

Rail lines open • Hope for Noor • Wolfhounds secure Taji

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THE COALITION CHRONICLE

Volume 3, Issue 4

April 2008

Task Force Storm
No signs of slowing down

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THE COALITION CHRONICLE

The Official Magazine of
Multi-National Corps-Iraq

April 2008
Volume 3, Issue 4

MNC-I Commander
Lt. Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III

MNC-I Public Affairs Officer
Col. Billy J. Buckner

MNC-I Command Information Chief
Staff Sgt. Joy Pariante

Editor
Staff Sgt. Jason Krawczyk

Staff Writers
Sgt. Jeremy D. Crisp
Pfc. Eric J. Glassey
Pfc. Eric J. Martinez
Pfc. Christopher M. Gaylord



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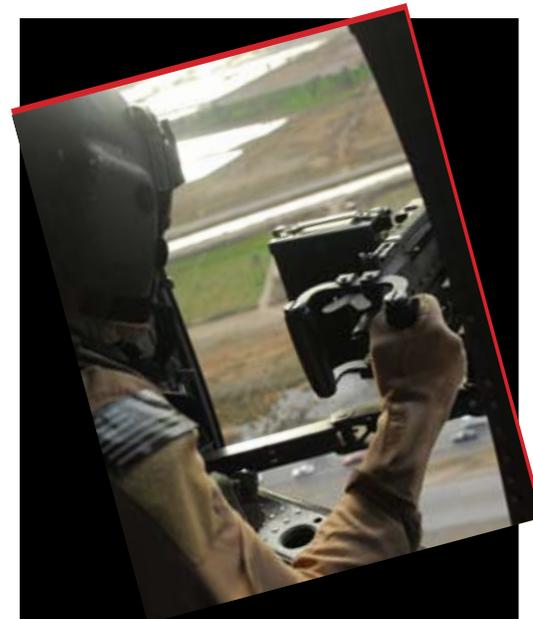
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This month's covers

Up front: Spc. Christopher Gunter, Co. B, 3-158 Aviation mans his weapon on a UH-60 Black Hawk (U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Jason R. Krawczyk 13th Public Affairs Detachment)

back: U.S. Army Lt. Col. Myran Reineke and Capt. Hendrickson from 2nd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division, enjoy lunch with local sheiks. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Michael Hendrickson)

Questions, comments and concerns about The Coalition Chronicle can be addressed via email at jason.krawczyk@iraq.centcom.mil. The Chronicle accepts articles, photos and letters for submission. Send submissions to jason.krawczyk@iraq.centcom.mil. The Chronicle reserves the right to edit for security, accuracy, propriety, clarity and space.

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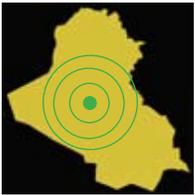


Extremists detained

BAGHDAD – Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers arrested two suspected members of a terrorist cell March 13 in South Baghdad.

A tip led Soldiers of Company C, 4th Battalion, 64th Armored Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division, attached to Task Force Dragon, and Company C, 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, to a building in Saydiyah, where they detained the two alleged terrorists.

The men are believed to be part of a cell that had been producing explosively formed penetrators. ©



National Police find weapons cache

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Iraqi National Police seized a substantial weapons cache March 18 in eastern Baghdad.

NPs from 1st Battalion, 4th Brigade, 1st NP Division, received a tip from a local in the area of a large amount of weapons being stockpiled. The NPs acted on the tip and found 34 107 mm rockets, 44 60 mm mortar rounds, 18 81 mm mortar rounds, 10 rocket-propelled grenades, 38 107 mm rocket fuses, 10 completed rocket sleds and another four partially constructed sleds, three RPG launchers, one 82 mm mortar tube, one 60 mm mortar tube, two RPK machine guns, one Dragonov sniper rifle, numerous 7.62 ammunition rounds, four washing machine timers, four electronic boxes, a large bag of wire and miscellaneous types of batteries.

“Areas in eastern and southern Baghdad have seen an increase in indirect fire attacks, and the confiscation of the rockets and mortars will deplete terrorist and extremist elements of weapons to conduct attacks against innocent civilians and Coalition Forces,” said Brig. Gen. Mike Milano, deputy commanding general for MND-B and the 4th Infantry Division.

“Iraqi Security Forces continue to successfully hunt down and attack al-Qaeda in Iraq and extremists operating with the intention of harming innocent Iraqis. By informing the ISF of these weapons, the local Iraqi undoubtedly saved countless lives by his actions.” ©



Soldiers find two weapons caches in Tarmiya

BAGHDAD – Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers seized weapons and munitions March 11 during ongoing security and stability operations in Tarmiya, which is located northwest of Baghdad.

Soldiers from Company A, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, “Warrior,” 25th Infantry Division, seized the weapons and munitions on a search. Sons of Iraq (Abna al Iraq) volunteers provided information to the 1st Bn., 14th Inf. Regt. Soldiers to help them locate the cache.

“The Abna al Iraq are truly stepping forward to ensure the safety of people of Iraq in their area,” said Maj. Al Hing, spokesperson for 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, “Warrior.” “They provide safety with tips of weapons caches, allowing coalition forces to remove the tools of the terrorists.”

