

EXPEDITIONARY TIMES

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Vol. 2, Issue 30

ESTABLISHING NORMALCY



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SITUATIONAL AWARENESS



TF 161 Trains Replacements on IED Scenarios
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Logistics "Heavy Hitters" Pages 12-13

U.S. Army Photo by Spc. Brian Barbour

Senior logisticians from all branches of service received a briefing by Spc. Shane Geesey, from Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 161st Infantry Regiment (Washington Army National Guard) on his company's convoy experiences at Joint Base Balad, Iraq July 23. The senior leaders traveled from all parts of the world for a logistics conference to discuss the ongoing drawdown efforts in Iraq.

Forward Redistribution Point Saves Taxpayer Dollars

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SPC. KIYOSHI C. FREEMAN
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Shipping containers arrive here every day at the Forward Redistribution Point, filled to the brim with every imaginable item: toilet paper, pens, pencils, turbine engines, humvee repair parts, even a rock climbing wall.

As Coalition forces con-

tinue their responsible drawdown from Iraq and close bases, Mobile Redistribution Teams comb installations looking for excess property. The items are then containerized and shipped to the FRP here for further processing.

"Up to three years ago, these items stayed behind or sometimes ended up in a burn pit, because there simply wasn't a good means to redistribute them," said Air Force Capt. Michael J.



See **FRP SAVES DOLLARS**,
Page 5

Spc. Matt W. Young, far right, of Tulsa, Okla., sorts and counts excess inventory items at the Forward Redistribution Point at Joint Base Balad, Iraq July 15. The Forward Redistribution Point currently oversees approximately \$350 million worth of inventory.

332 ESFS Blotter

July 16 - July 22

THEFT OF GOVERNMENT PROPERTY:

A victim entered the law enforcement office and reported missing property. The victim stated, via AF IMT 1168/Statement of Complainant, he purchased eight (8) items each of the property at 1632 hours and delivered them at 1640 hours for shipment to Forward Operating Base Warrior (Kirkuk). At approximately 1705 hours, the victim released the property to the forklift operator. The forklift operator returned and told the victim the property was missing. Victim stated when he parked his vehicle there were (8) of the property in the back of his pick-up and still in their original packaging.

THEFT OF UNSECURE PRIVATE PROPERTY:

A victim walked into the law enforcement office and reported a theft. Security forces assisted the victim in completing an AF IMT 1168/Statement of Complainant. The victim stated while attending an Army Combative class, he left his property on a desk. When he returned the property was missing. The victim further stated the property was left unsecured.

MAJOR VEHICLE COLLISION/GOV-GOV:

A vehicle driver #1 telephoned the law enforcement office and related a major vehicle collision occurred. Security forces were briefed and dispatched. SF arrived on scene and determined the collision to be a major vehicle collision. The vehicle driver #1 stated via AF Form 1168 Statement of Complainant, he was traveling westbound on All American Drive when he struck vehicle #2 causing damage, while negotiating a left hand turn onto Washington Avenue. The vehicle driver #2 stated via AF Form 1168 Statement of Complainant, was traveling eastbound on Washington Ave. while turning onto All American Dr., when the vehicle #1 crossed the center line. The vehicle for driver #1 and driver #2 sustained no injuries.

NIPR: 443-8602

SIPR: 241-1171

Email: PMOdesk@iraq.centcom.mil

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alone

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EXPEDITIONARY TIMES

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Mission Statement: The Expeditionary Times Staff publishes a weekly newspaper with a primary mission of providing command information to all Servicemembers, partners, and Families of the 3rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) team and a secondary mission of providing a means for units on Joint Base Balad to disseminate command information to their audiences.

Chaplain's Corner

"Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery. And today? Today is a gift. That's why we call it the present."--

Babatunde Olatunji

Imagine what it would be like if every day were Christmas. Imagine getting up every morning and finding a big box with shiny wrapping paper and your name written on the label. Imagine that inside the box there was a gift of twenty four hours, untouched, brand new, waiting to be used to the fullest.

Very few people realize what a gift today really is. Instead, we drag ourselves out of bed in the morning and complain about how much work we have to do, or how bored we are, or that nobody cares about us or that life isn't fair.

The truth is that each day starts out the same for every person. We all begin with a gift of 24 "never been used" hours. The question we must answer is this: "What will we do with this wonderful gift?" Will we fritter it away throughout the day on meaningless activities or will we invest it wisely in the things that matter most?

Life is too short to waste time, too short to be filled with bitterness, too short to complain about what might have been. We cannot get yesterday back. We don't have the guarantee of tomorrow. All we have is today and yet that is more than enough.

Today we can thank God for the precious gift of time. Today we can tell someone that we love them. Today we can go to work and give it our very best shot. Today we can enjoy the company of friends. Today we can celebrate all that is good. Today we can unwrap a beautiful gift and start to really live. Today.

Submitted by CH (Maj.) Peter Strong
Brigade Chaplain, 304th Sustainment Brigade

HOOAH OF THE WEEK



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Brian A. Barbour

Master Sgt. Sophia A. Mendoza is congratulated by Brig. Gen. Michael J. Lally, 3rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) commanding general for being selected this week's Hooah of the Week at Joint Base Balad, Iraq July 25. Mendoza, from Santa Monica, Calif., and member of the 63rd Regional Readiness Command, works as the 3rd ESC finance/human resources operations cell noncommissioned officer in charge, was recognized for organizing the 3rd ESC human resources conference held at Joint Base Balad for its subordinate brigades S1 leaders.

How to nominate a "Hooah of the Week"

Nominations must be turned in to Sgt. 1st Class Caprice Walker by 1:00 p.m. on Wednesdays.

For any questions, to request a nomination form or to submit a service member's name for nomination, e-mail: caprice.walker@iraq.centcom.mil.



"The Weekly Standard"



New Uniform Policy

The new Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I) uniform policy was recently published with an effective date of July 2009. There is one significant change that affects Soldiers. Wear of the Army tan t-shirt is changed and is now strictly for wear during physical training only. That means the tan t-shirt cannot be worn to the DFAC, PX, theatre or any other location except for physical training. It is not excusable to wear the tan t-shirt into the DFAC or any other location before or after physical training. The policy is clear.

Other violations can be seen on a daily basis though they are not new standards. Soldiers are reminded that the only kind of authorized bracelets are medical bracelets and the POW/MIA/KIA bracelets. The "Live Strong" and 550 cord bracelets are not authorized.

