



The Mountain View

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February 24, 2009

Deep Strike Soldiers reach out to local hospital



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Joe Thompson

Staff Sgt. Christina Kidwell, 2-20 FA Regt., Supply NCOIC, hands out a plush unicorn to a little girl at the Abbas hospital, Feb. 18.

SGT. 1ST CLASS JOE THOMPSON
41ST FB



FOB DELTA – A little bit of hard work, creativity, time and support helped to deliver a touch of playfulness and cheer to a local hospital’s children’s waiting room in Kut.

Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 20th Field Artillery Regiment, delivered some benches, hand-painted wooden toy boxes, a book case and some blankets, toys and candy to the Abbas hospital, Feb. 18.

“The best part is always to see a smile on a child’s face,” said Staff Sgt. Christina Kidwell, supply noncommissioned

officer-in-charge, 2-20 FA Regt.

Kidwell, from Guymon, Okla., spent almost a week hand painting the toy boxes for the hospital, along with some help from her supply sergeant, Spc. Zulma Yucrarodriquez, of Buenos Aires, Argentina.

See HOSPITAL, page 3

Truth be told: dispelling Basra rumors

SPC. DEBRALEE P. CRANKSHAW
MND-C



CAMP VICTORY –The Commanding General's live chat recently brought to light some concerns about the move to Basra. Many Soldiers have questions and many rumors are floating around that may not be based in fact.

Billeting, available facilities, mail and the security status are all issues of interest to Soldiers.

Housing is still a concern at Basra. Soldiers will be living in Containerized Housing Units, open bay tents, former gyms, converted dining facilities and other open spaces. The bunker-type sleeping areas will be removed to increase available living spaces, according to Capt. Robert McTighe, 10th Mountain Division, Headquarters Support Company commander.

The Post Exchange is currently a trailer, but a small store is scheduled to open in early March.

There will also be a main PX, but the grand opening date has not been determined, added McTighe.

The Eagle Cash card cannot be used in Basra at this time. However, credit and debit cards are accepted, said 1st Sgt. Carl Berg, 10th Mountain Division, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment first sergeant.

There are currently eight gyms on Basra for Servicemembers to use. They will stay in place until early May, said McTighe. At that time DFAC 1 will close and be renovated as a consolidated post gym. The four gyms closest to the facility will then be permanently closed.

There is currently internet service at the base which is being transferred to the Army and Air Force Exchange Service, according to McTighe.

Laundry service will also be provided, said Maj. Gen. Michael Oates, 10th Mountain Division commanding general in his live chat.

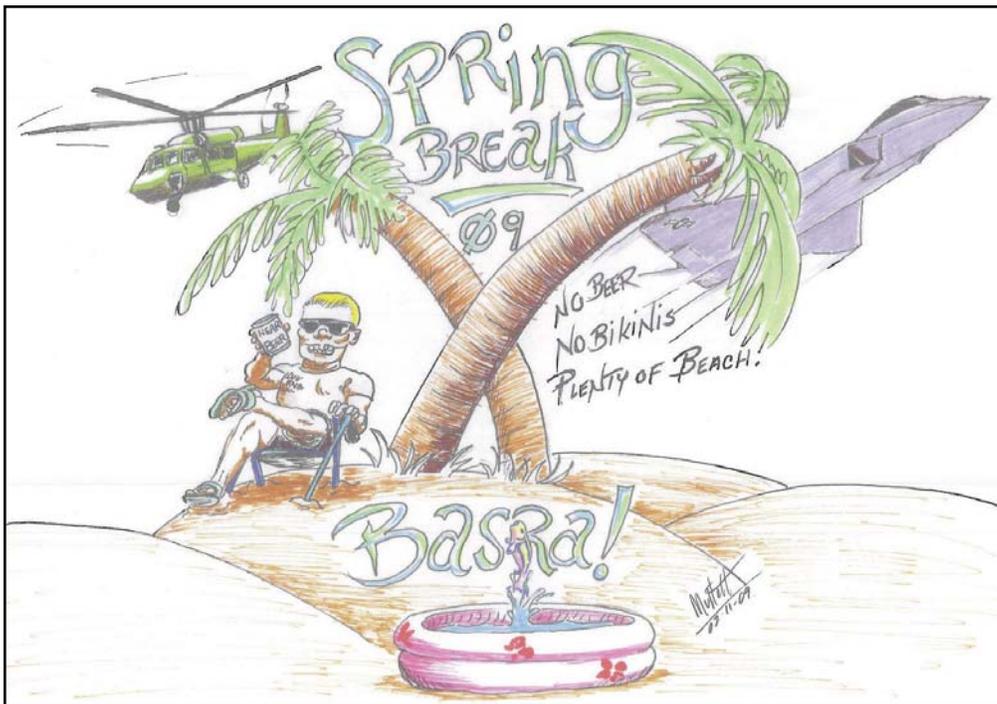
Finance visits the base twice a month and will have a permanent facility in the future. An Education Center is also planned, said Berg.