The munitions seized included a Dishka machinegun, five AK-47 rifles, 46 sticks of TNT, a rocket-propelled grenade launcher with rounds and fuses, and various improvised-explosive device making materials.

The SoI volunteers led Soldiers to another cache of homemade explosives in the same area March 10.

An explosive ordnance disposal team performed a controlled detonation at the cache site. ©



Soldiers detain individuals after suspicious activity

BAGHDAD – Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers detained 10 individuals March 6 who are suspected of emplacing improvised-explosive devices.

Soldiers with 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team “Warrior,” 25th Infantry Division, detained the suspects after reports indicated they were involved in suspicious activity.

The suspects were digging trenches across a road traveled by Iraqi Security and Coalition Forces.

The individuals are being held for questioning. ©

CSM's CORNER

I am Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph Allen, XVIII Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg's Command Sergeant Major. I am the incoming Multi-National Corps - Iraq command sergeant major replacing Command Sgt. Maj. Neil Ciotola. Without a doubt, the XVIII Airborne Corps will have some large shoes to fill.

Make no doubt about it, the XVIII Corps is more than up to the task. I am both proud and fortunate to be apart of MNC-I, to work along side some of the bravest men and women in the world. As Lt. Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III and I make our way throughout the battle field, we see first hand the level of trust and confidence Soldiers have in their chains of command. This speaks volumes about the leadership and Soldiers they lead.

We officially took over as the MNC-I command team Feb. 14. Our strategy is simple, to build on the successes that III Corps has already accomplished and to take them to the next level.

In 2005, the Iraqi people received a taste of what it's like to vote in their first free election. This election would have never taken place



**Command Sgt. Maj.
Joseph R. Allen
MNC-I Command Sergeant Major**

without the blood, sweat and tears of our MNC-I Soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines.

This is an election year for us back home, and I want the members of the MNC-I to exercise their rights as citizens of the United States by voting. The Staff Judge Advocate office has a voting assistance officer who trains the unit voting assistance officers. If your units have not appointed a voting assistance officer, please do so. If you have not met your voting assistance officer or registered as an absentee voter, please do so. I want leaders at all levels involved in getting every eligible Soldier, sailor, airman and Marine registered for absentee voting.

Voting is a right and privilege of each eligible service member. Register now, so

your voice will be heard in November's election. You still have the same opportunity as every eligible American citizen in the United States. This is a vote for the next commander in chief and the president of our country. This vote is important to all of us. ☺



**A puppy stares at Staff Sgt. Jeremiah Brennan from Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 32nd Field Artillery Regiment, attached to the 101st Airborne Division, Multi-National Division - Baghdad, while he observes from cover outside a local market in Hateen, Iraq, Feb. 3. As security continues to improve in western Baghdad, Coalition Forces are beginning to step back and watch Iraqi Security Forces take control of their homeland.
(U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Sharhonda R. McCoy,)**

Hope for little one

unit begins lifesaving procedures on Iraqi baby



Capt. Mike Mullaly, 948th Forward Surgical Team carries Noor into the operating room as her mother, Zainab Najy, looks on.

Story and photos by
Sgt. 1st Class Stacy Niles, 214th FB PAO

FORWARD OPERATING BASE DELTA, Iraq - U.S. military doctors began the process of repairing a potentially life-threatening condition for baby Noor, an 8-month-old Iraqi infant, Feb. 8.

Doctors from the 948th Forward Surgical Team, Shelbyville, Ind., performed the first of three procedures to reverse Noor's prolapsed rectum. The procedure involved manually reducing the swelling in the rectum and manipulating it back inside the body. Once the rectum returned to its normal location, the area around the rectum was injected with a highly concentrated dextrose solution. The solution causes scarring that will keep the rectum in its normal position, said Col. Robert Monson, from Provo, Utah, 948th FST commander.

Baby Noor was born with eight inches of her rectum outside of her body and bladder exstrophy, a rare congenital disease in which the bladder opens on the abdominal wall. The condition occurs once in every 30,000 births.

Surgery to repair bladder exstrophy is usually performed within 48 hours after birth. Separation of the pelvic bones also accompanies the condition and can complicate the repair.

The prolapsed rectum had begun to lose its blood supply; if left untreated, the rectum could perforate, resulting in death. The bladder exstrophy can progress to bladder cancer, said Lt. Col. Paul Brisson, an Albany, N.Y., general and pediatric surgeon with the 948th FST. Both conditions are rare in the U.S., said Brisson, and the causes are unknown.

"She is healthy other than these two problems," Brisson said. "Her prognosis could be excellent if we fix these problems, but if we don't there is a good chance she will die of cancer or infection."

"We can fix the rectum here safely, but we do not have the resources for the bladder surgery," Brisson said, adding he is trying to locate an urologist in Baghdad to repair the bladder exstrophy.

On the morning of her procedure, Brisson noted a change in the color of the rectum that he said indicated a reduction in blood flow to the area making the procedure urgent.