Leaders are reminded that the wear of the combat patch is optional. Soldiers have the choice of which combat patch to wear so long as it is authorized. The Soldier can also choose not to wear one at all. Another part of the uniform that is often forgotten is the weapon. All military personnel must carry their personal weapon and one magazine of ammunition except while conducting physical training.

Lastly, we as leaders are charged with setting and enforcing standards. Doing so helps promote unit discipline and is a sign of a well led unit. Please call your local Inspectors General office with any questions regarding the MNF-I uniform policy.

By Maj. Scott Peters
3d ESC Inspector General

Our organization is comprised of nine Inspectors General dispersed throughout the 3rd ESC area of operations with five offices; each one co-located with a Sustainment Brigade in order to provide the command with the best possible support.

Joint Base Balad (304th SB): DSN 433-2125
MAJ Lee Kemp (Command Inspector General)
MAJ Scott Peters (Deputy)
SFC Aaron Loos (NCOIC)
SFC Danilo Egudin
SFC Javier Cruz

Q-West (16th SB): DSN 827-6115
LTC Kyle Peterson
Taji (10th SB): DSN 834-3079
SFC Tamera Wynn
Adder/Tallil (287th SB): DSN 833-1710
LTC Melanie Meier
Al Asad (321st SB): DSN 440-7049
LTC Timothy Norton

JBB Airmen, Iraqi children get a kick out of donations: Stateside fraternity donates soccer balls to Iraqi children

BY SENIOR AIRMAN
ANDRIA J. ALLMOND
332nd AEW Public Affairs

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq -- Airmen and Soldiers here aided in fostering strong relationships with Iraqi citizens by delivering donations from a stateside fraternity to be given to Iraqi children who live near the base July 14 - 15.

The Pennsylvania State University chapter of the social fraternity Phi Kappa Tau supports programs which increase the quality of life for terminally ill children. Through their program Kicks 4 Kids, along with some inquiring by Capt. Craig Bryan, Expeditionary Aeromedicine Squadron psychologist and PKT alumnus, they were able to collect approximately 300 soccer balls to be distributed to Iraqi children via the support of JBB service members.

"Kicks 4 Kids is an annual soccer tournament hosted by the PSU chapter of the Phi Kappa Tau fraternity," said Bryan, who was once president of the University of Evansville chapter, Ind., for two years. "It was designed as a philanthropy event to raise money for an international network of summer camp facilities for terminally ill children...allowing these children the opportunity to participate in

typical summer camp activities despite their illnesses."

Months prior to the donations Bryan was having lunch with Capt. Laura Dart, 532nd Expeditionary Security Forces medical officer, she mentioned that Iraqi children were asking the 532nd ESFS for soccer balls when the Airmen were outside the wire on patrol.

"She commented that she wished she had some soccer balls to hand out to the kids, so I told her I'd e-mail some friends back in the States to see if they could send some," said Bryan. "I e-mailed a few of my fraternity brothers and told them the story. I asked if they'd be willing to get some soccer balls for us. One of them wrote back and said 'We're on it...we'll get you some soccer balls.'"

After Bryan made contact them, the PKT brothers hosting the event sent an e-mail to the 200 participating team coaches a month prior to the event. They requested each bring one deflated soccer ball and air pump to the event registration. The request was also posted on the Kicks 4 Kids Web site.

Bryan said the boxes started arriving shortly thereafter.

"They just kept coming," he said. "My initial reaction was, 'What am I going to do with all these soccer balls?'"

Bryan contacted Kids of Iraq, a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of Iraqi children by fulfilling their basic needs and providing a brighter future. They accepted the majority of the contributed balls and inflated them.

"We met at Troy's place and there were boxes and boxes of these soccer balls to inflate," said Airman 1st Class Jefferson Aguiar, 727th Expeditionary Air Control Squadron radar maintenance apprentice.

Due to the large amount of donations, Bryan coordi-



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Chris Hubenthal

Airman 1st Class Jefferson Aguiar of the 727th Expeditionary Air Control Squadron inflates a soccer ball at Troy's Place July 15. The Pennsylvania State University chapter of the Phi Kappa Tau fraternity sponsored a donation drive at a soccer tournament in June, and then shipped the soccer balls here for distribution.

nated multiple methods to distribute the soccer balls.

Some were kept in the intensive care ward at the base hospital and given out to pediatric patients, while a number were given to Army Spc. Nazha Lakrik, who is assigned to the 1st Medical Squadron medical control center, he said.

"Certain days of the week, the (local nationals) on base come in for their follow-up appointments," said Lakrik. "I know a lot of them are parents, so I make up goodybags of items for them to give to their children, like books and school supplies. When I heard

that Bryan had extra soccer balls, I asked if I could have some to put in my bags."

The remainder were given to the 532nd ESFS quick reaction force for distribution to Iraqi children while on patrol in areas surrounding JBB.

"I think where we're at right now in our operations in Iraq, building strong relationship with the citizens is what's most important," said Bryan. "Combat action will only go so far, especially during a stage that is 100 percent about building lasting, trusting relationships with the people."



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Chris Hubenthal

Capt. Jason Glanovsky of the 727th Expeditionary Air Control Squadron loads soccer balls into boxes here July 14 to be distributed to Iraqi children living near Balad July 15. The Pennsylvania State University chapter of the Phi Kappa Tau fraternity sponsored a donation drive at a soccer tournament in June, and then shipped the balls here for distribution to children near Balad.

FRP SAVES DOLLARS Continued from page one

Sander, MRT 1, officer in charge.

This is where the FRP comes in, said 1st Lt. Spencer R. Taylor, the accountability officer, 910th Quartermaster Company. He likened the FRP to a middleman for all the warehouses and MRTs in Iraq, a hub for excess inventory.

Each shipping container of excess property at the FRP is opened and every item is individually unpacked, processed and accounted for, said Spc. Tyeicha Nesbitt, 910th QM Co. It's a meticulous, time-consuming procedure, and a shipping container typically takes a week to empty and process, all of which is done by hand.

Their workload increased, she added, due to the recent Security Agreement, which mandated the withdrawal of Coalition forces from cities by June 30.

"Due to the (bases) closing down, they're taking all [excess] inventory and sending it over here," said the West Point, Miss. native.

It's a significant challenge, admitted Taylor, of Tupelo, Miss., especially when Soldiers must sift through a mountain of items to find the one or two which are still serviceable.

"With the big drawdown, everything will funnel and bottleneck here—which is a slow process to go through but one we feel is necessary in order to save (taxpayer) money and best utilize the equipment here (in theater)," Taylor said.

