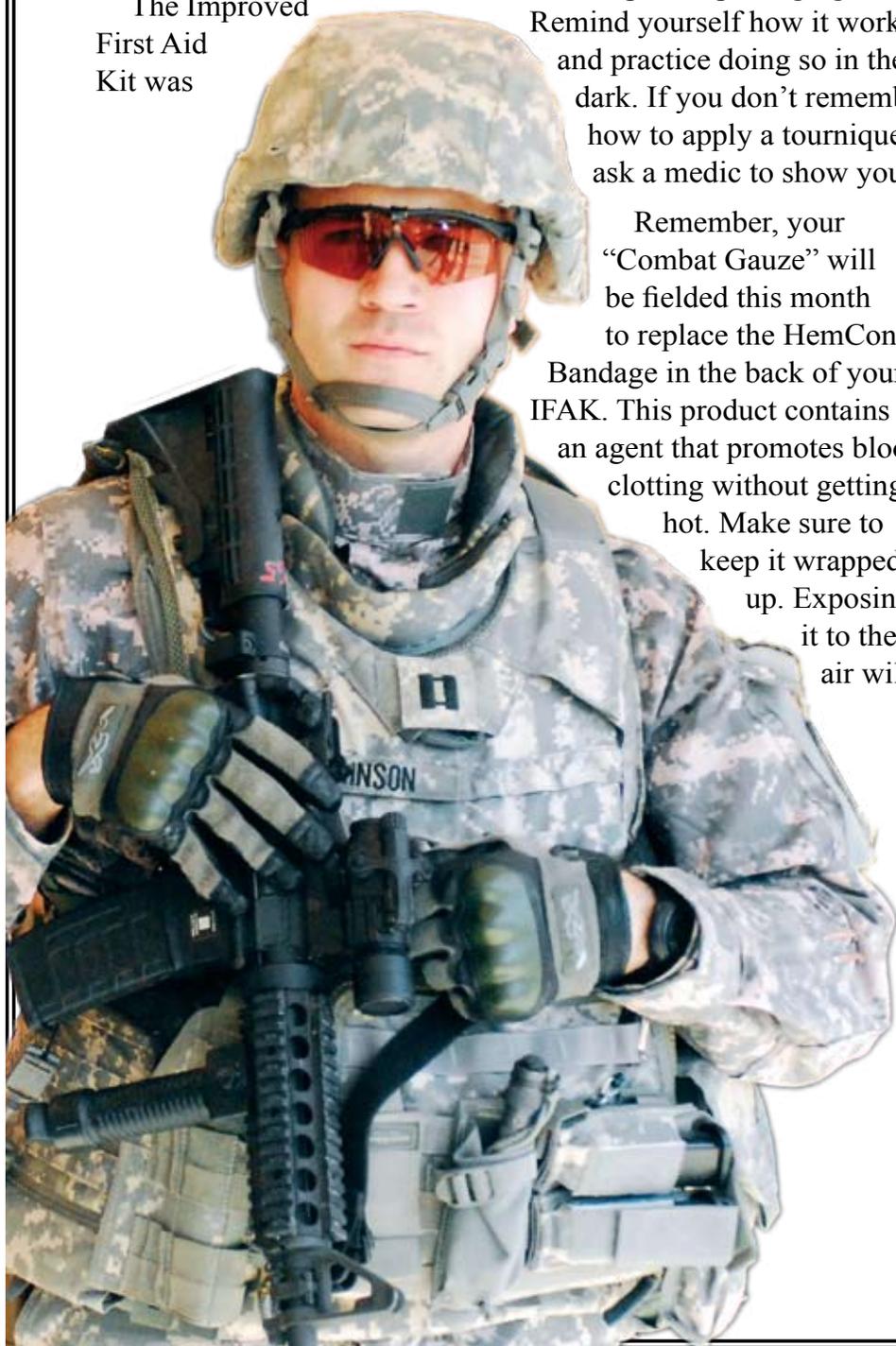
You should familiarize yourself with the contents of your IFAK, and prepare it for use. Remove your tourniquet from its plastic packaging.

Remind yourself how it works, and practice doing so in the dark. If you don't remember how to apply a tourniquet, ask a medic to show you.

Remember, your "Combat Gauze" will be fielded this month to replace the HemCon Bandage in the back of your IFAK. This product contains an agent that promotes blood clotting without getting hot. Make sure to keep it wrapped up. Exposing it to the air will

deteriorate its effectiveness.

Sgt. 1st Class Billy Mitchell teaches Combat Life Savor refresher courses every Friday night at 7 p.m. in the 2-1 STB conference room. If you or your Soldiers are interested in refreshing your CLS skills, he can be contacted at billy.w.mitchell@mnd-b.army.mil.



▲ An open Improved First Aid Kit.
(Photos by Spc. Dustin Roberts,
2HBCT PAO)



◀ Capt. Kenneth "Trip" Johnson
2nd HBCT Surgeon

MESSAGES F

2LT Jason Cady

B 1-7 FA

Jason Cady you are so dearly missed and deeply valued. We long to have you return, but know that you must continue with your duty for the duration of a year. We are so proud of you and all of your accomplishments. You are a blessing to have as the head of our household. The 2008 Holiday Season will not be the same without you, but we shall persevere for we know that God is holding each of us in His loving arms. God bless you and may you continue to be covered by the precious blood of Jesus Christ." Faithful & Genuine Love, Jennifer, Jaden, & Janzen.



SGT James Lambrecht

1-18 IN, HHC

James, You are loved and missed way more then you realize. You are the half that makes me whole. And now, you are well and truly Bradley's father. The judge signed the adoption paperwork at 1310 on October 27th, 2008. I can hardly wait to be in your arms again, and for us to be a family again. I never knew what was missing until you entered my life, and that of our son. I love you. Your Waiting Wife, Cassandra.



SPC Marcus Butler

HHC Company, 2/1 ID STB

Marcus, I hope things are going great for you! I miss you a lot and can't wait for you to come back home! Love you! Ashley XXXO



SPC Stephen Gaydarik

HHC Company, 2/1 ID STB

Message: Hi Stephen, Just wanted to let you know that you're in my thoughts and prayers each and every day. Let me know if you or your buddies need anything. Be safe. Love, Mom.



SPC Timothy Cross

HHC Company, 2/1 ID STB

Hi Hunny, I want you to know I'm proud of you and I love you with all my heart. Keep focused your doing a great job. Everyone here, Family, Friends, Me all support you and ask you to be safe! With love and prayers. Your wife, Wendy Ann Cross.



SFC Joshua D Walker

HHC 2nd BDE

Hi Daddy, I love and miss you very much. Hope that you are getting along well. I can't wait to see you. Take care of yourself...Love Lily.



Sgt Joel Frick.

HHC 2nd BDE

Joel, I wanted to tell you how proud of you we are, even though you are not here with us for the holidays Justin David and myself are thinking of you everyday. Just remember that you will be home soon and we are waiting for you. I love you and miss you so much baby. Love, your wife, Tasha.



PFC Todd Eacock

1-18 IN, Delta Co

I think about you everyday and love you more then you'll ever know! Hang in there baby, you'll be home before you know it! Marnie Eacock

FROM HOME



SSG Damon Jamison

HHC 2HBCT 1 ID

We love SSG Damon A. Jamison. Husband and father. We miss u and love you come home soon. Love your wife and son, Carla and Davon Jamison.