Noor was not treated earlier because the doctors in the province lacked equipment to perform the surgery, said Neseer Jemeel, Noor's father. Jemeel brought her to coalition forces because he heard they cared about children.

"It's hard to describe how I feel and how happy I am," he said about Noor receiving treatment from the military doctors.

The day of her procedure both parents were a bit apprehensive about the procedure.

"I have mixed feelings," said Zainab Najy, Noor's mother. "I am worried because this is my baby, but I recognize they have the knowledge and are capable of doing the procedure safely.

"This is the solution for one of two problems," she said. "I will definitely be happy to have the problem fixed, but I am still worried about the other ... I hope they will do something about her bladder."

Jemeel was concerned, but confident in the care Noor would receive. "I also worry about her because she is my baby, but I am sure she is in good hands and will be taken care of," he said.



Zainab Najy holds her daughter.



Taji rail lines open for first time since start of war

As an Iraqi locomotive slowly approaches the gate to Camp Taji, northwest of Baghdad, Soldiers from Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 11th Field Artillery Regiment, 25th Infantry Division, pull open the doors March 5.

Story and photos by Sgt. Jerome Bishop
2nd SBCT PAO, 25th Inf. Div., MND-B

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – The railroad lines of the Taji Qada, north of Baghdad, have laid dormant since the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, but as a result of the efforts of Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers, the first train let loose a thunderous blast of its horn March 5 as it slowly rolled through the gates into Camp Taji.

“This particular train ... is part of a proof of principle,” said Cpt. James Kerns, a Harrison County, Ky., native, who serves as the assistant operations officer for the Base Defense Operations Command, 2nd Battalion, 11th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, “Warrior,” 25th Infantry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad. “(This mission was executed) to facilitate the Iraqi railroad infrastructure improvement so they can, in the future, utilize the train and rail system to carry goods.”

With a functioning rail system, the Iraqi security forces can benefit from the results as well as the people of Iraq.

“It’s an enduring mission. The Iraqi railroads are being put back in, and it’s going to change the face of Taji,” said Maj. Henry McNealy, a Dewey Beach, Del., native, who serves as the operations officer for the BDOC, 2nd Bn., 11th FA Regt. “It’ll become a consistent train; hopefully, over time, the infrastructure of Iraq will be rebuilt.”

The train is a big piece of getting Iraq back on line, McNealy added.



Soldiers watch as an Iraqi locomotive sounds its horn in caution as it slowly crosses the threshold into Camp Taji.

“Every year, something big usually happens – last year it was getting the oil lines back up – the electric lines running again, and this year it’ll probably be getting the rail going all the way from Mosul to Baghdad – being unimpeded by criminal elements,” he said.

Soldiers of the 2nd Bn., 11th FA Regt., took part in the operation by providing security alongside their Iraqi army counterparts.

The leg work, as far as conducting, maintaining and navigating the locomotive to Camp Taji, was performed by the government of Iraq with minimal coalition forces assistance, said Kern.

“We’re facilitating the force protection requirements to bring the train in safely,” he said.

Among the benefits the government of Iraq is likely to gain, getting more equipment from place to place without the requirement of putting Iraqi security or coalition forces on dangerous roads is among the highest.

“This is going to help out a lot if the train makes it every time. If you have two or three guys in a truck, you’ll have 50 guys driving a bunch of smaller trucks. (With the rail system operational), you’ll have less

guys out there on the road and less chances of casualties happening,” said 1st Sgt. Dwalyn Dasher, a Jesup, Ga., native, who serves with Battery A, 2-11 FA Regt. Battery B provided the bulk of the force protection measures at the Camp Taji train yard.

In addition to contributing to military operations throughout the country, a functioning rail system also provides the potential for a larger benefit for the average Iraqi.