The FRP determines the serviceability of excess inventory, which is then either stored or shipped to where it is needed in Iraq or Afghanistan, he said. In this way, approximately \$3.4 billion worth of serviceable inventory items have been recovered and reused, reducing wastage.



Soldiers of the 910th Quartermaster Company sort and count excess items at the Forward Redistribution Point at Joint Base Balad, Iraq July 15. As Coalition bases close around Iraq, excess inventory is sent here for processing and redistribution, saving taxpayers millions of dollars.

"Any time you're taking something that would have been shipped out of Iraq, and you're taking it and redirecting it to the Soldiers, you're saving the taxpayers money," he said. "Really, anything and everything can come through here."

In addition to saving taxpayer's money and

facilitating the responsible drawdown of Coalition forces, the FRP also partners with Iraqis, Taylor said. The 910th QM Co. mentors Iraqi logisticians and utilizes the Iraqi Transportation Network to move unserviceable inventory to Kuwait, which encourages the development of Iraq's infrastructure.

MNF-I Commander visits 3^d ESC

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SPC. MICHAEL BEHLIN
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Gen. Ray Odierno, Multi-National Force – Iraq commander, visited the 3^d Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) here, July 21.

Escorted by Brig. Gen. Michael J. Lally, 3^d ESC commanding general, Odierno received a tour of the 3^d ESC headquarters, where he recognized several Soldiers in the process.

During the visit, Odierno was briefed on operations run by the 3^d ESC's joint operations center as well as the support operations fusion cell.

Odierno thanked the 3^d ESC's Soldiers for their hard work during

their 15-month deployment and assured them that MNF-I does not take for granted the sustainment support that the command supplies.

"The ESC is carrying out today's mission efficiently and professionally, and thinking ahead to how to carry out redeployment," said Odierno. "Thanks to the ESC for all the hard work you do across a large theater and battlespace."

"You all continue to make the complex look easy," he added.

Odierno was also briefed by Lally on the 3^d ESC's operation-covering the mission expected of the ESC in the future. Odierno stated that with the frequently changing environment in Iraq, Coalition forces will continue to need the leadership of the ESC for sustainment.

Before departing, Odierno presented coins to Soldiers hand-selected by the command for their contributions to the command's mission.

"Thank you for your service and the hard work you do on a daily basis," Odierno told the awardees.



Multi-National Force – Iraq commander, Gen. Ray Odierno, is briefed by 3^d Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) commanding general, Brig. Gen. Michael J. Lally, during his visit the 3^d ESC headquarters at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, July 21. While at the 3^d ESC headquarters, Odierno was briefed on the command's practices, procedures and successes during its 15-month deployment to Iraq.

On the Web

3D SUSTAINMENT COMMAND
(EXPEDITIONARY)

<http://www.army.mil/3rdesc>

ESC units complying with new standards

BY SPC. MICHAEL BEHLIN
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Since the June 30th withdrawal of troops from Iraq's cities, subordinate brigades of the 3^d Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) have made several adjustments to comply with standards outlined in the U.S./Iraq Security Agreement.

With the 3^d ESC serving as the senior logistics headquarters under Multi-National Corps-Iraq, much of the command's mission depends on being able to deliver all classes of supply using Iraq's roads.

Because of the Security Agreement, the 3^d ESC's convoy security companies and transporters are adjusting their tactics, techniques and procedures to share the road with Iraqis while conducting missions.

One of the most recent adjustments has been the limited use of sirens and lights by U.S. military convoys traveling throughout the country.

"We are limiting the times and situations

in which we use lights and sirens," said Maj. Christine C. Borgognoni, a 3^d ESC force protection officer and San Francisco native. "We used to use them as a matter of convenience, but no more. Now, we only use sirens as we would in the United States, when you would really have to warn the public of a problem."

Borgognoni listed possible reasons for using either as restricting an area because of an IED, MEDEVAC situations and when it's in the best interest of civilians and Coalition forces to promote safety.

"We're not taking away a convoy commander's flexibility, but we're just providing strict guidance to help everyone not use them (lights and sirens) as a matter of convenience," said Borgognoni. "This is just the next step to returning the roads to the Iraqi people so that they feel safer driving on their roads with us."

The concept of "sharing the road" is nothing new to Iraq as British Soldiers have conducted similar operations in southern Iraq. What they found with these operations was that insurgents didn't target convoys because of the civilian traffic surrounding them.

While this method worked in Iraq's southern

region, it has not gone without growing pains in other areas upon implementation.

"Being a driver, I have noticed the changes and differences since we've begun to share the road more with the Iraqis," said Spc. James Ham, a driver with Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 161st Infantry Regiment, Washington Army National Guard. "They're (Iraqis) are not as afraid as they once were to drive near our convoys. There's still situations where we would have to restrict access, but for the most part we've been able to adjust."

For future operations, Borgognoni explained that getting the information out to the local populace would be very important. Especially the standard and style of lights that would be used throughout the Iraqi theater. For now, that standard will be red and white flashing lights, similar to what's used in America.

"Red and white flashing lights tend to be a recognized symbol that Iraqis are already familiar with," said Borgognoni. "Similar to when we drive in America, you see red and white lights, you understand that something is happening that you may not want to be a part of."

Safety Topic of the Week

MRAP
MaxxPro...

LOOSE SENSOR WIRE

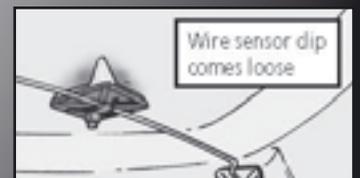
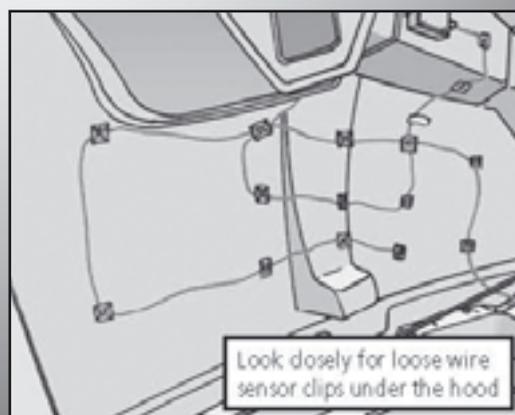
Courtesy of PS Magazine. For service members using Army equipment needing more information for ongoing equipment issues and challenges, visit PS Magazine online:
<https://www.logsa.army.mil/psmag/psonline.cfm>

MRAP users, a loose sensor wire can cause the engine fire suppression system (FSS) to activate—without warning—while your MaxxPro is running.