**PFC Johnson (TJ),
SGT Luallen, PV2 Jacoby,
PFC Whiffen, SSG Steven, SFC Commander**
5/4CAV S1

My 5/4 CAV S1 Buddies,

I just wanted to send you guys a message to say, I'm so proud of each of you and I miss seeing all of you around the office. You guys in my prayers. Thanks for serving for our Freedom. Be Safe! Love to All, Kristi (5/4 CAV FRSA... BTW Knox says Hi!



SPC David Eagles

1-18 IN, Delta Co

Happy Anniversary hunny!! I love you!!
Rebecca Eagles.



SPC Colby Lewis

Company B, 1-18 IN

Hello Babe, We will always miss you. My heart and we will grieve Every minute, hour, and day that you are gone away. We will miss your smiling face, and your tender, warm embrace. The late hours of the night When we held each other tight. We miss you here with us. In our hearts is where you'll be. But we will wait until that day When you are home again to stay.

Love Your Family
Gwen & Noah.



SGT Joseph Grace

Company B, 1-18 IN,

My dear joe grace....We miss you dearly and hope you are doing fine....We love you and cant wait for your safe return...Keep your chin up and your head down. We hope you made the best of the holidays. We are keeping our spirits up and just keep thinking about you always. With much love and care....Your wonderful wife and kids.



▲ Col. Joseph M. Martin, commander 2HBCT, and Command Sgt. Maj. Donald Battle case the Dagger Brigade colors in a Transfer of Authority ceremony Nov. 20.

Dagger Brigade officially takes charge of northwest Baghdad

Story and Photos by Spc. Dustin Roberts, 2HBCT PAO

The 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team (Dagger), 1st Infantry Division, Multi-national Division-Baghdad replaced the 2nd Brigade Combat Team (Strike), 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) in a transfer of authority ceremony Nov. 20 at Camp Liberty Field House, Victory Base Complex.

“It has truly been an honor for the Strike Brigade to serve in Multi-National Division-Baghdad and the 4th Infantry Division,” said Col. William Hickman, commander of the Strike Brigade. “It has been an honor to be able to

serve in Baghdad with the great Soldiers, who will always meet our nation’s needs and our nation’s mission.”

The Strike Brigade deployed to MND-B October 2007 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, and the ceremony will send the brigade to their home station of Fort Campbell, Ky.

The Soldiers of the Strike Brigade worked in concert with Iraqi Security Forces and government officials in northwest Baghdad and helped reduce violence by denying Al-

Qaida and other insurgents safe havens.

“I would say the future is bright for northwest Baghdad and I have never seen a brigade transition go better,” Hickman said. “I am confident that the Dagger Brigade will continue to move forward with great ideas to take northwest Baghdad to new heights.”

The Soldiers trained in Fort Riley, Kan., the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif. and Camp Buehring, Kuwait to prepare for their scheduled 12-month deployment.

“We will take the fight to the enemy,” said Col. Joseph Martin, commander, 2HBCT. “We will support the government of Iraq and encourage freedom everyday.”

Martin said he and the Brigade’s Command Sergeant Major, Command Sgt. Maj. Donald Battle have ensured the Dagger Brigade is well-trained, ready for the mission ahead and that they have looked forward to the ceremony for months.

“We will take the fight to the enemy; we will never back down.” - Col. Joseph M. Martin, commander, 2HBCT

“Command Sergeant Major Battle and I are honored to join the Strike Brigade today for another page in the storied history of these two great organizations as we recognize the transfer of authority between us in northwest Baghdad,” he said. “As the Strike Brigade did, we will never back down; we will preserve the Iraqi democracy and we will care for and secure its citizens.”

HISTORIC DATES: DAGGER UNITS’ TRANSFERS OF AUTHORITY

1st Combined Arms Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment:
Nov. 15.

1st Combined Arms Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment:
Nov. 8.

5th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment:
Nov. 14.

1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment:
Nov. 15.

299 Brigade Support Battalion:
Dec. 18.

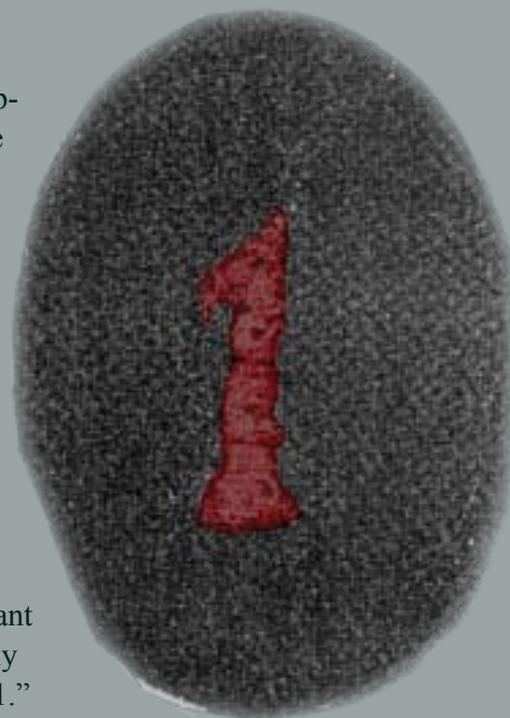
2-1 Special Troops Battalion:
Nov. 18.

BIG RED ONE PATCH HISTORY

TWO LEGENDS HAVE EMERGED IN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION ABOUT THE ORIGINS OF THE BIG RED ONE SHOULDER PATCH:

The first story says that during World War I, First Division supply trucks were of English Manufacture, so the drivers painted a huge figure “1” on each truck to distinguish their vehicles from those of the other Allies. Later, First Division Engineers carried this measure a step further by sewing a red patch on their sleeves on which was placed the number “1.”

The second, more-often quoted tale involves a general and a lieutenant. According to this version, during the build-up and training days of 1917, a general officer decided that the Division needed a suitable shoulder sleeve insignia. He proceeded to cut a crude numeral “1” from a ragged suit of his flannel underwear. When a brash young lieutenant saw the red numeral, he shouted, “the general’s underwear is showing!” The general shouted back, “all right young man, if you’re so smart, come up with something better.” The lieutenant produced a prototype of today’s patch, using a piece of cloth (probably grey) from a captured soldier’s uniform on which he placed the red “1.”



1-18th Infantry Regiment "Vanguards"

Vanguards set at FOB Justice

Story by Sgt. Brian Tierce 2HBCT PAO

Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldiers from the 1st Combined Battalion Vanguards, 18th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division assumed responsibility of Forward Operating Base Justice from the 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) in a Transfer of Authority ceremony Nov. 15.

The ceremony highlighted the end of the tour for the 1st Bn., 502 Inf. Bn. and the beginning of a bond between the 'Vanguard' Battalion and Iraqi Security Forces.

"I'm proud to be serving with the 'Vanguards'," said First Sergeant James Lower, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-18th CAB. "The ceremony just locked in the immense feeling of patriotism that has flowed from generation to generation of patriots before me."

The Vanguard Battalion colors are no stranger to Baghdad. Just 11 months ago the colors returned from Iraq as a part of the legacy 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division. Following a deactivation and trip across the Atlantic to Fort Riley Kansas, the colors once again grace the skies of northwest Baghdad.