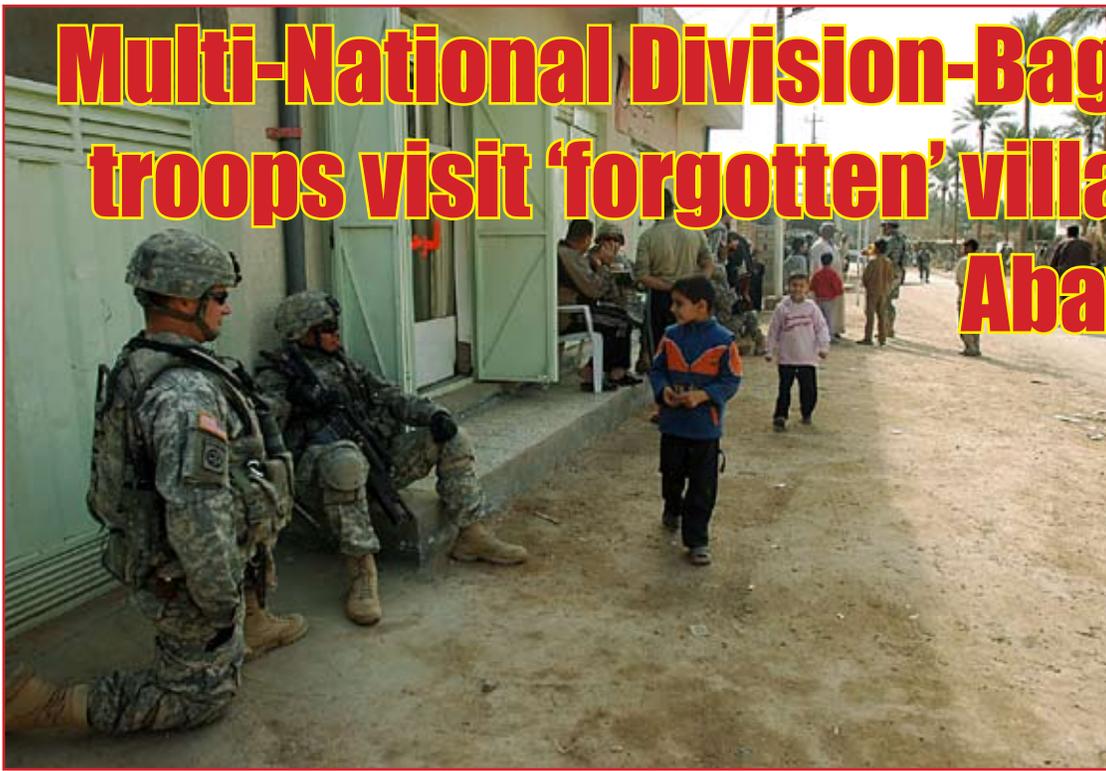
“It’ll bring business into the area; it’s going to bring economic goods into the area, and it’s going to allow the Iraqi Army to facilitate and sustain their own operations in the future – and hopefully, in the not-so-distant future, improve security operations for the Iraqi Army by allowing them to bring military equipment into the area and more sustainment items to Camp Taji and further north into Iraq,” Kern said.

Despite the short-lived spectacle of watching the green and yellow locomotive slowly roll through the almost-abandoned railroad gate, the bellow of the engine’s horn echoed yet another promising addition to the growing lists of successful changes taking place to benefit the future of a free Iraq.



An Iraqi locomotive passes a group of villagers March 5 upon its approach to the rail road gate to Camp Taji, northwest of Baghdad. The event marked the first time a train has arrived at the installation since the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003. Multi-National Division - Baghdad Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 11th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team “Warrior,” 25th Infantry Division, provided force protection measures required for the vehicle to gain access to the coalition forces base.

Multi-National Division-Baghdad troops visit 'forgotten' village Abayachi



Two Soldiers from Company B, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division, rest outside of a barbershop, while village children pass to say hello.

Story and Photos by
Sgt. Jerome Bishop
2nd SBCT PAO, 25th
Inf. Div., MND-B

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – For the first time since the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom, villagers in the town of Abayachi watched as Soldiers from several Multi-National Division – Baghdad units convoyed through their streets in Strykers and up-armored humvees Feb. 28.

The following day, Soldiers from Company B, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team “Warrior,” 25th Infantry Division, as well as elements from Company C, 432nd Civil Affairs Battalion; the 312th Psychological Operational Company; the 411th Military Police Company, 716th MP Battalion,

18th MP Brigade; and the brigade’s embedded Provincial Reconstruction Team, set out to assess the village’s infrastructure.

Their visit also afforded them the opportunity to ask local residents a series of questions, as well as provide them some answers, as they inquired about the possible future for the village.

“This is the first time anyone from the (coalition forces) has been here (in Abayachi) in sometime, so this is really a new opportunity, a new mission and brand new territory,” said Col. Mike Bridges, an Anchorage, Alaska, native, who serves as the deputy team leader and the governance advisor for the embedded Provincial Reconstruction Team working with the 2nd SBCT, 25th Inf. Div.

The village of Abayachi

is located several hours north of Baghdad. At one time, it housed former members of the Baath party. Since the beginning of combat operations in Iraq in 2003, it has been relatively untouched, explained Bridges.

The village assessment took place over the course of three days and focused on the people’s needs as opposed to combat operations.

“This mission specifically is very exploratory in nature,” said Bridges. “The company has come out from the battalion to assess the conditions at Abayachi, and I’m looking at the Nahia and the essential services for our team to see where we can apply the resources of our team to rebuild the community.”

While the patrol is composed of specialized assessment teams working



Soldiers from the Company C, 432nd Civil Affairs Battalion, talk to two local men about the conditions in the village.

toward a common goal, the different components each had their own missions to accomplish.

One team set out to gather atmospheric data on possible concerns related to security and the local economy. It also gathered information to get a feel for their perceptions of coalition forces, the Iraqi police, the Iraqi army and the Iraqi and local governments, said Staff Sgt. Alex Francis, a Lawrenceville, Ga., native, who serves as



2nd Civil Affairs Battalion, talk to
ns of a village water pump.

a Psychological Operations team leader with the 312th PYSOP Company, attached to 1st Bn., 14th Inf. Regt.

"This particular town hasn't had much Coalition presence, so there's a lot of points that we wanted to make like (improvised-explosive device) threats and see if the people have them," said Francis. "This is one where I hope to come back to because this is relatively un-touched ground.