When this happens, you'll hear a loud explosion go off under the hood, followed by a fine, gray chemical dust that covers the engine and everything else nearby. Talk about a mess!

Here's the problem: high operating temperatures in SWA cause the wire's sensor clips to come loose or just fall off. A loose wire that touches the engine makes the suppression system do its thing—that is, go off!

So, eyeball the sensor clips to see if they're loose. Find a loose clip? If so, use a 3/16-in diameter rivet, NSN 5320-01-232-7730, and rivet the clip back in place. Then use sealant, NSN 8040-01-010-8758, to seal both sides of the sensor clip, under and on top of the hood. For more information, see TACOM MAM 08-056.



SAFETY



3^d ESC Soldiers train two BCTs entering Iraq

BY 3^d ESC
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Soldiers of the 3^d Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)'s Command and Control (C2) Cell here are busy training two National Guard brigade combat teams before they enter Iraq.

The training received by the Oregon-based 41st BCT and Mississippi-based 155th BCT is in addition to the training incoming units normally receive. The training is unique because it has brought nearly 100 vehicles and 175 experienced trainers from across Iraq to Kuwait, and includes training

on vehicles not readily available for training in the states.

“As leaders we have a responsibility to make sure we have a trained and ready force,” said Maj. Matthew W. Welch, the officer in charge of the 3^d ESC's C2 cell here. “Bringing them to Kuwait, we can train them in a controlled environment before we send them into harm's way.”

Bringing together so many trainers, maintainers and operators from across Iraq to conduct the training also meant getting them on the same page.

“We had to synchronize them as one unit, with the vision that we had for training these Soldiers,” Welch said.

The cell alone is comprised of 22 Soldiers but is augmented by a constant stream of trainers brought from Iraq to train the

units that will replace theirs.

By the time each brigade leaves Kuwait, they will have driven more than 35,000 miles – about 1,700 miles per company in just two weeks of training.

For the Soldiers of the incoming BCTs, training is broken into three phases and includes a three-mile driver's course on Camp Buehring and a 22-kilometer stretch of road off base known as Army Supply Route Aspen.

Training the incoming BCTs has not come without some difficulties. Weather, for one, has caused problems. High winds and frequent dust storms have canceled or postponed some off-base training.

“The trainers have to stay constantly prepared to seize those opportunities to get out on ASR Aspen to train,” said Sgt. 1st Class

Shawn A. Frommeyer, the C2 cell battle NCO.

Running the C2 cell also requires a lot of communication and coordination between units in training and the various agencies and offices on base.

“It's constant coordination, constant link ups, constant de-confliction,” Frommeyer said.

With the 155th BCT already out the door, the C2 cell is now focused on getting the 41st BCT prepared for its missions in Iraq.

Welch said so far the feedback from the units trained has been very positive.

“They spoke highly of the trainers that are here and said that they knew their equipment and they shared their experiences in Iraq and the Soldiers being trained thought they'd be very helpful,” Welch said.

Sustainment Bn., mission complete, with courage

BY MAJ. GREG ATWOOD
UPAR, 620TH CSSB, 10TH SUST. BDE.

VICTORY BASE COMPLEX, Iraq – The Rockville, Md., 398th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion conducted a transfer of authority ceremony with the 620th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion from St. Louis, Mo., here July 2.

The 398th CSSB, led by Lt. Col. William C. Arther III, an Eldersburg, Md., native and Command Sgt. Maj. Ronald C. Merritt, of Rockville, Md., cased their battalion colors to formally complete the unit's mission in Iraq.

Arther said to his troops, “Especially to the officers, noncommissioned officers and Soldiers of battalion headquarters, I want to give my thanks and my deepest appreciation for the

outstanding job well done. We started together over a year ago from many when we arrived and are leaving together as one team.”

He continued by wishing the 620th CSSB, “The best of luck and a successful, completed mission to also include a deployment back to your Families soon.”

The 620th CSSB uncased their colors to formally accept the mission from the 398th CSSB, and led by Lt. Col. Douglas H. Stubbe, of Webster, Wis., and Command Sgt. Maj. Ricky A. Elcan, a native from St. Louis, Mo.

Stubbe thanked the 398th CSSB, “As we prepared to come over and take this mission from you.” He said they will continue the excellent service that the 398th had already established.

The ceremony ended with the singing of the Army Song by all Soldiers present. Other leaders present were Lt. Col. Robert J. Dixon, commander of the 260th CSSB.

Sustainers take control of warehouse

BY 1ST LT. CHAUNCEY L. PARKER
UPAR, 639TH QM CO., 10TH SUST. BDE.

VICTORY BASE COMPLEX, Iraq – Soldiers of the 639th Quartermaster Company partnered to manage the East Liberty Supply Support Activity warehouse, an array of supply items for base customers here and the surrounding camps and forward operating bases.

Sixteen Soldiers from Kallispell, Libby and Havre, Mont., partnered with 14 civilian contractors and collectively operate a warehouse consisting of inventories, processing, receiving and issuing over 6,000 stock items.

The yard is divided into five sections: issue, receiving, storage, stock control and turn-in/shipping. Each section is dependent on each other and has one goal in common to accomplish the mission and supply the force.

Customer service, a key part of their mission, is one way of ensuring customers receive their products in a timely manner.

The section is always in high demand and every Soldier must keep the operation moving. The supply yard can have up to 70 air-pallets dropped and four trucks full of supplies being delivered in one day. The Soldiers continue to support their customers by delivering the warehouse items and work through the continuous flow of freights.

Despite the challenges, the Soldiers will continue to supply the Coalition forces with supplies.

Check CHUsdays

Each TUESDAY Check The Following in Your CHU

1. Power strips are free of debris and clothing
2. Electrical devices not in use are unplugged
3. Power strips and outlets are not overloaded
4. Smoke detector is operational
5. Fire extinguisher is serviceable (in the green)
6. Room is neat and orderly

Do you have a story idea?

Contact the Expeditionary Times
expeditionarytimes@iraq.centcom.mil

Sustainers, Al Seqir partner to move cargo around Iraq

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SPC. KIYOSHI C. FREEMAN
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Soldiers of the 49th Transportation Battalion, a subordinate unit of the 3rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), control and track all ground and air movements around Iraq daily in support of Coalition forces.

