

WARHORSE



RIDER

Serving the Soldiers, Civilians and Families of 2BCT, 4ID

Vol. 1, Issue 3

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**Soldiers, IA conduct
aviation training**

CONTENTS

Warhorse Sends.....page 2

Lynchpin of a region.....page 3

204th BSB, 2-8 IN Soldiers learn self-defense.....page 4

Soldier Spotlight.....page 5

Soldiers stay fit to fightpage 6

Patrol reveals Iraqis seek to improve city.....page 8

Mother follows son to Iraq.....page 9

Cover Story: Warhorse Brigade, Lonestar Battalion uncases colors at Echo.....page 10

Around AO Warhorse.....page 12

Thanksgiving at Camp Echo.....page 14

Chaos Co. works with Kirkuk ESU.....page 16

2-8IN CMO helps Gol build up country's infrastructure.....page 17

Chaplain's Corner.....page 18

'Thunder' rolls into Scania.....page 19



On the Cover:

8th IA Div. and 2-8 Soldiers rush to mount a Black Hawk during aviation integration training.
photo by Sgt. Rodney Foliente,
2nd BCT, 4th ID PAO

Warhorse Sends: Movement of Units Update



The Warhorse Brigade is continuing the expansion of the Warhorse area of operation. Earlier this month, I informed you of 3rd Battalion, 16th Field Artillery's move from FOB Adder to FOB Kalsu; unfortunately, this was a short-term move and 3-16 FA had to move again to Convoy Support Center Scania which is located in the southern Babil province. 3-16th FA did a great job moving to their third location in less than 90 days.

This move was required to keep the battalion with the Warhorse Brigade. CSM Thompson and I appreciate the support of our Families during this rapid transition.

Unfortunately, this will not be the only battalion that will be affected by base realignment. I will keep you informed as we change our battlespace.

As of right now the Warhorse area of operation includes: Najaf and Qadasiya provinces and the southern portion of the Babil province.

The Warhorse Brigade will provide over

watch with assistance by, with and through the Iraqi Security Forces in order to continue their progress as they provide security to the Iraqi population in these provinces.

We continue to make significant improvements in the quality of life for our Warhorse Soldiers in Iraq.

This week the SPAWARS suite at Camp Echo, JSS2 and COB 4 were opened. The SPAWARS suite on Camp Echo provides us with 20 more computers and 5 more phones. The SPAWARS suites in JSS2 and COB 4 provide 5 more computers and 3 phones at each site.

Mail is now arriving every 3 to 4 days and our Soldiers are now receiving their proper deployment entitlements from finance. We will continue to improve the Warhorse Soldier's quality of life. I appreciate your participation in the monthly Town Halls and encourage you to continue to attend.

Our next Town Hall is December 16, 2008 at 1800 in the McMahon Theater. If you have questions that you would like for me to answer, please e-mail them to connie.kallerson@conus.army.mil.

I will continue to provide updates on the Warhorse Brigade throughout our deployment. Remember, if you did not hear it from me or the Warhorse Rear Detachment then it is only a rumor. Please continue to visit the Warhorse vFRG website to get the latest information.

We are Warhorse!

HENRY A. KIEVENAAR, III
COL, AR
Commander

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Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Fredrick Thompson...2BCT CSM
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Do you have a story to share? The *Warhorse Rider* welcomes articles, commentary, and photos from readers.

The *Warhorse Rider* reserves the right to edit submissions selected for the paper.

Submissions and requests for further information should be emailed to the editor: carlos.burger@iraq.centcom.mil.

‘Lynchpin of a region’

Najaf’s new airport to change the face of holy city

Story by Staff Sgt. Carlos M. Burger
2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div. PAO

FOB ENDEAVOR, Iraq – The Shia holy city of Najaf has been described as the “Vatican City” of the Shia world. Now the provincial government hopes to put the city ‘on the map’ with the completion and opening of the Najaf International Airport.

The 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division had a chance to tour the facility during a visit to the province Nov. 3.

“The success here in Najaf is impressive,” said Lt. Col. Adrian Bogart, deputy commander of 2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div. “From where we were two years ago to now, is not only a testament to the return normalcy for Najaf, but literally the beginnings of a new future for this great city.”

4th Inf. Div. has been very involved with the Najaf International Airport project, having supported the provincial government’s concept in 2006 from an abandoned airstrip into a functioning international gateway, Bogart added.

The road to building the airport has been a long and trying process.

The government chose the old military airfield of the Saddam era because it was the only airfield in the Southern Iraqi area that could be developed into an airport.

Following the fall of Saddam, the people of Najaf wanted their city to be put back on the map and become reconnected to the rest of their Shia people around the world, said Evan McCarthy, Iraq Provincial Action Officer for Provincial Reconstruction Team, Najaf.

“The airport would serve as the centerpiece to reconnect them to the world,” McCarthy added.

The government feels the airport will bring in religious tourism and grow businesses, which will have a huge economic impact. The airport



Lt. Col. Adrian Bogart, 4th Inf. Div. deputy commander meets with airport officials on his visit to the facility in Najaf Nov. 3. photo by Sgt. 1st Class Mark Glaze, 2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

was open this July with large fanfare.