There have been few engagements by Ameri-



Staff Sgt. Alex Francis, a Lawrenceville, Ga., native, talks with a local Shia man from Abayachi about political and living conditions in the town during a village assessment mission

cans, he added. As such, it is basically an untainted territory, which provides the MND-B Soldiers an opportunity to "start from scratch."

During the visit, Francis spoke with a local resident at a gas station and explained to him some of the reasons the MND-B Soldiers were visiting the area.

"I was explaining why Americans were here because we're kind of a spectacle coming in here because we had so many convoys coming in and helicopters in the air the whole time," he explained.

Francis said he also spoke with the man about the benefits of the Sons of Iraq (Abna al-Iraq) and the value they add to the security of the area.

"He had some interesting things to say," said Francis, adding that the man was very open and friendly.

"We even joked about farming, so it was a very good engagement."

Overall, a common consensus among several of the teams reflected a sense of promise for the village. However, they also said they realized there was a lot of work ahead of them.

"It needs some assistance," said Bridges, adding that the team's main goal is to assist the area by helping identify those needs the government of Iraq and coalition forces can focus their efforts.

"The visit today was incredibly positive; we just basically got out in the community and talked to people," he said. "Some of us spent some money in the shops to buy some candy and pencils and handed them out to the kids.

"There were only a few guys gritting their teeth ... but it was a very positive perception. The kids and adults wanted to talk to us

and shake hands."

Despite the multitude of various tasks taking place within a single patrol, the desired end result of the mission for each team was linked together by a common goal.

"(This mission) was all part of a greater scheme, looking at the governance and basic infrastructure of Abayachi, but they were all looking at different things," said 1st Lt. Matthew B. Schardt, a native of Littleton, Colo., who serves as a platoon leader for 1st Platoon, Co. B, 1st Bn., 14th Inf. Regt.

"Some were looking at law enforcement, some were looking at it a culture perspective, and others were looking at it from a basic government perspective. The mission today went extremely well. We accomplished the mission. We saturated Abayachi some follow-up projects to work on," he added.

Storm hits midpoint of current deployment



A UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter, flown by a pilot from Company A, 3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment (Task Force Storm), flies along a river bank in Baghdad

Story and photos by
Sgt. 1st Class Chris Seaton
Task Force XII PAO, MND-B

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – The halfway point came and went quietly somewhere around March 1; most of the members of Task Force Storm however, were too busy to notice.

Task Force Storm is Multi-National Division – Baghdad’s Assault Helicopter Battalion. While other units’ helicopters frequently transit the area, the Black Hawk’s mission in Baghdad belongs solely to the Storm Riders.

The task force is made up primarily of Soldiers and aircraft from the

12th Combat Aviation Brigade’s 3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, and is augmented by Troop S, 4th Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment. Together, the enhanced force package performs multiple missions in support of MND-B.

“We do all types of general support missions as well as the air-assault missions, all within the confines of MND-B,” said Lt. Col. Jay Macklin, a native of Macon, Ga., the unit’s commander. “We pretty much run the full gamut of support with those types of missions, operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week.”

During the battalion’s first few months of deployment, its Soldiers

performed, almost exclusively, air-assault missions while working in support of Multi-National Corps – Iraq. In early December, the Soldiers moved to Camp Taji, where they expanded their horizons in aviation operations with a mission dedicated to Baghdad’s operational environment.

“The first half of the deployment went pretty quick,” said Sgt. Orales Stroud, a Brooklyn, N.Y., native, assigned to Company A, 3-158 Avn. Reg. “The tempo was really high, and we were always on the move.”

“I’m particularly proud of the bravery of the flight crews (during the first half),” said Macklin. “We’ve been in some (tough) situations here, and the ability of the crews to complete their missions, no matter what, has amazed me. We’ve really made a difference in the battlefield here.”

The difference coalition forces have made here, since most of the task force arrived in July is very discernible, said Macklin, also an active pilot in the battalion, adding that he and his Soldiers see it from a unique vantage point.

“As we’ve continued to fly over Baghdad, we’ve really noticed a resurgence of life down on the street,” he said. “You see things like children playing in parks, markets that weren’t there before are now open, and people are out in the streets.

“When you see the normal Iraqi with a family here just wants to live in peace, it makes you feel like you’re really making a difference here and they’re living their lives the way they want to,” he said. “I feel honored to have served and continue to serve here. It’s utterly amazing to watch a city coming to life as you fly over it.”