▲ Lt. Col. John Vermeesch and Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey Smith, 1-18th CAB, uncuse the Vanguard colors Nov. 15. (Photo by Capt. Chad Hauge, 1-18CAB UPAR)

"This transition of authority marks a great day for the Vanguards. The Talon Soldiers have taught us a great deal, and we appreciate all they have done for us," said Capt. Aaron Lummer, commander, HHC, 1-18th CAB, "the Vanguards are fully mission ready and are proud to take control of AO Vanguard."

As the 1-18th CAB takes control of FOB Justice conditions in the capital are considerably different from their last tour. Violence is down sharply across Baghdad, the sectarian war that

was raging during their last tour has all but ceased and a major focus has shifted to resettling those who fled the sectarian violence.

But no matter what the mission entails, 'Vanguard' Soldiers stand ready and willing to accomplish the task.

The 'Vanguards' are prepared and ready to assume the tough and challenging mission the 1st Bn., 502nd Inf. Regt., Talons have professionally executed over the past year," added Maj. Fred Snyder, 1-18th CAB, battalion executive officer.



▲ Children of Hurriyah are ready and eager to learn at the grand opening of the al- Hadaba elementary school in Hurriyah Nov. 27. (Photo courtesy of the 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment)



▲ The grand opening of the al- Hadaba elementary school in Hurriyah Nov. 27. (Photo courtesy of the 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment)



Lt. Col.
John Vermeesch



Vanguards:

First to Battle! The Vanguards continue to get after it in the Kadamiyah Security District in Northwest Baghdad. In partnership with the Iraqi Army, National Police, and Iraqi Police, we are out there winning the right way everyday providing security to the people of Kadamiyah, Hurriyah, Shulla, Chircuk, Fajr, Atafiyah, and Salaam. On any given day, you can find the Vanguards out in the streets, in combination with the ISF, conducting combined area reconnaissance, clearing caches, securing routes, and denying the enemy the freedom of maneuver in AO Vanguard. We continue to help local leaders improve the essential services in the area and through our partnership with the Neighborhood and District Councils; we are assisting with the capacity and legitimacy of the local government. The prevention of resettlement violence in Hurriya remains our number one focus. I know that all the Vanguards had a great Thanksgiving, due in large part to the tremendous efforts of our cooks, who prepared an absolute feast in the finest American Tradition. It was a great day in which we remained focused on the mission at hand, while still taking time to reflect on the tremendous blessings we share as American citizens and Soldiers.

This month we need to take a moment from our busy days as we prepare to support the upcoming Iraqi Elections and reflect on what the holiday season means to us as individuals and to our families. I want to thank our Soldiers and Families for the tremendous sacrifice that each of you makes every day. Without your effort and support, the Vanguards could not do what we do. Thanks for everything you do each day to assist the Iraqi people, and thanks for your continued honorable service to our great Nation!

Vanguard 6

I-63rd Combined Arms Battalion “Dragon”

IA Soldiers Stand In Lead During Joint Patrol

Story and photos by Pfc. Evan Loyd, 2nd HBCT PAO, 1st Armd. Div., MND-B

Multi-National Division – Baghdad and Iraqi Army Soldiers conducted a joint compliance neighborhood inspection patrol Nov. 26 in the town of Al Murtada in the Mahmudiyah Qada, south of Baghdad.

Soldiers from Company D, 1st Battalion, 63rd Combined Arms Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, and Iraqi Army soldiers from 1st and 2nd Battalion, 25th Brigade, 17th Iraqi Army Division conducted the dismounted patrol visiting more than thirty houses.

The Iraqi Army uses compliance patrols to hold residents accountable for the safety and sanitation of their neighborhoods. Each household is asked to sign a form stating that they will keep their walls clean of graffiti and will report any suspicious behavior to an Iraqi Army Soldier.

“This patrol is a great way for the Iraqi Army to make the locals take an active stance in their neighborhoods,” said 1st Lt. Cameron Mays, a Marion, Ky., native who serves as the mortar platoon leader. “The best part about the patrol though is that the Iraqi Army is in the lead; we were purely in a supervisory role.”

Throughout the dismounted patrol not a single MND-B Soldier went to a door. Instead the Soldiers provided security to Iraqi Army soldiers as they went door to door speaking to the residents.

“The Coalition Soldiers have been great partners throughout my time with them,” said Iraqi Capt. Salah, the Iraqi Army mission Commander. “It is good to be able to show them how much we’ve learned from them in their time here.”



▲ 1st Lt. Cameron Mays, Marion, Ky., Mortar Platoon Leader; Company D, 1st Battalion, 63rd Combined Arms Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, and Iraqi Maj. Wassim, company commander in the 2nd Battalion, 25th Brigade, 17th Iraqi Army Division, coordinate a compliance inspection patrol Nov. 26 in Al Murtada in the Mahmudiyah Qada, south of Baghdad.



Lt. Ahmed, a Soldier of the 2nd Battalion, 25th Brigade, 17th Iraqi Army Division, explains the compliance patrol Nov. 26 to a resident of Al Murtada in the Mahmudiyah Qada, south of Baghdad. The Iraqi Army uses compliance patrols to hold residents accountable for the safety and sanitation of their neighborhoods. Each household is asked to sign a form stating that they will keep their walls clean of graffiti and will report any suspicious behavior to an Iraqi Army soldier. ▼



◀ *Spc. Ian Faling, from Jackson, Mich., who serves as the medic of Mortar Platoon, Company D, 1st Battalion, 63rd Combined Arms Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, talks with a soldier of the 2nd Battalion, 25th Brigade, 17th Iraqi Army Division, Nov. 26 while on a compliance inspection patrol in Al Murtada in the Mahmudiyah Qada, south of Baghdad.*



*Lt. Col.
Jim Bradford*

To the Soldiers of 1-63:

As I write this letter we are busy at work in Mahmudiyah and by the time you receive this Newsletter and note, everyone back home will be into the holiday season. Your Soldier and this battalion continues to do an incredible job in support of Iraq and in the defense of our nation. I am so proud of them. We have reached a couple of milestones in the last couple of weeks that I would like to take a moment to mention.

First, on 11 NOV our nation celebrated Veteran's Day- a holiday where we take a few minutes out of our busy schedule and hectic lives to remember those that have stood in defense of our nation. On 27 November, we awarded the 1st Infantry Division Patch to the newest members of our combat veteran ranks. It was a simple ceremony but one that has huge significance in the lives of each Soldier, their Family, and most importantly our nation. It was an honor to recognize this unit and its Soldiers for their commitment to our nation and our Families. It goes without saying that they are not the only ones who stand in defense of our country; we have over 500 Families back home that are just as supportive and as much committed to our cause as anyone. We have communities like Abilene and Dickinson County that support us as well and we are constantly in their prayers

Dragon 6



1-7 Field Artillery

“Lightning”

Uncle, nephews reunite in Baghdad for “Thanksgiving” Meal

Story courtesy of the 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment



On December 2, Chaplain (Capt.) Douglas Inman, who is responsible for the spiritual health of the Soldiers serving in the 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment, was privileged to unite with his three nephews at Victory Base Complex, Baghdad, Iraq.