“The Najaf government wants the city to be a genuine tourist destination in five years. They view this airport as the lynchpin of the whole region’s economic development,” said McCarthy.

The success of the airport is just one of the many projects the PRT works on in conjunction with the Najaf government.

“We are highlighting the economic success of Najaf; not just the airport, but the university as well,” said Robin Jallo, the PRT Public Diplomacy Officer.

A large contributor to the airport project is the fact that Najaf remains a relatively peaceful province. The 8th Iraqi Army and the Najaf police have been instrumental in keeping that peace.

“The 8th IA is very competent, from what I observe,” said McCarthy.

The airport’s completion, along with the stabilized province and recent international flights starting at Baghdad’s International Airport provide the right formula for the government and people of Najaf to achieve their dream of establishing the city as a religious center for Shia.

Depending on if the peace continues, both the provincial government and the PRT team have big aspirations for the facility.

“Nine months to a year from now, I expect international flights from as far as London, Bangladesh and areas with large Shia populations, to come to Najaf,” Kurt Benson, PRT transportation officer.

“If Iraq maintains its current stability, the city of Najaf has a lot to offer the country,” said McCarthy. 🇮🇶

Note from the Editor:

*Some of our readers may have noticed that this issue of the **Warhorse Rider** is dated for December and our last issue was dated October.*

*The issue date has been changed to reflect the month the current magazine is **available**, instead of the month the current magazine **covers**.*

Sorry for the confusion.

SSG Carlos M. Burger II, Editor

‘Lethal Weapons’

204th BSB, 2-8 IN Soldiers learn self-defense

Story & photo by Pfc. Ericka Herrera
204th BSB, 2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

FOB KALSU, Iraq – As Hapkido Grand Master John Pellegrini and Master Robert Gray enter the room, some Soldiers bow their heads to welcome them. Others looked at 1st Sgt. Micheal Garmon and ask nervously, ‘What did you sign us up for?!’

As my group other participants around us begin to stretch out, it looks obvious that we have a fanatical day ahead of us.

Soldiers from the 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment and 204th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Division, along with elements of the 4th Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division were taught advanced combatives skills at the FOB Kalsu gym and Camp Echo Theater, Nov. 5- 6.

More than 50 Soldiers from both battalions participated in the course and gained knowledge to take on their attacker, and bring them down.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Carlos M. Burger II, 2BCT, 4ID PAO

John Pellegrini, Grandmaster and founder of Combat Hapkido, teaches some techniques to Soldiers from 2-8 IN, during his visit to Camp Echo Nov 5.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Carlos M. Burger II, 2BCT, 4ID PAO

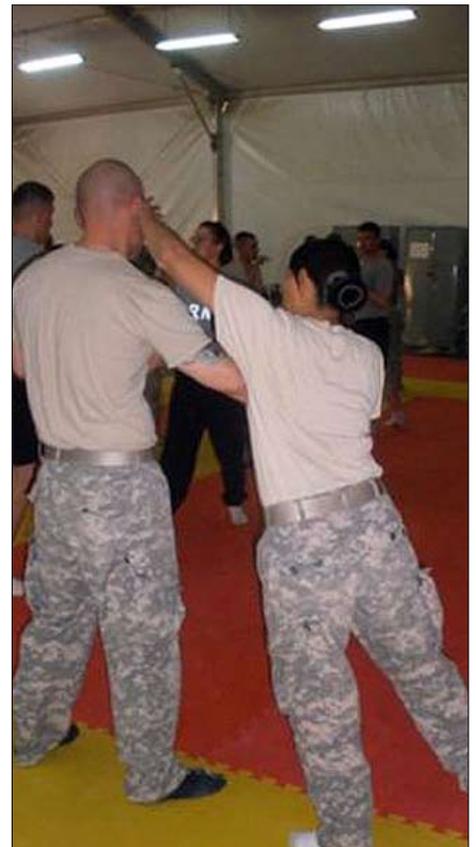
Sgt. Maj. Dale Veneklasen, 2-8 IN operations sergeant major, helps a Soldier work on his counter technique. Pellegrini works with Soldiers all over Iraq and is based in Phoenix.

“The class was very enlightening,” said Sgt. Don Balow, a member of the convoy security detail and a native of Detroit.

Throughout the course of three hours Grand Master Pellegrini and Master Gray went over several techniques of advanced combatives. Most of the techniques involved taking your challenger down using pressure points, calculated hand movements and quick judgment.

“After the class, I felt like I could take on the world,” said Sgt. Kassie Garza, a supply sergeant from Zuni, N.M.

After class, Col. Thomas James and Command Sgt. Maj. Louis Torres of 4th BCT, 3rd ID honored our instructors with a certificate of appreciation. Pellegrini and Gray called us their heroes, but to us, they are heroes; citizens who care enough to give back and show their appreciation. 🇺🇸



Sgt. Kassie Garza, 204th BSB, blocks a punch and aims her counter right for Sgt. Don Balow's face. Soldiers from 204th, were taught advanced combatives skills at the FOB Kalsu gym, Nov. 6.