The next step for the Soldiers is looking ahead to the second half of their 15-month adventure. While they all focus on passing the time quickly so they can get home to



Sgt. Orales Stroud, a Brooklyn, N.Y., native, logs flight information prior to taking off on a mission

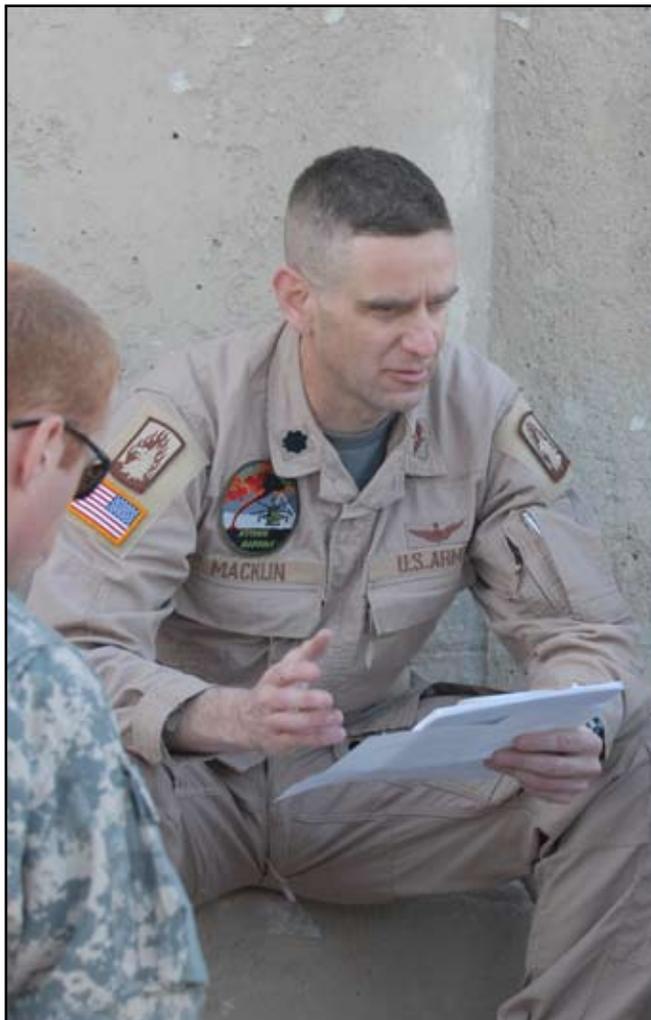
their Families and lives back in Germany, most continue to pursue the goals they brought with them.

“I still want to get promoted to staff sergeant,” said Stroud. “I’m taking college classes, and just became a squad leader, so I want to lead my Soldiers the best I can and continue to learn and grow in my first deployment.”

And though halfway through, the battalion’s had no serious incidents or mishaps to date. However, the Soldiers are reminded every day not to get complacent.

“I think we’re doing a pretty good job, but that’s something you have to stay on constantly,” said Macklin. “It’s a very dynamic environment here in Iraq, and it can change very quickly. We try not to take anything for granted when we fly.

“It can go really good one day and then bad the next,” he said. “So far though, our guys have been good at doing things efficiently as well as safely. That’s what every commander wants.”



Lt. Col. Jay Macklin, commander, Task Force Storm, conducts a pre-flight briefing just prior to taking off on a passenger travel mission over the city of Baghdad March 9. Macklin, a native of Macon, Ga., leads a group of more than 400 Soldiers responsible for UH-60 Black Hawk aviation operations in Multi-National Division - Baghdad. The unit recently passed the half way mark in its 15-month deployment.



An MV22 Osprey prepares to land in Haditha, Iraq, March 7, (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Chad L. Simon)



U.S. Marines with Combat Logistics Battalion 1 use a flamethrower to clear Post Black, in Fallujah, Al Anbar province, Iraq on February 12, 2007. Multi National Force-West in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Iraqi Security Forces, facilitate the development of official rule of law and development of a market based economy centered on Iraq. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Albert F. Hunt)



U.S. Army Soldiers from Heavy Troop, 3rd Squadron, 3rd Armor Cavalry Regiment, talk to an Iraqi girl during a stop in a joint patrol with the Iraqi Army at her house March 1, in Mosul, Iraq. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Jason Robertson)



...the thrower to clear areas of brush aboard Observation
...ary 26. Regimental Combat Team 1 is deployed with
...edom in the Al Anbar province of Iraq to develop Iraqi
...e of law through democratic reforms, and continue the
...aqi reconstruction. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance



Lance Cpl. Jonathan Franks, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regi-
ment, smiles as children follow him while he is on patrol
through the city of Hit, Iraq March 6.
(U.S. Marine Corps photo by Corporal Tyler Hill)