1st Lt. Brian Inman, Spc. Joshua Lunsford and Spc. Zachary Lunsford are all assigned to the 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Arkansas National Guard. Chaplain Inman’s nephews just completed combat operations in Baghdad and are preparing to re-deploy to the States.

“I felt great pride as I stood with my nephews for a picture that will be part of our families’ photo albums forever,” Chaplain Inman said about the en-

counter.

1st Lt. Inman is a platoon leader for Company B, 153rd Infantry Regiment. Both Spc. Joshua Lunsford and Spc. Zachary Lunsford are assigned to Company C, 153rd Infantry Regiment.

Chaplain Inman deployed to Iraq in October knowing that his nephews were on the Camp Victory Base Complex.

Though it took nearly a month for all of their schedules to align, contact was made and all four of them were able to share a “Thanksgiving” meal together.

“Thanksgiving is a big deal in our family,” said SPC Joshua Lunsford. “Even though we couldn’t

be home this year, we were able to have our own get together.”

Chaplain Inman and his nephews look forward to spending next Thanksgiving at home in Arkansas in a more traditional family setting.

Chaplain (Capt.) Douglas Inman, the spiritual leader of Soldiers who serve in the 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment, reunites with his nephews at Victory Base Complex, Baghdad, Iraq Dec. 2. His nephews are 1st Lt Brian Inman, Spc. Joshua Lunsford and Spc. Zachary Lunsford, all assigned to the 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Arkansas National Guard.

◀(Photo courtesy of 1-7 F.A.)

...Our rear detachment and family readiness groups back at Fort Riley are also doing incredible work in support of the deployment. In addition to a great holiday party that included VTC.

connections with deployed Soldiers, the rear detachment and FRGs arranged a holiday dinner party for families with the Junction City American Legion and helped “rock” Bramlage Coliseum during Fort Riley Military Appreciation Day with our partners the KSU Wildcat Men’s Basketball Team. I want to say a special thank you to all the First Lightning Soldiers and Family Members who helped make these events a big success.

I again encourage you to visit the battalion’s Virtual Family Readiness Group (vFRG) website which is continuing to expand with information and new features. If you haven’t visited the page lately check out the battery pages, FRG store and of course the huge collection of photos of our Soldiers in action.

In closing, CSM Hunt and I would like to wish a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from to each of you back at home. Please remember to inform your FRG representatives of where you’ll be over the holidays and please travel safely. Thanks again for what you do for your Soldier and for making our jobs easier over here!

Never Broken by Hardship or Battle!

LIEUTENANT COLONEL ROB BAILES,
LIGHTNING 6

COMMAND SGT. MAJ. GARRY HUNT
LIGHTNING 7



Lt. Col.
Robert Bailes

FIRST LIGHTNING – Guarding the Guardians!

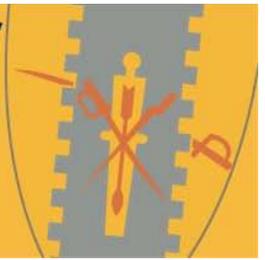
Holiday Greetings from Baghdad, Iraq. On behalf of all the First Lightning Battalion Soldiers I’d like to extend our wishes for a happy, safe and peaceful holiday and a prosperous 2009. Your Soldiers are hard at work continuing their extraordinary efforts to bring sustainable security to the people of Iraq. Our mission is diverse and challenging but the Warriors of 1-7 Field Artillery are up to the challenge and we are winning the fight each and every day.

Your Soldiers continue to set the standard for all other units. We have already re-enlisted 65 Soldiers this fiscal year, more than 80% of our annual mission (with 9 months still remaining!). We expect to complete our annual mission in the coming months and then continue re-enlisting Soldiers to far exceed the goals the Army has set for us. This is a testament to the incredible men and women who make this battalion great – our Soldiers. We are grateful for each and every one of them who has committed to STAY ARMY and STAY FIRST LIGHTNING...

Message continues



5-4 CAVALRY "LONG KNIFE"



Cavalry Soldiers adjust on fly in Ghazaliyah

Story and photos by Sgt. Brian Tierce, 2HBCT PAO



▲ *Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Tompkins (left), the senior enlisted leader of the 5th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, returns from a mission in the Ghazaliyah district of northwest Baghdad Nov. 26.*

Being thrust into an unfamiliar environment can be challenging in any situation. Being thrust into a new environment in a war zone can be even more tumultuous. Thus is the life of a group of cavalry troopers, who are taking on the challenge of making the Ghazaliyah district of northwest Baghdad a better place to live.

The troopers from the 5th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment assumed control of the Ghazaliyah district Nov. 15. With the transition complete, the troopers are al-

ready beginning to settle into their respective Joint Security Stations.

"Everything around here has been pretty slow, but we have a lot of missions," said Sgt. Guadalupe Ramos, senior medic, Troop C, 5-4 Cav. Regt., a native of Freer, Texas. "There hasn't been anything going on for the past couple of weeks."

A unique feature about the security stations the troopers live and operate on is the close partnership they share with Iraqi Security Forces, who also call the

stations home. This cohabitation allows a new level of partnership to develop among the troopers and Iraqis.

"From my perspective, the partnership we have with the Iraqi Security Forces is going very well," said Sgt. Maj. Craig Pinkley, 5-4 Cav. Regt., operations senior enlisted leader, and a native of Leigh, Neb. "We're really impressed with their knowledge of what they're doing. They are very proud of what they are doing, and they take it very seriously."

Knowing that their Iraqi counterparts are taking their jobs seriously enhances the squadron's ability to accomplish its primary mission in its operational environment.

In its short time in the district, the squadron has already made an impact. Working with their ISF partners, the Troopers detained a suspected extremist and confiscated a weapons cache. "We're out there trying to make a difference in Ghazaliyah," explained Pinkley. "We want to make sure that the standard of living in Ghazaliyah is brought up immensely while we're here."

Although the Troopers put a lot of their time and energy into their primary mission, that

does not mean they don't get a chance to take a break once in a while. As soon as the day's missions are complete, troopers try to find time to catch up on all the little things, such as calling home, writing loved ones and cleaning up their living areas.

"The troopers do a lot of computer work; we also like to call home and work on our field sanitation," added Ramos. "We are confined to a small space, so there is just not a lot we can do."

With little room for extras, the troopers are focused and ready for whatever the next year has to offer on the streets of Baghdad.

"We're getting a feel for it, learning the people, learning the streets and learning the mission," said Pinkley. "It's new to us so we're really kind of excited."



▲ Troopers from the 5th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Multi-National Division Baghdad take a break from performing maintenance on their vehicles Nov. 26 at Security Station Ghazaliyah IV.



Lt. Col.
John B. Richardson IV
From the SCO to the Soldiers:

First, let me begin by saying EXCEPTIONAL work thus far, Troopers. Thanks to the staff, support, and combat Soldiers of 5-4 CAV we have managed to get into a steady battle rhythm already. Even more impressive, though, is the amount of work that has already been done by you all. Each victory, from capturing several HPT's to making fighting positions to delivering supplies safely each day is noteworthy.

Secondly, I would like to commend you all for adjusting to life in Iraq so quickly. Being away from loved ones is very difficult, especially during this time of year. I have seen each and every one of you grow into a stronger person since our arrival in Iraq. I pray that we all continue to grow, and that in doing so we can become better Soldiers and better people.