There are currently four DFACs, but one will be closed to allow it to be revamped to provide more dining space, said McTighe.

There is no mass transit system established on Basra yet, but this is an issue being worked, McTighe added.

Mail should be limited to VBC after Feb. 20. All mail received after March 20 will be forwarded to home station, not Basra, said Capt. Laura Wood, HSC personnel officer. This does not include Servicemembers staying at Victory. Mail can be received in Basra after March 1 and official postal operations in Basra are scheduled to be fully functional by March 20.

Security is an important aspect at Basra. Body armor is a requirement to move around the base at this time, said Berg.



THE Mountain View

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Task Force 449



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HOSPITAL

From page 1

The original project for the waiting room didn't receive funding, and after Kidwell's battalion commander returned from a mission to the hospital, he told her that he wanted to try and get them some furniture. Some of the Soldiers in the battalion built the benches, book case and toy boxes, and Kidwell and Yucrarodriguez did the rest.

"It was pretty simple with a little paint and an imagination. We didn't have that many colors, so we did a lot of mixing and experimenting," said Kidwell.

Kidwell and Yucrarodriguez painted the four boxes in colorful designs, including a beetle, turtle, and two gift-wrapped boxes. The items to fill the boxes came from donations from the United States.

"It is like Christmas when the mail comes in and we receive items to give to the Iraqi people," said Kidwell.

Once everything was ready to hand out to the hospital, they coordinated with the local Iraqi Security Forces to get them involved in the project.

"As Americans, we give to people as part of our culture and helping your neighbor. Not only does this project help the local Iraqi populous, but we are showing the Iraqi Security Forces the way of giving and taking care of your own," said Kidwell. "I really hope they take some of our traditions and incorporate them so they can help the less fortunate."



Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Joe Thompson
(Above) A little girl clutches her fleece blanket and stuffed animal at the Abbas hospital. **(Left)** Sgt. Robert Dyer, Btry A, 1-77 FA Regt., helps to bring in one of the four benches delivered to the Abbas hospital Feb. 18. Soldiers from 2nd Bn., 20th FA Regt., delivered benches, hand-painted wooden toy boxes, a book case, blankets, toys and candy. The original project for the waiting room didn't receive funding, so Soldiers wanted to get them furniture. The Soldiers in the battalion built the benches, book case and toy boxes. They also painted the four boxes in colorful designs, including a beetle, turtle, and two gift-wrapped boxes. The items in the boxes came from donations from the United States.

Soldiers share highlights of African-American history

PFC. BETHANY L. LITTLE
172ND INF. BDE.



FOB KALSU – Soldiers and civilians gathered at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation stage at Forward Operating Base Kalsu, for a Black History Month program, Feb. 13.

The program provided a learning opportunity for the residents of FOB Kalsu through speeches and music provided by the FOB Kalsu Choir.

Seven Soldiers started the program off by giving “I am” speeches highlighting the significant achievements of seven important figures in African American history. Soldiers described their chosen historical figures life and key accomplishments, which impacted American history.

Highlighted figures included Oprah Winfrey, Reverend Jesse Jackson and President Barack H. Obama.

A heavy equipment construction operator for A Company, 9th Engineer Battalion, 172nd Infantry Brigade, enjoyed voicing the life of Obama.

“I feel honored and privileged at having the chance to participate in this program and voice the accomplishments of our president,” said Pfc. Roscoe Graveside, a New York City native.

Guest speaker Lt. Col. Fredrick J. Hannah, battalion commander for 204th Base Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Division, spoke about the struggles and advancements of African-Americans throughout history.

“Today, I want you to join me on a journey to discover the history of slavery up to where we are today,” said Hannah, a native of Havana, Fla.



Photo by Pfc. Bethany L. Little

“It’s time for change,” said Pfc. Roscoe Graveside, a New York native and heavy equipment construction operator for Co. A, 9th Eng. Bn., 172nd Inf. Bde., as he describes the life of President Barack Obama in his “I am” speech during the event honoring Black History Month, Feb. 13, on FOB Kalsu.