Soldier Spotlight:

Workplace or dance floor, Sgt. Dunham has got moves

Story & photo by Staff Sgt. Carlos M. Burger
2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div PAO

CAMP ECHO, Iraq – The hectic stress of being deployed in a combat zone can make it hard for Soldiers to find their daily battle rhythm. Sgt. Lacy Dunham however, is taking action to make sure both her personal and professional life stay ‘in step.’

“When I found out they had salsa night here, I talked to the gym coordinator about starting a class and he was OK with it,” said the 25-year-old Dunham.

Dunham works as an imagery analyst for the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division intelligence section. The San Diego native’s primary job is to gather images and decipher them, which helps Soldiers make clearer choices on the battlefield.

Although her secondary job as the brigade security manager takes up much of her time, Dunham loves the chance when she can help the war fighters.

“Knowing that I produce something that helps the Soldiers feels good,” she said.

Dunham admits that being an analyst has changed her perception on not only combat but on people as well.

“I see things in a different way. Personally, I notice flaws, the tiniest detail I see more. But it helps me professionally, it helps me make a better product,” she said.

That attention to detail has earned her the respect of her superiors.

“Sergeant Dunham is a very enlightened individual. She will pick up the ‘ball’ and run with it with minimal guidance. She’s one of the shining stars of our intelligence crew. Her school was very difficult to graduate from and she’s a vital part of the Warhorse team,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Ian Holt, fusion intelligence analyst officer-in-charge, and Dunham’s supervisor for nine months.

Dunham joined the Army in June

2000 as a joint surveillance target acquisition reconnaissance system operator. She went to Fort Hood, Texas and deployed with 1st Cavalry Division. She then moved to Germany and was stationed with the 1st Infantry Division. While there she had deployed to Turkey and Iraq.

She was also stationed at Warner Robbins Air Force Base near Macon, Ga. She deployed three times for the Air Force and received an Air Force Commendation Medal before changing her job to an imagery analyst.

It was on one of her many deployments that the salsa bug first bit Dunham.

“My first time learning salsa was my first deployment in Camp Doha, Kuwait. I’ve been doing it for seven years, but I just recently started teaching.”

Even though she first started teaching at a previous deployment on accident, she has come to enjoy teaching and is the instructor for Camp Echo’s salsa class. She teaches the basic steps of salsa, bachata and merengue.

“The fun I have, I want others to have too. It’s fun to see to see them develop and do things they couldn’t do before.”

Her students are grateful for the chance to escape the normal everyday routines of combat life.

“I think the class is a great idea, especially for Soldiers who want something to do or they’ve never done it before. Sergeant Dunham worked with me one-on-one and doesn’t put you on the spot. We actually extended the class because we were having so much fun,” said Spc. Maria Paulino, 2BCT paralegal.

While Dunham admits she is by no means an expert at analyzing or salsa, she knows the basics to be successful at both and has found the perfect rhythm for herself to make her deployment as enjoyable as possible. 



Dunham instructs Staff Sgt. James Cowell, 2nd BCT STB, 4th Inf. Div., on the proper turning techniques during her salsa class.



Warhorse Soldiers and other Camp Echo deployment residents participate in a friendly competition with a 5 kilometer run Nov. 1.

Soldiers stay fit to fight

Story & photos by Sgt. Rodney Foliente
2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div. PAO

CAMP ECHO, Iraq – With a fast-paced operational tempo, deployed Soldiers face an extended string of long days, which pile upon each other into the proverbial “ground hog’s day.”

Time off is a well-deserved luxury; a time to relax and pursue personal interests. After a day’s mental and physical taxing, many Soldiers choose to exercise; a hard work out after a hard day.

This may come as a surprise to those outside the Army, but to Soldiers, the drive to conduct physical training is ingrained into them, offering a variety of personal rewards.

“It’s a stressful environment here. Just to stay sane you need to have something that makes you happy,” said Sgt. 1st Class Monica Carlile, senior paralegal, Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, after running approximately six miles.

For her, and many like her, that “something” is exercise.

“It’s my way to get away. I decompress by going to the gym. I decompress by hanging out and pushing someone else to better themselves,”

said Sgt. Maj. Dale Veneklasen, operations, 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, 2nd BCT.

As he speaks, the gym pulses with the sounds of weights rising and falling, harmonized with the whir and thuds of cardio machines. Soldiers breathe and groan and their comrades call out alternated words of encouragement and antagonism to help push each other.

“It gives us an opportunity to get away from the work and think about something else. It builds teamwork,” continued Veneklasen, who comes from Estelline, S.D.

A nearby Soldier struggling to complete one more bicep curl, looks ready to give up. Instead, he digs deep within himself and forces the weights to lift all the way before letting them down slowly with a sigh. His buddy slaps him on the shoulder and says, “Good job;” a complete 360 from what was said during the struggle.