Finally, my message to you today is to stay vigilant. The holidays bring with them a sense of peace and joy. While I hope you will partake in these moods of the season, do not forget we are at war. There is never a time to let your guard down while you are in Iraq. Be vigilant, be alert. In doing so, you may save your own life, or that of a friend.

I wish you all the best of the season: joy peace love, and prosperity. Happy Holidays and the very best of New Year's to each Trooper!

Long Knife 6



6TH IA DIV. LOGISTICS LEADER BEARS WITNESS TO IMPORTANCE OF DIAGNOSTICS

Story by Capt. Kevin Bentz, 299th BSB UPAR

A team of mechanics from the 299th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, conducted a training visit Nov. 20 to the 6th Iraqi Army Division to provide a class on proper maintenance procedures for IA vehicles.

During this visit, Col. Saleem, the Iraqi Army 6th Division's logistics leader, observed first hand as the maintenance team demonstrated the importance of proper maintenance diagnostic equipment.

Saleem's vehicle was being prepared to be sent to the Taji Maintenance Facility for a new transmission. Staff Sgt. David Strong, one of 299th BSB's maintenance instructors, used the vehicle to perform hands-on training and a demonstration of the capabilities of the transmission diagnostic system. The Iraqi Soldiers quickly hooked the diagnostic system up to the vehicle and were able to run a check on the transmission. Strong helped with the translation of the codes the diagnostic system displayed.

"The Iraqi mechanics are knowledgeable in how to use the diagnostic equipment," Strong said. "The problem is the quantity of diagnostic systems and under-

and could be replaced. This precluded sending the vehicle to the facility for an entirely new transmission.

Currently, the process of obtaining a new transmission for a humvee takes between 4-12 months for the parts to be ordered and installed before the vehicle is returned from the maintenance facility.

On this day however, the part required for Saleem's vehicle was available and quickly replaced.

"(With) a quick five minute class and a little guidance, the Iraqi mechanics were able to fix the vehicle," said Strong.

Saleem said he was very impressed with the time that was saved by properly knowing how to diagnose the problem at the lowest level possible. He also noted that using diagnostic equipment and properly identifying faults can save

large amounts of money by just replacing a small part and not an entire major item like a transmission.

"I have every confidence that the Iraqi Army will continue



▲ A 6th Iraqi Army Division Mechanic performs diagnostic checks on a engine during maintenance training between the 299th BSB and 6 Iraqi Army Division.

(Photo by 1st Sgt. Robert Hobson, Company B, 299th BSB)

standing the codes they produce." Once the codes were translated, the Iraqi mechanics quickly worked to test for potential faulty parts. They identified and confirmed one of the parts was faulty

to improve their capabilities as they begin to utilize the digital systems, along with their already proven skill and work ethic,” said 1st Lt. Jim Getts, an Iraqi Security Force liaison, with the 299th BSB, who added that he is very enthused about the progress that can be made by the Iraqi Army.

The training on the digital diagnostic systems will ultimately contribute to the Iraqi Army being self-reliant and able to maintain its vehicles independent from Coalition Forces.



▲ Sgt. Cameron Beckwith, 299 BSB, places a 1st infantry Division Combat patch on Pfc. Ericka Frederic, 299 BSB at the units combat patch ceremony Dec. 1 (Photo by Spc. Dustin Roberts, 2HBCT PAO).

...The dining facility is preparing holiday meals that I am sure will be amazing and look forward to sharing this time with you all. I would like to let you all know I am truly proud of the battalion and everything we are accomplishing. We are living up to the Standards, Habits, and Discipline of this battalion every day. We are accomplishing our mission and setting the standard for the Brigade in our deliberate operations during missions and in our day-today activities here on Camp liberty. Keep up the great work, look out for each other, and have great Holiday Season.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL BRIAN TEMPEST
LIFELINE SIX



Lt. Col.
Brian Tempest

LifeLine Soldiers and officers:

Another month has passed here in Iraq and you are all performing beyond my greatest expectations. The training we did over the last 18 months is showing in the professional standards that you are setting every day in the streets of Baghdad. I want to thank each and every one of you for the sacrifices that you and your Families have made that has allowed this Battalion to excel at our mission here in Iraq. Every member of this battalion has jumped into their jobs and is doing great things in support of the Brigade. The Battalion has assumed the responsibility of providing the full support to the Brigade and other units in our area here on Camp Liberty. We have begun a partnership with the Iraqi Army and have begun training their support elements on maintenance and other support functions to help them gain the knowledge needed to support their units.

This month is a very difficult month for us all as we prepare to spend the holiday season away from our Families and friends. For many of you this will be your first time spending the holidays in a combat zone, for others this is nothing new. Several have begun decorating and preparing to celebrate this holiday season with friends and coworkers...

Message continues



2-1 BRIGADE SPECIAL TROOPS BATTALION "GRIFFIN"

Griffin sets up communication in Iraq

Editorial and Photo by 1st Lt. Danielle Mattingly, 2-1 STB UPAR

The Soldiers from Company B, 2-1 Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team (Dagger) have one of the most critical and important missions within the brigade combat team.

For the past month and a half the Soldiers of Company B have been extremely busy installing, configuring, maintaining and troubleshooting the signal network. Not only does the company provide communications for the brigade headquarters but also has several slice elements detached out to other areas.

The 1st Platoon is situated directly at the Brigade's headquarters at Camp Liberty. They provide the Joint Node Network as well as the High Capacity Line of Site for the Brigade. These systems allow the Soldiers working within the Brigade Headquarters, to include the Commander, Command Sergeant Major and the staff, to have connectivity via voice and data communications. Simply put, the platoon provides secure internet and phone capabilities.

2nd Platoon is forward and co-located with the 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment at Camp Justice, which is several miles away from the brigade.

These Soldiers, also using the JNN and HCLOS, provide voice and data access to all the Soldiers and personnel on the camp. In addition, the platoon also provides an FM retransmission, which al-



▲ *Spc. Anthony Knight of Augusta, Ga., and Spc Zell Doung of Westminster, Calif., test their vehicle's equipment before rolling out on a convoy.*

lows the users to transmit secure, tactical voice communications to all the adjoining units in the area of operations. The "Retrans", as it is most commonly called, extends and retransmits line of site voice communications when the normal range of operation cannot be achieved.

Finally the Headquarters Platoon element is the most diverse of the three platoons. The HQ Platoon supply section has been very busy with equipment inventories, equipment draw and issue, and property book accountability. The First Sergeant

has been taking care of the normal, day to day Soldier's issues of the orderly room as well as being put in charge of the Brigade's Morale, Welfare and Recreation facility.

A signal maintenance shop was established within the platoon to provide the brigade with a central hub for all units to turn in their broken communications equipment.

Last and certainly not least, the platoon deployed members of the Command Post Node team to JSS Sheik Marouf to provide voice and data services to the 4th Battalion, 42nd Field Artillery Regiment. These Soldiers perform similar duties to those in the JNN section, but on a much smaller scale. Nonetheless they are just as important and similarly busy.

All in all, Company B has hit the ground running and is making big strides within the Dagger Brigade. With all the systems in place, the brigade can begin to run their normal combat operations. The Soldiers are in good health and high spirits. With good chow and an ample amount of MWR facilities, these Soldiers can enjoy some slice of the home pie but look forward to completing the mission and coming home safely.