The 49th Trans. Bn., from Fort Hood, Texas, also plays a role in encouraging the development of Iraq's commercial trucking industry by capitalizing on Al Seqir, said Lt. Col. Peter M. Haas, commanding officer, 49th Trans. Bn. A consortium of tribally owned trucking

companies, Al Seqir provides the Coalition with another option for moving cargo around Iraq, in addition to military and civilian-contracted convoys.

"It's an additional capability to what we brought into country ourselves," Haas said, referring to Al Seqir. "We're going to need more transportation (assets) as we downsize and take all this (equipment) out."

Al Seqir was used extensively when smaller contingency operating bases and joint security stations were closed in accordance with the Security Agreement, he said. The Iraqi trucking companies moved T-walls, barriers and construction equipment, primarily.

The concept of private trucking companies is new to Iraq, explained Capt. Carey Menifee, the 3rd ESC's lead planner for the Iraqi Transportation Network, of which Al Seqir is one facet. Before, under the reign of Saddam Hussein, trucking was controlled by Iraq's Ministry of Transportation.

The Commercial Movement Division was created, in part, to centralize and simplify the process of moving cargo and to promote the use of Al Seqir, said Capt. Jeffrey A. Doyle, 1177th Movement Control Team and officer in

An Iraqi driver prepares chai tea while waiting in a queue of trucks at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq Jan. 23. The driver works for an Iraqi company which is part of the Iraqi Transportation Network, a consortium of trucking companies owned and operated by Iraqi tribes.



Iraqi drivers wait in a queue to load their trucks with cargo destined for Coalition forces at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, Jan. 23. The Iraqi Transportation Network, with its fleet of trucks owned and operated by Iraqi tribes, is taking over more and more sustainment operations in support of Coalition forces throughout Anbar province.

charge of the CMD.

Previously, the process was very confusing, and required customers to do most of the leg work, he said. Now, the process is integrated into the military system, meaning customers submit movement requests and sustainment units determine how best to transport the cargo.

Compared to military convoys, Al Seqir offers several advantages, Haas said. Unlike Coalition convoys, Iraqi trucking companies are not limited to certain routes or times of the day when they're allowed to operate, and they can travel individually if necessary.

"That's actually what makes Al Seqir desirable for the future," said Doyle, a native of San Diego, Calif. "Just like any trucking company, they're picking up their cargo. We don't have to worry about security, recovery; we don't have to clear routes for them."

Thus far, he said, there have been no major issues of theft or insurgent attacks on any Al Seqir movements. The trucking compa-

nies themselves assume financial responsibility for the safe delivery of U.S. military cargo.

"The key to that success is that the Iraqi people are directly involved," Doyle said.

There are restrictions to what Al Seqir is permitted to move, he admitted. Only containerized items, bottled water and construction materials typically are moved by Iraqi trucks. Still, Doyle estimated approximately a quarter of the 1,600 to 2,000 trucks the CMD moves a week are Al Seqir.

Utilizing Al Seqir both reinvests money into the local economy and develops another transportation capability, which is particularly important as Coalition forces continue their responsible withdrawal from Iraq, said Haas, a native of Fleetwood, Penn.

"This opens up opportunities for us to keep Soldiers out of cities and off the roads," Doyle said. "It makes perfect sense to start pulling (military) assets back and allow Iraqis to help us."



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Four tours in Iraq and counting

BY 3rd ESC
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – While it's not uncommon for National Guard Soldiers to serve multiple deployments, not many have served as many as Staff Sgt. James E. Yaconi.

Recently, Yaconi was selected to be one of nearly 175 experienced Soldiers pulled from units across Iraq to help train incoming National Guard brigade combat teams in Kuwait.

The training is an initiative by the 3rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) designed to familiarize Soldiers with the vehicles they will use in Iraq and help prevent rollovers.

Yaconi, who is a resident of Chicago, was unique among trainers

here because the unit he helped train was also the unit he chose to extend with – Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 114th Field Artillery Regiment, an Army National Guard unit from Kosciusko, Miss.

This will mark Yaconi's fourth tour in Iraq, and that's the way he's chosen it.

"I've chased them, they've never chased me," Yaconi said about his multiple tours – all of which he has volunteered for.

What drives him to return? "Duty, honor, country," he said.

Yaconi, now a 14-year Veteran of the Army, said he'd always wanted to join the military and the military service of other Family members influenced him to join. It's a career that has taken him many places, including Germany and Italy.

"I don't think I've done an AT (annual training) in my state the whole

time I've been in the Guard," Yaconi said.

Aside from missing his Family back home, Yaconi said one of the hardest parts of doing multiple tours has been being accepted into new units.

"When you first get attached to a unit, you're still considered an outsider," Yaconi said. "You shouldn't have to prove yourself, but in a way you do."

Yaconi spent little more than a month at Camp Buehring, but many who have worked with him here have been quick to comment on his performance.

Sgt. 1st Class Shawn A. Frommeyer, the NCO overseeing the training of the incoming BCTs here describes Yaconi as a good NCO and a trainer who's gone "above and beyond" to ensure his new unit is ready for Iraq.

"He cares about what he's doing, care's about the Soldiers that are coming in that he's training, even though he doesn't know them," Frommeyer said.

Recently, bad weather and poor visibility forced the unit Yaconi oversaw to cancel some drivers training.

"He couldn't get the amount of training time in he felt the unit needed, so it ended up costing him some late nights and lost sleep," Frommeyer said, noting how Yaconi took every opportunity to ensure the Soldiers he was training received enough time behind the wheel before they left for Iraq.

So what lies in Yaconi's future? Surprisingly, it's not another tour in Iraq.

It's off to Afghanistan, Yaconi said. "Afghanistan just seems like another tour."

Fort Lewis' 80th Ordnance Battalion Receives Combat Patch

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SPC. KELLY ANNE BECK
304TH SUST. BDE. PUBLIC AFFAIRS

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The 80th Ordnance Battalion, from Ft. Lewis, Wash., conducted a combat patch ceremony here July 7, to recognizing 30-consecutive days in a combat

zone.

Lt. Col. Christopher O. Mohan, the 80th Ord. Bn. commander, placed the first combat patch on the right sleeve of Capt. Channing G. McGee, from Florence, Ala., the 80th Ord. Bn.'s Headquarters and Headquarters detachment commander. After Mohan's proudly gesture, he watched as each Soldier in the battalion put on, earns their patches.

Mohan placed two requirements on the Soldiers before being allowed to don their combat patches. The first requirement was that the

Soldiers serve for at least 30 days in Iraq. The second requirement was that, "they prove they're a fully functional Headquarters capable of conducting their wartime mission," said Mohan.