“I have a battle buddy. I have a couple of them. We force each other to work out. We push each other for the readiness to fight for the mission,” said Veneklasen.

As Veneklasen talks about teamwork and pushing each other, the two

Soldiers look up and nod their agreement before switching places with the easy camaraderie and making fun of each other with greater vigor and wider grins.

Another reason to work out is to look good for the Family when the time comes to be reunited, said Veneklasen.

“When Soldiers get back home for reintegration, the Family members, loved ones or friends are surprised. You either put on some weight in muscle mass or you really trim down,” he said, wryly adding however, that “some Soldiers may not quite look as good as they did by using the chow hall to work against them in some benefits.”

He commented that some people don’t exercise as they should, providing an ‘I just don’t have time’ justification.

“It is just an excuse for them to be lazy. It’s unfortunate, but we do have that. As a leader, it’s our responsibility to encourage them to work out and do something additional during deployments,” said Veneklasen.

Another excuse primarily offered by those who do not often go outside the wire on missions is: ‘Since I don’t

regularly go out on missions, I don't need to stay that fit.'

But Carlile disagrees with such logic.

You need to (exercise) because you never know when you are going to have to go outside the wire," responded Carlile. "You never know what's going to happen out there. You have to be prepared at all times."

She used an example of the unfortunate possibility of having to extract and transport an injured person to a safe place for medical treatment, repeating the importance for Soldiers to always be prepared to accomplish the mission.

An avid runner, she averages approximately 40 miles per week during deployment. No matter what base in Iraq Soldiers are stationed at, there are always ways to find the time and the means to exercise, whether it's hitting the gym, playing sports or running, said Carlile, who comes from Oceans-



Spc. Danny Ramirez, intelligence analyst with HHT, 2nd BCT, hits the gym after a fourteen-hour day. Ramirez comes from Muleshoe, Texas.



Cpl. Jason Massa, petroleum specialist with Co. E, 2-8 IN, 2nd BCT, finishes off a set as his battle buddies wait their turn and offer encouragement. Massa hails from Slidell, La.

ide, Calif.

"Make time for yourself and do it!" she exclaimed, covered in sweat and standing tall with the quiet self-pride that comes with pushing oneself and knowing the challenge was met.

"Soldiers need to understand that fit is more than just an excuse to do something. It's a right and it's something they need to be responsible for and take care of themselves and get through the mission. It's very important for the mission we have today," said Veneklasen.

Staying fit keeps the Soldiers strong and capable. He explained that Soldiers' combat kits can weigh upwards of 70 lbs. Staying fit helps Soldiers accomplish their missions; It's part of being a Soldier.

"I believe in going the extra mile. The endurance factor helps me push the Soldiers to get to the objective. It's going to allow them to get through the mission more easily," said Veneklasen, right before going to his battle buddies and starting the day's workout.

He walks past a gym filled with a myriad of Soldiers and civilians. There are the young and the old, male and female, those working to lose weight and those working to gain it. There are the toned and the not-so-toned, the brawny and the scrawny.

To most present, it does not seem to really matter what a person can lift or what their current physical state may be. What seems to matter is the shared willingness to put in a good work out.

The air is tinged with the smell of sweat and cleaning solutions, but it is also thick with accomplishment and determination.

A Soldier struggles with 15 pound dumbbells, as the person next to him knocks out twice as many repetitions with 65 pounders. The smaller Soldier looks sheepish as he puts his weights away. The bigger Soldier notices and tells him that he showed good heart and said encouragingly, "Everybody has to start somewhere. Just keep at it." 🇺🇸

Story Ideas?

The *Warhorse Rider* welcomes articles, commentary, and photos from readers. Submissions and requests for further information should be emailed to the editor at carlos.burger@iraq.centcom.mil.

‘Recognizing Change’

Patrol reveals Iraqis seek to improve city

Story & photos by Staff Sgt. Carlos M. Burger, 2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div. PAO

DIWANIYA, Iraq – While conducting a dismounted patrol in Diwaniya, Soldiers from “Beast” Company, 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, were greeted with the signs of any city in Iraq: congested roads, debris everywhere and glares from the populace.

As the patrol continued however, they began to recognize new signs: the roads were congested from all the ongoing construction, the litter was being picked up by garbage men at every turn, and although some citizens glared, most of the people smiled and waved.

The signs were evident that city of Diwaniya is bustling with activity.

“I think it’s great that we saw a lot of people cleaning up, trying to improve,” said Pfc. Mark Windam, with B Co 2-8 IN.

Most of the Soldiers in the platoon, including Windam, are on their first deployment to Iraq and admit that even though they haven’t been here before, they seem surprised that the conditions here are different than what they’ve heard from either the media or those who have been here previously.

“I think there has been a positive change. Hopefully one day this country will be better (for its entire people),” Windam said.

The platoon from B Co. conducted the patrol from an over watch standpoint as soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 30th Brigade, 8th Iraqi Army were in control and dictated how the patrol was conducted. The two groups worked together, as U.S. forces showed the IA soldiers how to conduct various dismounted tactical movement formations.