▲ Soldiers from the Griffin Battalion stand in formation after they received their combat patches Nov. 26.
(Photo by Spc. Dustin Roberts, 2HBCT PAO)

...Dagger's Edge and the Ironhorse Big 8 routine and a Team that accomplishes all missions to standard through teamwork. Always remember, true success is working alongside our ISF partners to help Iraq develop into a secure and stable state.

In closing, CSM Gregory and I are extremely proud and honored to lead and represent every Soldier in the "Griffin" battalion. Every "Griffin" Soldier is critical to the success of the "Griffin" battalion, the "Dagger" brigade and quite honestly our Army and our Nation.

This year we'll enjoy the Holidays and New Year as a Family of "Griffin" Soldiers, and as such, I want to wish every "Griffin" Soldier a safe and joyous holiday season and best wishes for 2009.

Griffins! Point of the Dagger!

LIEUTENANT COLONEL DAVID S. IMHOF
GRIFFIN SIX



Lt. Col.

David S. Imhof

**Happy Holidays and
Happy New Year!**

Griffins, we finally arrived safely in Iraq and have been conducting operations at the Point of the Dagger for over a month now. You are doing a tremendous job, and CSM Gregory and I want to express our sincerest Thanks for all of your efforts. As you continue to set the standard each and every day, I want you to always maintain focus on our command philosophy-Mission, Soldiers and Families, and Team.

By Mission, I mean executing every mission to standard. There are no short cuts to standards and discipline, and I expect Leaders and Soldiers at every level to follow and enforce the right standard 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Use the Ironhorse Big 8 and the Dagger's Edge as your guides. For Soldiers, I expect Leaders at every level to exercise positive, hands on leadership to ensure every mission and every Soldiers' actions continue to build on previous successes. Our Families are instrumental in providing the strength and support we all need during this deployment. Rest assured that we have built a top notch Rear Detachment team that will take care of and support your Family Members while you are deployed. Finally, I want you to remember that we will have the most success if we function as a Team on each and every mission; a Team that makes adherence to the Warrior Ethos, Army Values, the...

Message continues



4th Squadron 10th Cavalry "Blackjack"



Blackjack Soldiers Open Pool, Enrich Neighborhood

By Sgt. Brian Tierce 2nd HBCT, 1st Inf. Div. PAO, MND-B

In many American communities the neighborhood pool is a place to meet up with friends and have some fun while trying to beat the hot summer days. In the spirit of summer, though a little after the season, the citizens in the Ameriyah neighborhood of north-west Baghdad received a welcome gift when their pool reopened the Ameriyah pool on Nov. 22.

The pool has been closed since the invasion by U.S. forces in 2003. According to the lead contractor for the project, Shihad Ahmed Abdullah, the area has seen a number of terrorist attacks and the pool itself has been vandalized and stripped of all necessary resources to maintain a functioning pool.

The fortunes of the neighborhood pool took a drastic turn for the best when Soldiers from the 4th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment of Fort Carson, operationally attached to the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, MND-B, decided to make renovating the pool one of their top priorities.

"It's really about working

together with the community," said Capt. Kelly Lanphere, the 4-10th Cav. Squadron Fire Support Officer Projects Officer. "We consolidated pooled our resources together to work with the local community and local government to reopen this pool and now today we are reopening the Ameriyah pool."

The reconstruction project did not just call for the pool to be rebuilt but also the pool house in the complex which added a new air conditioning system, windows, doors, and fixtures.

"This is another place where people can come and enjoy themselves," said Shihad Ahmed Abdullah. "Thanks to the air-conditioning system local citizens can now host computer training, catered events as well as wedding parties."

With improved security and the quality of life on the rise in Baghdad, Blackjack Soldiers knew they had a golden opportunity to provide a boost to the morale of the local citizens and they took full advantage of the chance.

"I think this pool's great, it's a

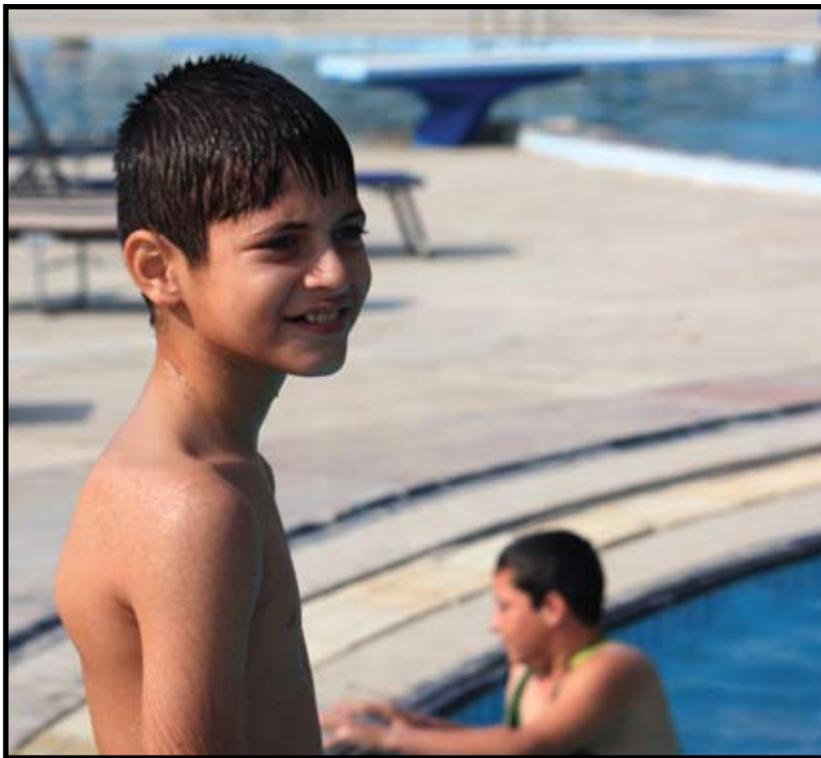
great project," added Lanphere, "more than anything it represents hope. Ameriyah was a very bad place for a long time, and today is really a sign of hope of things to come."

Once the ribbons were cut a few children from the community had the chance to take a quick dip into the pool, despite being the month of November the sun shined and the water was enjoyable and though the cold of November was in the air, the warming sense of pride in their new pool could be seen all over their faces and that sense of pride was shared by the Soldiers of the 4-10th Cav. Sqdn Squadron. "This is the first time I have been able to swim in a pool, I have always seen them on the movies and dreamed that I too could enjoy this luxury," said Raheem Muhammed Alaif, a 10 year old Iraqi boy and neighbor to the refurbished pool.

"We're making progress one day at a time," said Lanphere, "all the projects we're doing, their making an impact for the people."