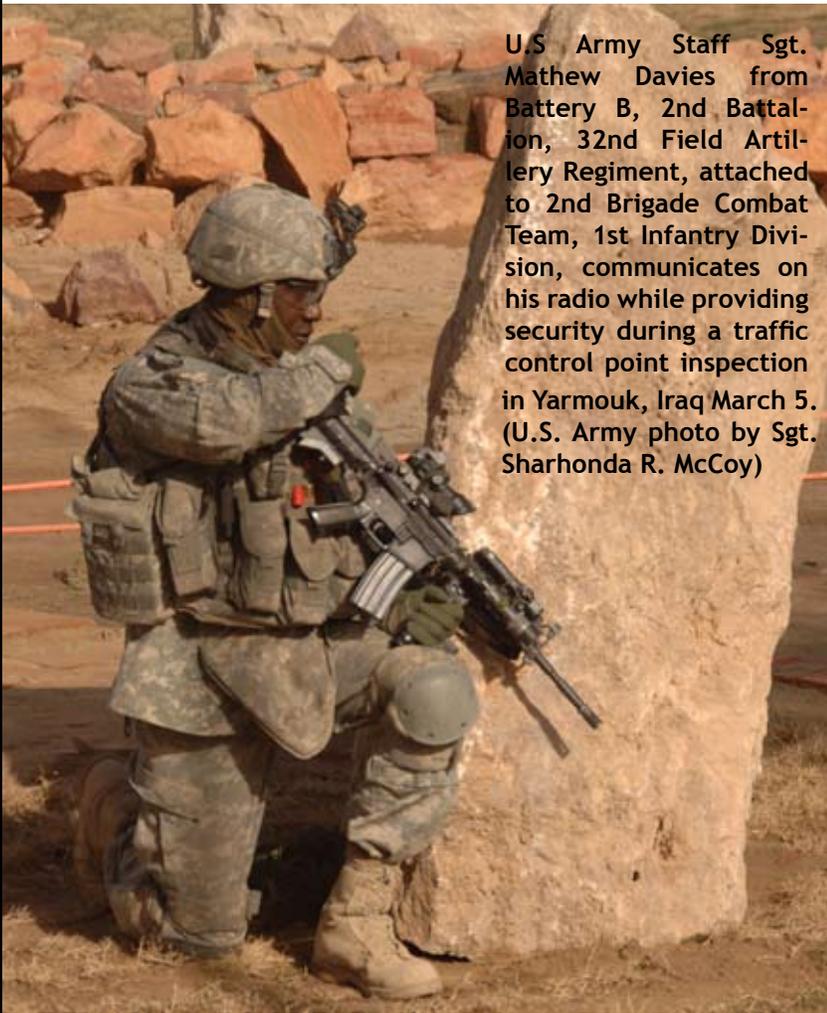
U.S. Army 1st Lt. Alan Boyce of the
1st Battalion, 68th Armor Regiment,
3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th In-
fantry Division, helps conduct a dis-
mounted presence patrol through
the Beida neighborhood of Baghdad,
Iraq, Feb. 29. (U.S. Air Force photo
by Tech. Sgt. Adrian Cadiz)

Freedom's Focal Point





Freedom's Focal Point



U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Mathew Davies from Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 32nd Field Artillery Regiment, attached to 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, communicates on his radio while providing security during a traffic control point inspection in Yarmouk, Iraq March 5. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Sharhonda R. McCoy)



Iraqi and U.S. Army Soldiers unearthed a large weapons cache, comprised of hundreds of munitions and many large weapons systems. A villager who wanted to reconcile, led the Soldiers to the cache in Bani Said, Diyala Province, Iraq, March 3. (U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Sean Mulligan)





A Polish Civil-Military Cooperation official delivers a care package to a patient in the maternity ward of a hospital in Ad Diwaniyah, Iraq, March 6. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Gabriel Reza)



Iraqi police stand in formation before their graduation from classes taught by U.S. Marines with Battery F, 1st Marine Battalion, 10th Marine Regiment and U.S. police officers with Civilian Police Assessment Training Team in the Iraqi Training Center at Camp Fallujah, Al Anbar province, Iraq March 7. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Albert F. Hunt)



U.S. Army Sgt. David Gardner of 2nd Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment walks past an Iraqi flag painted on the barriers while on his way to speak to shop owners in Doura, Al Rashid, Baghdad, Iraq Feb. 28. (U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Greg Pierot)

Freedom's Focal Point



A U.S. Marine with Company K, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines (3/5), Regimental Combat Team 1 (RCT-1) secures a courtyard in the Al Sina'a district of Al Fallujah, Iraq March 5, Marines with 3/5 are conducting missions to insure security and safety for citizens of Al Fallujah. RCT-1 is deployed with Multi National Force-West in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in the Al Anbar province of Iraq to develop Iraqi Security Forces, facilitate the development of official rule of law through democratic reforms, and continue the development of a market based economy centered on Iraqi reconstruction. (U.S.Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Grant T. Walker)



Freedom's Focal Point

Wolfhounds work t

Pfc. Stephen Miller, a Batesville, Ark., native, communicates situation reports to his company and higher headquarters Feb. 26 in the Taji Qada, northwest of Baghdad. Miller is a platoon radio telephone operator from Company A, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment "Wolfhounds," 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team "Warrior," 25th Infantry Division, Multi-National Division - Baghdad. Along with the rest of his unit and the Iraqi Army, the Soldiers help secure the Taji area, which helps afford the Government of Iraq an opportunity to provide essential services to the Iraqi residents in the area.



Cpl. Jared Bruyneel, a San Bernardino native, searches for explosive residue during a search of an improvised-explosive device production facility in the Taji Qada, northwest of Baghdad. Bruyneel is assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, "Wolfhounds," 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, Multi-National Division - Baghdad.

Spc. Michael Miller, a Fort Worth, Texas, native, inspects a house for traces of explosive material Feb. 26 during a search conducted in the Taji Qada, northwest of Baghdad. Homemade explosives are a key ingredient in the production of improvised-explosive devices.



to secure Taji area



Justin Do, a native of Vancouver, Calif., native, checks the interior of a suspected improvised explosive device Feb. 26 in the Taji Qada. Do is an infantryman assigned to the 27th Infantry Regiment Combat Team "Warrior," 25th Infantry Division - Baghdad.