In fact, the overall ability to conduct improvements on the city can be



Iraqi children wave and greet Pvt. David Couleas, B Co., 2-8IN, 4th Inf. Div., as he moves down the streets of Diwaniya during the patrol.

attributed to the success of the IA and Diwaniya police forces.

“The threat has gone down,” said 1st Lt. John Mullany, platoon leader and native of Gainesville, Va. “The IA has done a great job establishing security around Diwaniya. Every local that we talk to says ‘we’re safe’.”

Mullany added that although there is a large variety in the quality of

training, Diwaniya has become safer overall due to the professionalism and competence of the Iraqi Security Forces.

“Today they were pretty good. They all have great potential and are willing to learn,” he said. “It’s only a matter of time until (the ISF) get on the same page and don’t need us anymore.”

Everclear puts on show for Camp Echo



Rock band Everclear performs their hit song, “Father of Mine,” for the Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division and civilians during their visit to Camp Echo Nov 15. The band stayed around to sign autographs and take pictures with the Soldiers. Photo by Staff Sgt. Carlos M. Burger II, 2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div. PAO

Mother follows son to Iraq

Story & photos by Capt. Adhana McCarthy
204th BSB, 2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

FOB KALSU, Iraq - Most mothers say goodbye to their Soldiers at a going away party, a final family dinner or at the gym hours before they get on the plane to go overseas. For Sgt. Joetta Bridges, 204th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, her goodbye to her son, Sgt. Willie Bridges Jr., came in Baghdad.

The Harrisonburg, La., native and her son had planned their reunion in Baghdad since she discovered she would be stationed at Forward Operating Base Kalsu. The family had not seen each other for 10 months, so when the moment finally came where they would reunite, mother was at a loss for words. She could only describe it as “awesome.”

“From day one, his unit worked with him to make a plan for us to see each other,” she added.

To see her son, however, Joetta fol-



Joetta Bridges and her son, Willie, share a hug during their first reunion moments.



Sgt. Joetta Bridges, and her son Sgt. Willie Bridges Jr., reunite for the first time in 10 months at Camp Striker, Iraq.

lowed a path few mothers have taken.

Joetta was raised in an Army family and enlisted in 2006. It had always been her dream to join the military.

“I missed the (Army) life,” said the 44-year-old Joetta. “One evening, my husband and I were watching the news and saw that the Army raised its age limit to 42. I just looked over at him and smiled. My youngest, Willie Jr., enlisted in 2002 because he wasn’t ready for college,” she added.

Willie did not know that mom had plans to join herself. Her son was surprised, but happy to see his mom join the Army.

“We are already close, this just makes it better,” he said.

When she joined, her eldest son, Tyler, wanted to show support for her decision and he went with his mother to take the entry tests. Tyler wasn’t looking to join the Army, but he ending up taking the tests right along with her. After he saw that she was able to join, he was inspired to join himself. The mother and son went through basic training and advanced individual training together and he is now a private first class stationed in Germany.

As an older enlistee, Joetta did not

have many obstacles integrating into military life.

“I thought that my biggest challenge was going to be with younger people tell me what to do, but they were respectful,” she said.

Once he received news of her upcoming deployment, Willie was initially worried about his mom on the battlefield; however once he knew her location that fear subsided.

“Once I found out where she was going, I felt better, especially since she is so close to me,” he said.

Upon her arrival to Baghdad and see her, Willie was surprised to see his mom recently promoted to sergeant. Although he currently out ranks his mother, he beamed with pride at her accomplishment.

“If she takes the same approach to Soldiers that she took to parenting, she will be an amazing NCO,” he said.

With two sons in the military and a retired Airman as a husband, Joetta had a good sense of military life before she enlisted. She has just one piece of advice for older enlistees. “Come in. If you don’t live your dreams now, you’re going to look back and say, I wish,” she said. 

DEATH FROM ABOVE: CONDUCT AVIATION IN



Soldiers from 4th Bn., 30th Bde., 8th IA Div. and HHC, 2-8 IN, rush to security positions upon dismounting a Black Hawk during aviation integration training at Camp Echo Nov. 15.

Story & photos by Sgt. Rodney Foliante
2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div. PAO

CAMP ECHO, Iraq – Soldiers from 4th Battalion, 30th Brigade, 8th Iraqi Army Division, and 2nd Combined Arms Bn., 8th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Div., began joint aviation integration training Nov. 15 at Camp Echo.

Soldiers primarily trained on boarding and dismounting the UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter in combat scenarios, but also learned of the support capabilities of the Black Hawk and the AH-64 Apache helicopter.

“We’re going over integration

procedures with the air weapons teams and the (transport) elements and the best ways to use each asset,” said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Sam Bennett, 2nd BCT aviation officer. The next phase of the training will involve actual air lift and drop off exercises at different locations.

“The training that we’re doing is for the troops to get familiar with the UH-60 and the AH-64, (their) capabilities and what they can do for (the units),” said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Edward DeGuisto, Co. A, 142nd Aviation Assault Bn., a New York National Guard unit.