▲ *Local Ameriyah Boys dive into the Ameriya Pool during the Grand Opening Celebration. (Photo by Capt. John Farmer. 4-10 CAV)*



▲ *A local Ameriyah boy enjoys a dip during the Ameriya Pool Grand Opening Celebration Nov. 22. (Photo by Capt. John Farmer. 4-10 CAV)*



▲ *A local Ameriyah boy enjoys a swim during the Ameriyah Pool Grand Opening Celebration Nov. 22. (Photo by Capt. John Farmer. 4-10 CAV)*



*Lt. Col.
Monty Willoughby*

Troopers of Blackjack:

As Commander of the 4th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment in Baghdad I have been able to witness our Nation's best and brightest fighting daily to anticipate the direction of the enemy before he can act. The flow of operations can shift dramatically in only a matter of minutes in a counterinsurgency fight, and this has required our Soldiers and their leaders to be eternally vigilant. During the last twelve months we have experienced a full range of challenges on the political, economic, social, and security fronts in Baghdad, and the Troopers of 4-10 CAV have met them head on working alongside their Iraqi counterparts of the 54/6 IA Brigade.

The leadership and dedication of this squadron has paved the way for the accomplishment of our mission. You have spent countless hours taking the fight to the enemy; fighting from four different joint security stations spread throughout western Baghdad. It is no small feat to secure an area once owned by two battalions twice our size, but you have done it well.

Our first and enduring mission is to protect the Iraqi citizens. Through our efforts the everyday life of the average Iraqi citizen improved with new businesses, new public infrastructure, school refurbishments, and numerous other civil projects. You have encouraged and built enduring relationships with the Iraqi people and forged a bond with our ISF partners. I am confident to say that you are in full stride with no sign of complacency or fatigue. My hat is off to you, the outstanding Soldiers, NCO's, and Officers of Blackjack Squadron.

Blackjack 6

4-42 Field Artillery



New School Offers New Hope To Nablus Children

Story by Sgt. Brian Tierce, 2nd HBCT PAO

If knowledge is power and the pen is actually mightier than the sword, then the refurbishing and reopening of the Nablus School in the Yarmouk community of northwest Baghdad Nov. 23 will serve to empower the children of Mansour with the skills necessary to improve their lives.

The refurbishing project, which is also underway in more than 200 schools in Baghdad, added six new rooms, a computer lab and a science lab in addition to the school's auditorium being refurbished at no cost by the local contractor.

"The Nablus school should be the model that the other 220 schools currently under reconstruction follow," said Dr. Nihad, Karkh District Deputy Minister of Education.

The Government of Iraq has

placed a high level of importance on the rebuilding and refurbishing of its educational systems, said Dr. Nihad. The Nablus school, along with the refurbishing, also received boxes full of paper, more than 350 backpacks and 100 informative Iraqi comic books, which were distributed by members of Iraqi Security Forces and the Ministry of Education. It was also a marquee day for Soldiers of the 4th Battalion, 42nd Field Artillery Regiment, operationally attached to the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Multi National Division – Baghdad, who are responsible for security in the area.

"The refurbishing of this school gives hope to the elementary students in Yarmouk," said 1st Lt. Nicholas Anderson, a civil military operations officer with 2nd Bn.,

42nd FA Regt. "Furthermore, it demonstrates the concern for academics from the local leadership."

During the event, students who will attend the refurbished school performed for the crowd. An Iraqi band provided entertainment as well. The entertainment brought a sense of normalcy, which serves as a reminder to the Soldiers who have worked so hard in recent months to improve the standard of living for the people of Iraq.

The Soldiers know they are getting the job done in their operational environments, said Anderson, and they know also know that by empowering the Iraqis, they are making the transition that much easier.

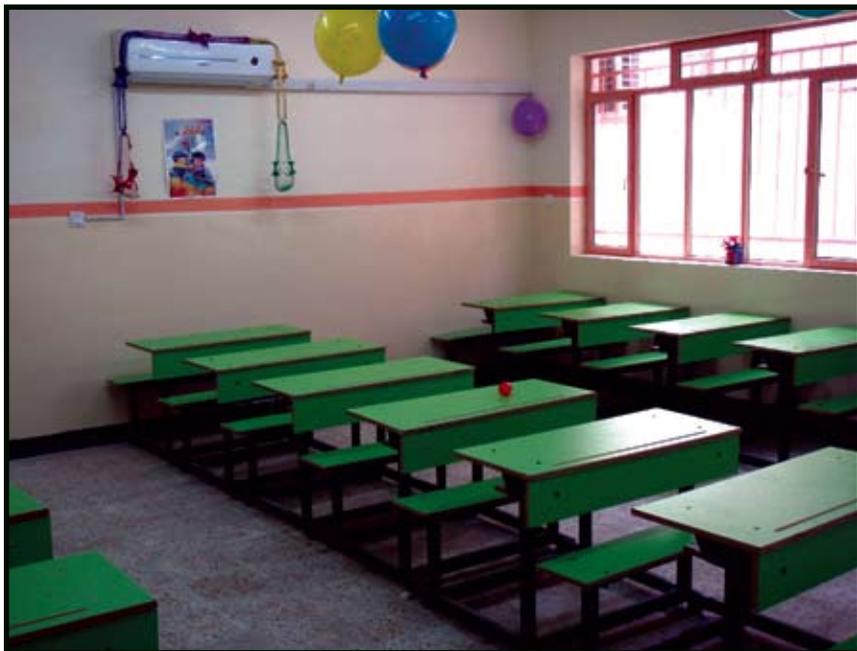
"This was an outstanding Iraqi-led event," he concluded.

An Iraqi band performs in the recently refurbished auditorium of the Nablus School in the Yarmouk neighborhood of northwest Baghdad Nov. 23. During the event, Soldiers from the 4th Battalion, 42nd Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, along with Iraqi Security Forces, passed out school supplies to students of the school.

(photo by 1st Lt. Nicholas Anderson, 4-42 FA) ▼



◀ Maj. Ryan Remley, executive officer, 4th Battalion, 42nd Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, along with members of Iraqi Security Forces, passes out school supplies to students at the reopening of the Nablus School Nov. 23 in the Yarmouk neighborhood of northwest Baghdad. (photo by 1st Lt. Nicholas Anderson, 4-42 FA)



▲ One of six refurbished classrooms at the Nablus Elementary School in the Yarmouk neighborhood of northwest Baghdad is reopened to students at a ceremony Nov. 23. “This was an outstanding Iraqi led event,” said 1st Lt. Nicholas Anderson, civil military operations officer, 4th Battalion, 42nd Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad. “The refurbishment of this school gives hope to the elementary students in Yarmouk.” (photo by 1st Lt. Nicholas Anderson, 4-42 FA)



Lt. Col.
Robert Kirby

To the Soldiers of 4-42 FA:

Let me start by saying that your ability to transition into the Dagger Brigade operational environment with flawless professionalism proves to me that the Soldiers of the 42nd Regiment are the best that the Field Artillery Community has to offer. We are conducting a mission that is vital to the success of the overall mission in Baghdad and it is a mission we learned on the fly. Each and everyday the Soldiers of this great battalion lean and grow as Soldiers and will surely take this experience home and be able to pass the knowledge to the future leaders of the U.S. Army.

I know we have been in theater for some time and the end is getting near. It is also the Holiday season and we will be away from our loved ones. Do not let your spirits become down. We will finish the mission strong and support not only the Dagger Brigade but also MND-B to the fullest and prove that we are the best there is.

Lastly, remember we are the King of Battle with little room for error. It is crucial that we maintain our integrity and work ethic for the remainder of the deployment.

I wish you a safe and joyous holiday season as we continue to execute important missions everyday.