After the 80th Ord. Bn. replaced the 259th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion in June, Mohan said his Soldiers had proved themselves.

"Since the day we arrived, I've been nothing but impressed with how quickly our team took the reins and started practicing 'offensive logistics'- characterized by aggressive problem solving, and a focus on utilizing all our capabilities across the battalion to accomplish our mission," Mohan said.

An Army combat patch is worn on the right shoulder sleeve of a Soldier's uniform to indicate a unit's participation in or support of, overseas ground combat operations against hostile forces where Soldiers were exposed to the threat of enemy action or fire, either directly or indirectly.

The 80th Ord. Bn. Soldiers were

excited to don the 593rd Sustainment Brigade patch. The unit falls underneath the 593rd at Fort Lewis.

The patch includes five stars commemorating five campaigns the 593rd has participated in: World War I, Vietnam, Desert Storm, Somalia and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Mount Rainer is also on the patch to symbolize the 30 years the Brigade has spent at Fort Lewis, Wash., while the three spears then overlap to create an "X" that is next to an "I" to represent the Roman numeral "IX," or nine.

The patches' Roman numeral nine, three spears and five stars signify the number 593, the Brigade's numeric designation.

Mohan congratulated his Soldiers on earning the wear of the 593rd Sust. Bde. patch.

"You have earned the right to wear your combat patch, so I ask you to do so with pride," Mohan said. "Congratulations and thank you for all that you do every day for our country. I'm proud to be a part of your formation."



Lt. Col. Christopher O. Mohan, commander of the 80th Ord. Bn., from Ft. Lewis, Wash., places the first combat patch on the right shoulder sleeve of Capt. Channing G. McGee, from Florence, Ala., the Headquarters and Headquarters detachment commander, 80th Ord. Bn, during a ceremony at Joint Base Balad, Iraq July 7.

10th Sustainment Brigade

Task Force

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10th Sustainment Brigade, Camp Taji <http://www.taskforcemuleskinner.army.mil/mm.asp>

Sustainers "Safety First" message yields results

BY SGT. HEATHER WRIGHT
287TH SUST. BDE.
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE ADDER, Iraq – Soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, 133rd Field Artillery and the 287th Sustainment Brigade civil military operations team saw the results of their "Safety First" mission during their interaction with Bedouin families in Dhi Qar province, Iraq June 25.

The "Safety First" mission was designed by Lt. Col. Clint Moyer,

287th CMO chief, to teach Iraqi children not to approach military vehicles for handouts or throw rocks at the convoys to improve the safety of Soldiers and Iraqi civilians. The mission started by teaching Dhi Qar elementary and middle schools and continued as the 287th CMO team spread the word among the local Bedouin tribes during "Bedouin Express" missions.

Master Sgt. Alexander Parker, 287th Sust. Bde., CMO noncommissioned officer in charge, went out with the 167th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion on a Bedouin Express mission a few

weeks prior. On that mission, the Bedouin children, contrary to the safety message delivered earlier, were crowding the military vehicles on the road, endangering the Soldiers and themselves. Parker told the Bedouin elder that he couldn't deliver the supplies that he intended to share because the "Safety First" policies weren't being adhered to. Parker promised to come back in a few weeks while ensuring the children adhered to the safety rules and bring supplies to them.

Weeks later, Parker returned with Soldiers from the 3rd Bn., 133rd FA Regt., delivering mat-

tresses, clothes and stuffed animals to the Bedouins. No children were on the road, and the elders approached the team first after they arrived.

"Thank you for keeping your children and our Soldiers safe," Parker said. "You've kept your end of the bargain and we're going to keep ours." Then the 3rd Bn., 133rd FA Regt. Soldiers began off-loading mattresses and supplies from the vehicles.

"It's gratifying to see the safety message is having a positive effect," said Parker. "It makes this job even more rewarding."

Container Repair Yard increases production, reaches milestone

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SPC. MICHAEL BEHLIN
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Just seven months ago, Joint Base Balad's Iraqi-owned container repair yard consisted of forty-five workers and a quota to repair a minimum of sixty containers per month.

Since then, the Miran Village Company, has continued to exceed its production standard monthly since January. This accomplishment, however, pales in comparison next to what the company has grown into today through the hard work of its Iraqi owner and staff, and U.S. Forces.

The Miran Village Co., is now capable of employing nearly 100 workers, and able to repair more than 200 containers a month given their recent milestone.

"In the beginning we had only 45 workers, but we were still able to exceed production," said Hashim Abd Al-Amir Mahdi, owner of the Miran Village Co. "We were successful at the time even though most of the workers were new at their job and just becoming skilled. Now with better training and understanding of their job, we can continue to increase our production."

In June, Mahdi said he employed a total of 84 workers and credits the company's increased productivity to the new workers. For future months, Mahdi said production goals include reaching 250 containers per month, and growing to more than 100 employees. To meet these goals, the Miran Village Co. plans to hire and train a total of 10 new workers per month, which will allow a gradual increase in the company's workforce.

The successes of Mahdi and the Miran Village Co. have not gone unnoticed by those who work with him.

"He (Mahdi) has definitely impressed us in our 30 days of being here," said Capt. Jason J. Vivian, the 80th Ordnance Battalion support



An Iraqi worker repairs a container at Joint Base Balad's Iraqi owned container repair yard. The Miran Village Company is a project of the Iraqi Based Industrial Zone initiative that provides Iraqis with economic growth opportunities on the perimeters of installations of Coalition Forces.

operations transportation officer and South Fork, Pa., native. "His business practices have made for a very successful business here on JBB."

While Mahdi appreciates the praise and success of his company, he credits his workers and Coalition forces for all that his company has achieved.

First, he credits Soldiers of the 155th Inland Cargo Transportation Company for their willingness to supply his company with personnel and assistance to be successful. An active-duty unit from Fort Eustis, Va., the 155th ICTC supplied Mahdi with a contracting officer representative, escorts and several inspectors who ensure containers are repaired properly before they proceed to their next destination.

Next, he credits a willingness to learn and work hard by his Iraqi workers. Mahdi made clear the main purpose of his company is not to make a profit, but to allow for many Iraqis to be able to provide for themselves and their families.

Before being employed by the Miran Village Co., many of the workers had no idea of their future or how they would earn a living for their families.

With the Miran Village Co. boasting nearly a 95 percent skill rate for its workers, Iraqis are now trained in welding, carpentry, and painting. These skills are valuable to the Iraqi workers and could assist them in the future, even if the company were to disband for any reason.