He emphasized the importance of the Black Hawk for troop movement and the Apache for fire support and how much units rely upon the air support in a combat theater.

“Most of them have been on Black Hawks before, but it’s always good to have a review from time to time,” said DeGuisto, who comes from LaGrange, N.Y. “It is a safe, secure way to get about the country; it’s quicker and more direct.”

Soldiers reviewed verbal and non-verbal communications and practiced loading and offloading in different mission scenarios in the ‘crawl phase’

IA, U.S. SOLDIERS INTEGRATION TRAINING

of the training, in which the Black Hawk was grounded with the engines turned off.

The training is important because it gets the Soldiers more familiar with boarding and dismounting the Black Hawk quickly under different combat scenarios and levels of duress. The less time the Soldiers take lowers the potential for an enemy attack, said DeGuisto.

Amidst jokes, laughter and appreciation for the helicopters during down-time, the Iraqis and Americans conducted the training with professional determination and a growing cohesion.

“We’re here to help (the Iraqis) and assist them to maintain their democracy,” said Bennett, who comes from Havelock, N.C. For the long-term,

“the training will show them what they can expect when they get their own air assets, how they can better integrate them and what they can use their air assets for on the battlefield.”

Iraqi and American troops training together helps in “showing (the Iraqis) the way we do business and



Soldiers from 4th Bn., 30th Bde., 8th IA Div. and HHC, 2-8 IN, pull security after a hasty dismount from a Black Hawk during aviation integration training.



Soldiers from 4th Bn., 30th Bde., 8th IA Div. and HHC, 2-8 IN, leap from a Black Hawk and pull security an instructor and platoon sergeant bark instructions during aviation integration training.

allowing them to see some of our techniques, tactics and procedures, allowing them to pick up on that,” said Bennett.

The training helped equip the IA Soldiers with knowledge and experience to be more capable in a wider scope of missions, said 2nd Lt. Ala’a, Special Forces Company, 4th Battalion, 8th IA Div.

He also added

that his Soldiers liked training with the helicopters and that the training will benefit his battalion and the working relationship between the two nationalities.

Training together definitely benefitted the Soldiers on an individual and team level, said Staff Sgt. Henry Flores, scout, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2-8 IN, 2nd BCT.

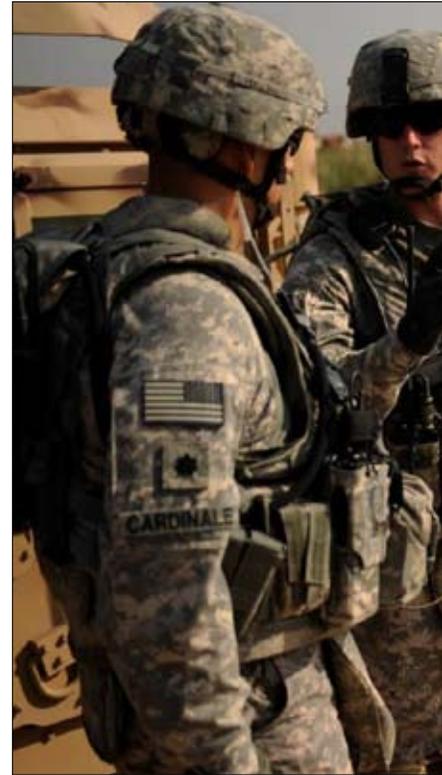
“We’re trying to integrate the IA into our day-to-day training so that for air insertion or any other (missions) we do, that the IA knows what we’re doing and we know what they’re thinking, we’re all on the same page and we’re all fighting the same fight,” said Flores. 



AROUND AO



Retired athletes Bryan Hickerson of the San Francisco Giants, Keith Elias of the New York Giants, and Anthony Telford of the Texas Rangers meet with Soldiers from 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division during their visit to Camp Echo Nov 7. All three athletes are members of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Photo by Sgt. Rodney Foliente, 2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div. PAO.



Capt. Jason Meloy, 2nd Combined Arms Battalion commander, during a patrol of Diwaniya, Iraq. Photos by U.S. Air Force Senior Airman



Soldiers from 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment enjoy an Iraqi meal at FOB McHenry. Photo by Sgt. Rodney Foliente, 2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div. PAO.

WARHORSE



Special Troops Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, speaks with Lt. Col. Doug Cardinale, 2-8 IN Iraq, Nov. 13. U.S. Soldiers patrol to assess the needs of Iraqi residents in the area. Photo by Eric Harris, 1st Combat Camera Squadron



Eleven newly promoted Soldiers from Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, receive applause during a ceremony at Camp Echo Nov. 1. Photo by Sgt. Rodney Foliente, 2nd BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div. PAO



Lt. Col. Fredrick J. Hannah, commander of 204th Brigade Support Battalion, reenlists Staff Sgt. Rebecca J. Book, A Co., 204th BSB, at Al Faw Palace Oct. 17. Book said she wanted her last reenlistment to be somewhere special, so she chose the palace. Photo by Staff Sgt. Troy A. Isakson, 204th BSB, 2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

WARHORSE SOLD THANKSGIVING



Servicemembers and Warhorse Soldiers take pictures and admire the colorful display during a hearty Thanksgiving lunch at Camp Echo.