Hannah spoke about what life was like for slaves in the year 1450. He talked about the evolution of slavery in the United States and how society’s views of human equality have continued to move forward. Hannah concluded his speech and was presented a certificate of appreciation for outstanding support and dedication to the 172nd Inf. Bde during Black History Month by 172nd Inf. Bde. executive officer, Maj.

Lucien Campillo.

Soldiers felt attending the event heightened their knowledge of African-American history.

“I’m really happy they did this for us,” said Spc. Charrod A. Grimes, from Dayton, Ohio, a logistics clerk for the 204th BSB, 4th Inf. Div. “I gained new knowledge and will continue to research great African-Americans that altered American history.”

WOULD YOU
LIKE TO CHAT
WITH THE CG?
NOW’S YOUR
CHANCE!



Meet the CG online March 1
from 8:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

How?

- Go to www.taskforcemountain.com
- Click on *Lima Charlie chat room* (right sidebar)
- Click on the *click here* icon
- Chat is anonymous

Headline Round-up

World News:

GUJIAO, China - Rescuers wearing headlamps and oxygen backpacks carried dozens of miners to safety Feb. 22 after a gas explosion at a coal mine in northern China killed at least 74. The blast at the mine, which had for years boasted an exemplary safety record, highlighted the perilous conditions that make China's mining industry the deadliest in the world.

Sports:

FONTANA, Calif. - Daytona 500 winner Matt Kenseth made it two victories in a row Feb. 22, holding off a late challenge from Jeff Gordon to win the Auto Club 500. It is the first time a Cup driver has won the first two races of the season since Gordon did it in 1997 on the way to the second of his four championships. It was Kenseth's 18th career victory and third on the 2-mile Auto Club Speedway oval. It was also the fifth straight February victory here for team co-owner Jack Roush. Kyle Busch, who made NASCAR history by winning both the truck and Nationwide races on Saturday, came up short of a weekend sweep after finishing third. Greg Biffle finished fourth followed Kurt Busch, Denny Hamlin, defending race winner Carl Edwards, two-time Cup champion Tony Stewart and three-time reigning Cup champion Jimmie Johnson, who led 74 laps but faded in the late-going.

Entertainment:

LOS ANGELES - "Slumdog Millionaire" took the best-picture Academy Award and seven other Oscars on Feb. 22, including director for Danny Boyle, whose ghetto-to-glory story paralleled the film's unlikely rise to Hollywood's summit. Kate Winslet won best actress for the Holocaust-themed drama "The Reader" and Penelope Cruz took supporting actress honors for "Vicky Cristina Barcelona." Sean Penn, best actor for the title role of "Milk," took the stage to accept his prize gleefully telling the crowd: "You commie, homo-loving sons of guns." For his demented reinvention of Batman villain the Joker, Heath Ledger became only the second actor ever to win posthumously when he secured the Oscar for supporting actor for "The Dark Knight." His triumph came exactly 13 months after his death from an accidental overdose of prescription drugs. Ledger's Oscar for the Warner Bros. blockbuster was accepted by Ledger's parents and sister on behalf of the actor's 3-year-old daughter, Matilda.

Quote of the Day

"Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it." – Dwight Eisenhower

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For the answer to today's puzzle, go to:



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AROUND THE COMMUNITY

Lions Den

Feb. 24
Madden '09 @ 7:30 p.m.
Spades @ 8 p.m.
Fridays
"Gospel Hour: Moments of Joy" @ noon

Fishbowl Gym

Feb. 24
Full Body Aerobics @ 6 a.m.
March 27
Relay for Life HOPE Ceremony @ 8 p.m.
March 28
Cancer awareness 5K/10K walk run. Free t-shirt and continental breakfast. Race begins @ 7 a.m.
April 11
Pirate's Cove Run 5K/10K. Registration begins @ 7 a.m., race begins @ 8 a.m. T-shirts awarded to top finishers.

Liberty

Feb. 23
Black History Month Observance at Aw Faw Palace @ 7 p.m.
POC: Maj. Monique Compere-Anderson at 835-2057.
Feb. 26
Charlie Wilson and the GAP band at Liberty PX/BX stage @ 7:30 p.m.

Victory Stage

Feb. 27
Blackstreet @ 7 p.m.

Babylon Theater

Feb. 24
Punisher - War Zone @ 4 p.m.
The Day the Earth Stood Still @ 7 p.m.
The Boy in the Striped Pajamas @ 9:30 p.m.
March 2
Newcomers Brief @ 1 p.m.
March 6
Town Hall Meeting @ 1 p.m.
March 17
Fire Warden Class @ 1 p.m.
Fire Extinguisher Class @ 2 p.m.
March 16
Newcomers Brief @ 1 p.m.