"The main point of this project is to promote a bright future for many Iraqis," said Mahdi. "If it wasn't for this company, many of our workers would not know what they would be doing for work. This company has really made a difference for many families outside the wire."

Iraqis working for the Miran Village Co. earn a monthly base salary, depending on what duties they perform. Mahdi said it's not a secret that he also gives his workers incentives for reaching certain performance goals. He attributes these incentives

to the company's growth in production.

"The more containers a worker can repair, the more money they can make," Mahdi said. "This is done to push my workers and shows them that if they work hard, they'll have the opportunity to get paid more. It's simple as that."

Mahdi stated that this performance incentive gives the Iraqi workers a goal to strive for and a chance to measure themselves.

Lastly, even though Mahdi believes in standard business practices, one in particular he pushes more than others is having an open business. By this, he explained that he doesn't keep any information from his workers.

Each week, management and workers of the Miran Village Co. have a roundtable of discussions regarding problems and possible solutions. These discussions also include a safety briefing, where workers receive lectures on safety and promote a safe, healthy working environment.

For future endeavors, Mahdi mentioned that the CRY and Miran Village Co. will expand to accommodate more workers and more production.

Although Mahdi is rather modest about his personal contributions in ensuring that his business is successful, he believes many Iraqi businessmen can have the same success.

He described his three standards for a successful business as having a good business plan, pay a fair salary and to believe in your workers. Mahdi feels that if an Iraqi businessman follows this plan, they can be successful.

"For Iraqi business owners to be successful, they first need to believe. Iraqis are hard workers and if you believe in them, you can do whatever you want," he said. "Before U.S. troops came to Iraq, many Iraqis didn't have a bright future. Now, many Iraqis are dreaming for a new future and are within reach of achieving their goals."

Soldiers, Families stay connected using reading program

BY CAPT. VINCENT CERCHIONE
UPAR, 260TH QM CO.,
10TH SUST. BDE.

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – “That is good,” said the fish. “He’s gone away, yes. But your mother will come. She will find this big mess,” goes the timeless story of the Cat in the Hat by Dr. Seuss. Children of all ages and generations have been captivated by the words of Dr. Seuss and other authors, taking them to places of fantasy and wonder.

In reality, a reading program allows Soldiers in Iraq an opportunity to reach across the miles and be part of their children’s wonder and imagination.

United Through Reading is a program sponsored by the United Service Organizations, in partnership with the 260th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion from



U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Christopher Perry

Sgt. Teresa Wilt, a native of Temple, Texas, and personnel actions noncommissioned officer for Echo Company, 949th Brigade Support Battalion, 260th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, reads a book during recording for her Family using the United through Reading program, a partnership between the 260th CSSB and the United Service Organization at Camp Liberty, Iraq.

Hunter Army Airfield, Ga. The program allows Soldiers to share an opportunity of reading with their children back home.

The 260th CSSB set up a room in the Chaplain’s office, where Soldiers will go to read books and record onto a CD-DVD, while sending a video message back home to their children.

This program allows Families to watch the videos and share the joy of reading, while remaining close by using technology.

“This is a very good tool that we use to communicate with our Families back at Hunter,” said Chaplain Sean Facchinello, a native of Richmond Hill, Ga., and the battalion’s Chaplain.

Facchinello, along with the his assistant Pfc. Christopher Perry, a Virgin Islands native, get logistic support from the USO program coordinators with a decorated room with books, a video camera and disks.

Soldiers can pick from a selection of donated books to read to their children while being recorded. During recording, Soldiers are encouraged to be animated and excited, like they were back home

reading to their children. When Soldiers are done, Perry ensures that the disk cannot be written on, packages the materials and sends them home to the Soldier’s Family.

The 260th CSSB hopes to grow the program and influence other units to participate in such a worthy cause. The unit is working with publishing companies, local Savannah merchants and working with the Family Readiness Group to sponsor book drives. With help from the USO, the 260th hopes to continue to receive small donations of books for different reading and age levels, allowing everyone a chance to reach out and share in the joy of reading.

“Any book that helps a child to form a habit of reading, to make reading one of his deep and continuing needs, is good for him,” a quote from Maya Angelou, rings true and the United through Reading gives Soldiers simple tools necessary to touch their children’s hearts and minds back home.

Transporters honored with St. Christopher award

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. CRYSTAL G. REIDY
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Seven transporters received the military order of Saint Christopher award here July 9.

One 3^d Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) Transportation Corps Soldier received the Ancient Order and six others received the honorable version for their outstanding service and dedication to the transportation branch. The awards are given to distinguished members of the transportation branch.

“It is my pleasure to be here to recognize this group of transporters,” said Brig. Gen. Michael J. Lally, 3^d ESC commanding general. “They are a part of the distinguished Army Transportation Corps that also represents Army Core Values.”

The 3^d ESC moves millions of gallons of fuel and bottles of water around this theater because of transporters like the ones being recognized today, Lally said.

“I feel pride that I’m being recognized by my profession by receiving this award,” said Lt. Col. Christopher D. Hardin, distribution manager center chief for the 3^d ESC. “It means a lot to us that such a distinguished transporter like General Lally is here to present the awards.”

Hardin received the Ancient Order, which is the more distinguished of the two awards. He loves working in transportation because it is always different, he said. He added



The recipients of the order of the Saint Christopher award are Lt. Col. David Cook, mobility branch chief and resident of Gaffney, S.C., Lt. Col. Chris D. Hardin, distribution management center chief and resident of Elizabeth, Tenn., Capt. Carey W. Menifee, mobility plans chief and resident of Cincinnati, Ohio, Maj. Gary M. Wehrle, land mobility chief and resident of Paintlick, Ky., Warrant Officer two James Hamilton, mobility officer and resident of Edmon, Okla., Sgt. 1st Class Jose R. Reyes-Lopez, senior movement noncommissioned officer and native of Jayuya, Puerto Rico, and Master Sgt. Jeremiah Ousley, distribution integration NCO in charge and resident of Union Springs, Ala., with the 3^d Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) received the military order of Saint Christopher award at Joint Base Balad, Iraq July 9.

that transporters can work with ships, trains, planes and trucks.

“There is a sense of satisfaction when you take a large convoy from one place and deliver it another,” Hardin said. “I love bringing a convoy in - it’s like bringing a herd in - it’s great and I love doing the job.”