Story & photos by Sgt. Rodney Foliente
2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div. PAO

CAMP ECHO, Iraq - Servicemembers from all over the camp took part in Thanksgiving Day activities held on Camp Echo Nov. 27.

The day began with a 5-kilometer run, known traditionally as the "turkey trot." After the run, Soldiers gathered in the camp theater for Thanksgiving services held by the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division Chaplain.

The day was capped off with a Thanksgiving luncheon held in the dining facility. Senior leaders from 2BCT, 4 ID, served the Soldiers food and provided a joyous atmosphere that all those deployed at the camp could be thankful for. 



A choir of Soldiers sing during a Thanksgiving service at Camp Echo.

SOLDIERS CELEBRATE AT CAMP ECHO



Command Sgt. Maj. Wade Myers and Lt Col. Leo Cabellero, 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion command team, serve Soldiers at the Thanksgiving luncheon. Leaders from 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, and 2nd BCT STB, 2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div., served Warhorse Soldiers and Camp Echo deployment residents during a hearty Thanksgiving lunch at Camp Echo.

Warhorse Soldiers and Camp Echo contractors start off their morning with the 5-kilometer "Turkey Trot" Run on Thanksgiving here.



Chaos Co. works with Kirkuk ESU

Story & photos by 1st Lt. Christopher Freeborg, 1-67, AR, 2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

KIRKUK, Iraq - For “Chaos” company, 1st Combined Arms Battalion 67th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, the primary effort during this deployment is “the return to normalcy” in Kirkuk City.

Improved security and increased Iraqi capability have directly changed how C Co. conducts operations within the city. The new conditions change how Soldiers conduct themselves, drive in city streets, and orient their weapons during operations. With missions being conducted and led by the Iraqi Security Forces, a handshake, rather than a weapon muzzle has become the preferred method of greeting.

Kirkuk City, located 155 miles north of Baghdad, is the capital of Tamim Province and it sits atop one of Iraq’s key oil producing fields. The Kirkuk fields contain about 12% of Iraq’s established reserves, the world’s third largest supply. The city lies just outside the largely autonomous Kurdistan region. Kurds, Arabs, and Turkmen make up Kirkuk’s three main ethnic groups. The city is also home to Chaldean, Catholic, Christians, and other minorities.

Thousands of Arab families moved to Kirkuk in the 1970s and 1980s under former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein’s “Arabization” policy, which involved the expulsion of Kurds and Turkmen from the province. The challenge for the Government of Iraq is to return all these groups to their original homes and stabilize the region, both physically and economically.

“A large part of the ‘Chaos’ company mission is to partner with the Iraqi Security Forces to help legitimize the security agencies,” said Capt. Pedro Rivera, Chaos Company commander.

“We are also looking to partner with the newly reformed and fragile provincial sub-districts as well as assist with the reconstruction and development of



A Chaos Company Soldier over watches an Iraqi emergency Special Unit Lieutenant as he checks on arrest details.

projects to bring essential services to the people. Additionally, we hope to add stability and security in our area of operation by conducting a combination of non-lethal and lethal operations,” he added.

In partnership with the Iraqi security forces, C Co. conducts four to five missions a week in Kirkuk City with the inner city emergency special unit. Most missions are in support of the legitimization of the Iraqi Security Forces.

“The goal here is to endorse the ISF so the people of Kirkuk feel protected and the citizens can participate in the security of their own towns by notifying the Provincial Joint Control Center or local ISF of terrorist activities,” said Rivera.

This is already happening in many places. All the companies’ cordon, search, tactical call-outs, tactical area search, and security missions inside the city of Kirkuk are led by the ESU with the support of the company.

Currently, all four platoons in Chaos Company conduct operations with the ESU and local IPs. The ESU is commanded by BG Khataub Omer

Aref Al Waly is and composed of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd ESU Brigade.

The ESU can be best described as what we know in the United States as a SWAT Team. The ESU does not own any specific district within the city, however they operate anywhere in the city by executing riot control missions, special assault missions, patrols, and checkpoints to over watch possible “hot-spots” in the area.

Chaos company is partnered with nine inner city police stations, the emergency response unit, two Iraqi Army Battalions, and four sub-district police stations. The main emphasis is to always place the ISF in the lead.

“I was impressed with the ESU’s skills on handling detainees during a platoon tactical call-out where we partnered with them. The house and the family members of the detainees were treated respectfully and ESU was careful not to destroy property.” said Pvt. David Vaught from 3rd platoon.

“I enjoy working with the ESU raid team because of their level of proficiency and because their leadership is solid,” said 1st Lt. Hal Hoogstra, 2nd platoon leader for C Co. 



photo by 1st Lt. Keith Phelan, 2-8 IN, 2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

A 2nd BCT Soldier stands amidst the foundation for one of the new schools to be built in the Qadisiya Province.