Lt. Col. Robert Kirby



Thanksgiving in Baghdad



▲ Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment anxiously stand in line at a dining facility Nov. 27.
(Photo by 1st Lt. Mark Peek, 1-7 F.A. UPAR)



▲ Command Sgt. Maj. Donalt Battle, the senior enlisted leader in the Dagger Brigade, serves pumpkin pie to Pfc. Eric Blaskowski, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2-1 Special Troops Battalion Nov. 27 at Joint Security Station Hurriyah II. (Photo by Spc. Dustin Roberts, 2HBCT PAO)



▲ Col. Joseph M. Martin, commander, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, greets Capt. Andrew Chovancek, Company B, 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment Nov. 27 at Joint Security Station Hurriyah.
(Photo by Spc. Dustin Roberts, 2nd HBCT PAO)



▲ Capt. J.B. Rashad, 2HBCT assistant adjutant, 2, stands in front of a Thanksgiving Day display at a Camp liberty dining facility Nov. 27.
(Photo courtesy of HHC, 2HBCT)

HAPPY THANKSGIVING

Dagger Soldiers don combat patches

Story and photos by Spc. Dustin Roberts, 2HBCT PAO

In a ceremony Nov. 26, Soldiers from the 2-1 Special Troops battalion, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, donned 1st Inf. Div. shoulder sleeve insignias on the right shoulders of their Army Combat Uniforms.

When a shoulder sleeve insignia, better known as a “unit patch,” is placed on a Soldier’s right shoulder of the ACU, it becomes a shoulder sleeve insignia for former wartime service, more-widely known as a “combat patch.”

“After activating the Battalion 18 months ago from the 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division as the special Troop Battalion ‘Greyhounds,’ we finally have arrived in Iraq; this is a remarkable achievement given the short amount of time from activation to today,” said Lt. Col. David Imhof, commander, 2-1 STB. “More importantly, the arrival of this battalion was, and is, an important day for our Army. I am extremely proud to report that you are now at the point of the Dagger and poised to make history as a member of a unit with only five months of history since the brigade stood up in March of 2007.”

When the Dagger Brigade landed in Kuwait in October, Imhof said the arrival linked the Soldiers with “Big Red One” Soldiers who fought for freedom in the past.

He also spoke about the famed history of the 1st Infantry Division and its elite presence in World War I, World War II, Vietnam, Bosnia, Operation Desert Storm, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

“I want to look back more than a couple of years to understand what wearing the ‘Big Red One’ patch means. We, as the ‘Big Red One,’ were the first to cross the lines in Germany and

had the furthest penetration of U.S. troops in World War I,” said Imhof. “In 1965, at the helm of the Vietnam War, the ‘Big Red One’ was again making headlines as the first element of an infantry division to arrive in Vietnam. In 1968, the Division embarked in the largest operation in the Vietnam War and stopped the infiltration of the enemy into the Saigon area.”

“I’ve seen you in action, and I know you are up to this task. I am extremely proud to lead and represent every Soldier in the Griffin Battalion,” he said. “Every Griffin Soldier is critical to the success of our battalion, the Dagger Brigade, our Army and, quite honestly, our nation. Be proud of the history you are creating and be proud of the ‘Big Red One’ patch.”



Capt. Ryan Cripps, commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2HBCT, stands in front of the formation of HHC after slapping on a 1st Infantry Division combat patch Nov. 26.

▲ Capt. Zachary Shields, commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2-1 Special Troops Battalion, is presented with his “combat patch” by Lt. Col. David Imhof, commander, 2-1 STB on Camp Liberty Nov. 26.

SAFETY ZONE

practicing winter safety

by Thomas McMurray, 2HBCT tactical safety specialist

While cold weather makes military tasks more difficult, it doesn't make them impossible. Viewing cold as a challenge to be overcome is the key to the positive attitude required to successfully accomplish the mission.

Typically, the cold weather casualty is a male, approximately 20 years old and in the rank of E4 or below. This Soldier is usually from a warm climate and is not acclimated to cold weather and is not prepared to survive in those conditions. Soldiers who have experienced a cold injury in the past are much more likely to develop a cold injury sooner, or a more severe cold injury in the future.

We're approaching that time of year when we are all thinking about staying warm and comfortable. While most of us know how to keep warm, some of us are more willing to take unnecessary risks to accomplish this. The cost of this can be death and/or the loss of Government or personal property from Carbon Monoxide poisoning or fires.

The temperatures in our region of Iraq seldom dip below freezing; if they do, the equipment that the Military has provided will keep us warm without risks.

There are simple and effective rules that will keep you and your battle buddies safe, ready and in the fight.

Commanders and leaders are responsible for establishing and implementing controls for cold weather hazards. This includes: ensuring that personnel are trained to recognize signs of cold weather injuries and the actions to take when an injury is encountered. Soldiers are required to implement and follow controls, to include being prepared and never second-guessing old man winter.

“There are simple and effective rules that will keep you and your battle buddies safe, ready and in the fight:” - Thomas McMurray, 2HBCT tactical safety specialist

- 1. Never use any fuel-fired heating device inside an enclosed space. This includes grills, kerosene heaters, and Army approved devices.**
- 2. Never remove or modify safety devices.**
- 3. Always use UL or CE approved electrical heaters.**
- 4. If using an electrical heater, ensure that it is the only device on that circuit.**
- 5. Supplemental heating devices are not authorized where proper devices are installed.**



**STAY
DAGGER
SAFE!**

Say goodbye to USB

Courtesy of Army Times

The Department of Defense (DoD) has banned the use of removable flash media and storage devices from all government computers, starting this week. In a campaign to reach all DoD military, civilian and contractor staff, DoD has shotgunned notifications regarding the use of media storage on DoD computers. “Joint Task Force Global Network Operations has banned the use of the following forms of media usage on all military computers.

Thumb drives, memory sticks, camera flash memory, compact flash, sd, mini sd, etc. Secondly, they have required deletion of all computers and accounts on the military sites (.mil) that have not been accessed in 90 days.

If you have a laptop, VPN in and make contact. If you use Outlook Web Access (OWA), check in. Questions should be directed to your active duty installation communication support administrator.” Top of Form So why did it take so long to put administrative controls - “GovSpeak” for regulations that depend on human behavior - that ban the use of such devices.

Didn't the information security (IT) staff or DoD leadership see the 2003 movie, “The Recruit” where a memory stick was used to covertly steal our most guarded intelligence secrets? Apparently not, as this action comes from report of a worm virus known

as “Agent.btz” that was discovered infecting some DoD networks; not information security. The worm virus “Agent.btz” is a variation of an older worm that copies itself to removable USB drives from infected computers and then spreads itself to whatever new systems it is connected to through USB ports, Wired reported.

The worm seriously degrades computer performance by copying itself to multiple programs.

For security reasons, DoD officials won't discuss “specific measures commanders in the field may be taking to protect and defend our networks,”

but for years progressive DoD Chief Information Officers and Chief Information Security Officers Offices have placed IT controls to prevent USB ports from

working with any storage devices. Currently, the only authorized media for use on DoD networks is media purchased and provided by the government, under no circumstances will personally owned removable media be considered mission essential or used on government networks. DoD's Global Information Grid includes more than 17,000 local- and regional-area networks and approximately 7 million individual computers.



end frame...



THE DOGGER EDGE
2HBCT/110 AND FAMILY READINESS GROUP UPDATE