Pvt. Justin Do, a native of Vancouver, Wash., inspects the ground for improvised explosive devices and mines Feb. 26 in the Taji Qada, northwest of Baghdad. Do is assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment "Wolfhounds," 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team "Warrior," 25th Infantry Division, Multi-National Division - Baghdad.



An Iraqi child watches as Staff Sgt. Joseph Brown, an Oswego, N.Y., native, pulls security Feb. 26 in the Taji Qada, northwest of Baghdad. Brown is assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment "Wolfhounds," 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team "Warrior," 25th Infantry Division, Multi-National Division - Baghdad.

Photos by
Sgt. Brad Willeford,
1st Bn., 27th Inf. Regt.,
25th Inf. Div., MND-B

Military police conduct weapons training



Photos by:
Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger,
18th MP Bde. PAO, MND-B



Sgt. Joshua Holland, a native of Bessemer, N.C., demonstrates how to clear the SA-58. Holland is a squad leader with the 401st Military Police Company, 716th Military Police Battalion, 18th Military Police Brigade.

Spc. Gerald Polanco, a native of Del Rio, Texas, helps an Iraqi policeman assemble an SA-58 rifle March 3 during Day 2 of the two-week on-the-job training at the Jamia Iraqi police Station.



Holland points to the selector lever switch on the SA-58 rifle March 3 for Jamia Iraqi policemen.

Cpl. Kristina Andersen, a native of Orlando, Fla., helps an Iraqi policeman disassemble an SA-58 rifle March 3 during Day 2 of the two-week on-the-job training at the Jamia Iraqi police Station.

IN MEMORIAM

NAMES OF COALITION SERVICE MEMBERS WHO DIED WHILE SERVING IN OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM BETWEEN FEBRUARY 16 AND MARCH 15, 2007

February 17, 2008

Spc. Luke S. Runyan, 21
2nd Bat. 23rd Inf. Regt., 2nd Inf.
Div.

Spc. Chad D. Groepper, 21
2nd Bat. 23rd Inf. Regt., 2nd Inf.
Div.

February 20, 2008

Capt. Nathan R. Raudenbush, 25
3rd Bat., 7th Inf. Regt., 3rd Inf. Div.

Spc. Micheal B. Matlock Jr., 21
1st Bat., 502nd Inf. Regt., 101st
Airborne Div.

SSG Bryant W. Mackey, 30
3rd Squad., 3rd Armor Cav. Regt.

Cpl. Albert Bitton, 20
1st Bat., 502nd Inf. Regt., 101st
Airborne Div.

Sgt. Conrad Alvarez, 22
1st Bat., 502nd Inf. Regt., 101st
Airborne Div.

February 21, 2008

Lance Cpl. Drew W. Weaver, 20
3rd Light Armor Recon. Bat., 1st
Marine Div., 1st Marine Exp. Force

February 22, 2008

Spc. Keisha M. Morgan, 25
Div. Spec. Troops Bat., 4th Inf. Div.

February 24, 2008

Spc. Micheal E. Phillips, 19
1st Bat., 502nd Inf. Regt., 101st
Airborne Div.

Spc. Orlando A. Perez, 23
2nd Squad., 2nd Cav. Regt.

February 25, 2008

Spc. Kevin S. Mowl, 22
2nd Bat., 3rd Inf. Regt., 2nd Inf.
Div.

**GREATER
LOVE HATH
NO MAN THAN
THIS: THAT
A MAN LAY
DOWN HIS
LIFE FOR HIS
FRIENDS.
JOHN 15:13**

February 29, 2008

Sgt. Duane "Baz" Barwood, 41
attached to 903 Exp., Air Wing,
Royal Air Force

March 3, 2008

SSG. Christopher S. Frost, 24
377th Air Base Wing

March 7, 2008

Cpl. Jose A. Paniagua-Morales, 22
4th Bat., 9th Inf. Regt., 2nd Inf. Div.

March 10, 2008

Capt. Torre R. Mallard, 27
2nd Squad., 3rd Armor Cav. Regt.
Spc. Donald A. Burkett, 24
2nd Squad., 3rd Armor Cav. Regt.
Sgt. Phillip R. Anderson, 28
2nd squad., 3rd Armor Cav. Regt.

March 11, 2008

SSG. Laurent J. West, 32
3rd Squadron, 73rd Cav. Regt.,
1st BCT, 82nd Airborne Div.

March 12, 2008

SSG. Juantrea T. Bradley, 28
7th STB, 7th Sustainment Bri-
gade, 10th Mountain Div.
Spc. Dustin C. Jackson, 21
350th Adjutant General Com-
pany, Army Reserve

March 15, 2008

Cpl. William D. O'Brien, 19 1st
Bat., 28th Inf. Regt., 4th BCT, 1st
Inf. Div.





*Trust men and they will
be true to you; treat
them greatly, and they
will show themselves
great.*

Ralph Waldo Emerson