2-8IN CMO helps GoI build up country's infrastructure

Story by Capt. LaRue Meehan,
2-8 IN, 2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

CAMP ECHO, Iraq – The civil military operations shop of 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, is adjusting to the dynamics of being involved in civil affairs during the period of transition from U.S. forces to Iraqi control.

The 2-8 CMO is a fairly new staff section and has the mission of conducting projects to support the essential needs: water, electricity, sewage and trash services, and other government services of the Iraqi people.

During this transition period, 2-8 CMO's focus has been to work with the Iraqi government in order to help them provide services for their people. In this way, they can help the Iraqis be more able to sustain themselves once the U.S. no longer has a presence in Iraq.

"In Diwaniyah, I have been working with the Provincial Reconstruction Team to help the Iraqis develop systems that will enable their government to take care of their people," said 1st Lt. Keith Phelan, the 2-8 CMO officer.

The PRT is comprised of civilians from various specialties — State Department personnel and experts in infrastructure development, government, politics and law — who have volunteered to deploy to Iraq and provide whatever knowledge they can to Government of Iraq.

Since arriving in September, the 2-8 CMO section has been integrating with the other brigade assets in order to better grasp the level of infrastructure of the Qadisiya Province, said Phelan.

To assist in the transition period, the CMO was allocated a temporary civil affairs team, which comprises four to six Soldiers that specialize in assessing services and executing projects to benefit the local population.

The temporary team was here for nearly a month before being replaced by a full-time team at the end of October. During that time, they collected data and offered assessment capabilities to help 2-8 IN to better understand the province, said Phelan.

Now that the new team has arrived, the CMO shop has been able to branch out and begin conducting assessments of

the projects begun by the Polish Army prior to the arrival of U.S. forces. The projects have been focused primarily on building the infrastructure and increasing the education opportunities of the local population, Phelan added.



photo by 1st Lt. Keith Phelan, 2-8 IN, 2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

Children take a break from learning in their temporary classroom in the Qadisiya Province recently.

Chaplain's Corner: A Visit from the Chaplain Chief

Photo by Staff Sgt. Carlos M. Burger II, 2BCT, 4ID PAO

CAMP ECHO, Iraq
– Maj. John Kallerson, Chaplain for 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Inf. Div., shows his cross made of steel from the World Trade Centers on Sept. 11, to Maj. Gen. Douglas Carver, U.S. Army Chief of Chaplains during his visit to Camp Echo Nov. 26. The Chaplain showed the Chief of Chaplains the plans and future site of the new Camp Echo Chapel, which is scheduled for construction. The Chief also met with the battalion chaplains, and toured the camp as well. 



Operation Care Package

This month, members of the Cherry Hills Community Church in Highlands Ranch, Colo., donated more than 1,000 care packages to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division to show their support. Photo provided by Connie Kallerson, 2BCT Family Readiness Group Coordinator.



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and have a free cup
of coffee!**

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**Courtesy of your reli-
gious support team**



'Thunder' rolls into CSC Scania

Story & photos by Staff Sgt. Carlos M. Burger II, 2BCT, 4ID PAO

CONVOY SUPPORT CAMP SCANIA, Iraq – After having temporary homes in Forward Operating Bases Adder and Kalsu, the 3rd Battalion, 16th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, finally relocated to their home in CSC Scania Nov. 20.

The 'Thunder' battalion started arriving the week prior and began the transition of authority from the

6th Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 4th BCT, 3rd ID and they will be tasked with improving security in the region, said 2nd Lt. Erik Escobedo, platoon leader from Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 3-16 FA.

The camp offers amenities on par with most of the larger camps, including access to free laundry services, a chapel, a dining facility, a large internet cafe, a phone center, a regional Post Exchange, a coffee shop, local national shops,



Pfc. Daniel Hudgins, a forward observer from HHB 3-16 FA, hits a punching bag at the CSC Scania gym. The base has a combined Morale, Welfare and Recreation facility that includes a gym and a theater inside.



A large chapel is one of the many features offered at CSC Scania.

and a combined Morale, Welfare and Recreation facility that includes a gym and a theater inside. The Soldiers live in containerized housing units, which give them more personal space than tents. Escobedo added that the Soldiers morale has improved now that they are able to settle down.

"Overall, it's better here. We've been moving around a lot and here is a step up from before," he said.

"It's small here and everything is compact, but it's nice living in CHUs instead of tents," added Pfc. Daniel Hudgins, a forward observer from HHB 3-16 FA. 

December Quality of Life Report

Last Month

- * Camp Echo SPAWARS: 20 computers and 5 phones.
- * COP 4 & JSS2 SPAWARS: 5 computers and 3 phones each.
- * Mail arrives every 3-4 days, down from 14 days.

- * Comics Ready to Entertain Tour and band, Everclear performed at Camp Echo in Nov.

Upcoming

- * WWE Tribute to Troops Tour - Dec. 3
- * Hope & Freedom Tour Dec. 20

Happy 91st Birthday Warhorse!