The Transportation Corps was formed in 1942 and in 1998 the Army instituted the order of St. Christopher medal to recognize out-

standing transporters.

St. Christopher is the patron saint of travelers and motorists. Lally told the story of St. Christopher to the audience during the award presentation and explained how the image of St. Christopher was a fitting symbol of strength, loyalty and safety for transporters charged with moving the force.

The recipients of the order of the Saint Christopher award were:

Ancient Order

Lt. Col. Chris D. Hardin, distribution management center chief and resident of Elizabeth, Tenn.

Honorable

Lt. Col. David Cook, mobility branch chief and resident of Gaffney, S.C.

Maj. Gary M. Wehrle, land mobility chief and resident of Paintlick, Ky.

Capt. Carey W. Menifee, mobility plans chief and resident of Cincinnati, Ohio

Warrant Officer two James Hamilton, mobility officer and resident of Edmon, Okla.

Master Sgt. Jeremiah Ousley, distribution integration noncommissioned officer in charge and resident of Union Springs, Ala.

Sgt. 1st Class Jose R. Reyes-Lopez, senior movement NCO and native of Jayuya, Puerto Rico

The story of St. Christopher says that he was a large man who helped people cross a dangerous river. When carrying a child across the river the child got very heavy and Christopher could hardly make it across.

When he finally reached the other side, he said to the child: "You have put me in the greatest danger. I do not think the whole world could have been as heavy on my shoulders as you were." The child revealed himself to be Jesus Christ and explained that Christopher had carried the world's sin on his shoulders.

Senior logisticians meet a

BY SPC. KIYOSHI C. FREEMAN
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Thirteen senior logisticians met here to discuss the plans for continuing the responsible drawdown of forces and equipment in Iraq and the repositioning of assets to Afghanistan July 23.

The general officers traveled from around the world and included Lt. Gen. Mitchell H. Stevenson, Deputy Chief of Staff, Army G-4; Lt. Gen. James H. Pillsbury, U.S. Army Material Command deputy commanding general; Lt. Gen. Kathleen M. Gainey, Director of Logistics, J4, the Joint Staff; and Vice Admiral Michael K. Loose, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Fleet Readiness and Logistics, N4.

The logisticians, some of

the most senior in their respective services, participated in a conference and visited facilities here in order to learn about ongoing drawdown operations across Iraq.

The key topics the attendees discussed were obtaining accurate accountability of Department of Defense property in Iraq and acquiring sufficient cargo and transport to support the drawdown efforts.

“The name of the game is responsible use of taxpayer money and 100 percent accountability,” said Pillsbury, who commended the efforts of sustainment units in Iraq on laying the groundwork.

Since arriving in theater June 2008, the 3^d Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and its subordinate units led an initiative to improve accountability by bringing over 40,000 items back onto records. Additionally, they sent Mobile Redistribution Teams to bases looking for excess inventory for shipment

to the Forward Redistribution Point here. The FRP then determines its serviceability and stores or ships it to where it is needed.

The quantity and serviceability of shipping containers was also addressed. Thousands will be needed for the drawdown operations, and retrograde of equipment out of Iraq.

Container Repair Yards are planned for several major bases. The 3^d ESC’s subordinate brigades also field Mobile Container Repair Teams to inspect and repair shipping containers. Last month, MCRTs inspected approximately 3,300 containers and performed minor repairs to 104.

The Coalition also partners with the Iraqi Transportation Network to facilitate the movement of equipment throughout the country, especially Al Seqir, a consortium of tribally-owned trucking companies.

“We’re going to need more transportation (assets) as we downsize and take all this [equipment] out,” said Lt. Col. Peter M. Haas, commanding officer, 49th Transportation Battalion, referring to Al Seqir.

Some assets in Iraq, to include several military units and over 1,300 vehicles, have already repositioned to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

“In the coming months, it’s going to take a massive team effort from the Army and Joint (Services) Community to execute the drawdown of forces in Iraq,” said Brig. Gen. Michael J. Lally, commanding general, 3^d ESC from Fort Knox, Ky.

“I think with the team [we] saw here today – the senior logisticians from each service and Joint Staff – we have the right organizations and some of the smartest logisticians in the world working to make this happen right,” he said.

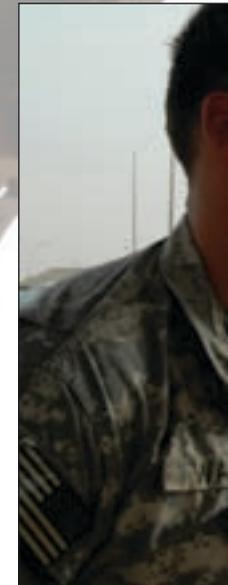


U.S. Army photo by Spc. Brian Barbour

Senior logisticians from all branches of service receive a briefing from Capt. Daniel J. Bugbee, company commander of Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 161st Infantry Regiment, Washington Army National Guard on his company’s convoy experiences at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, July 23. The senior leaders arrived at JBB earlier that day for a logistics conference about the ongoing drawdown efforts in Iraq



Lt. Gen. Mitchell H. Stevenson, Deputy Chief of Staff, Army G-4, and Vice Admiral Michael K. Loose, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Fleet Readiness and Logistics, N-4, listen to a briefing at the Forward Redistribution Point at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, July 23. The officers toured the facility as part of a conference to discuss ongoing drawdown operations.



Soldiers with 1st Battalion, 161st Infantry Regiment (Washington Army National Guard), wait to receive a briefing at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, July 23. The soldiers will share their experiences with the drawdown of vehicles.

U.S. Ar

1st JBB to discuss drawdown



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Kiyoshi C. Freeman

1st Battalion, 161st Infantry Regiment (Washington Army National Guard) be interviewed by visiting general officers at a motor pool at Joint Base Balad, Iraq July 23. The officers visited the unit to inquire about the survivability of Mine Resistant-Ambush Protected



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Brian Barbour

Lt. Gen. Mitchell H. Stevenson, Deputy Chief of Staff, Army G-4 and Vice Admiral Michael K. Loose, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Fleet Readiness and Logistics, N4 are introduced to Lt. Col. Gregory J. Allen, battalion commander of 1st Battalion, 161st Infantry Regiment (Washington Army National Guard) by Brig. Gen. Michael J. Lally, 3rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) commanding general at Joint Base Balad, Iraq July 23. Loose and Stevenson were among several other senior leaders visiting JBB for a logistics conference to discuss the ongoing drawdown efforts in Iraq.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Kiyoshi C. Freeman

Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Fleet Readiness and Logistics, N4; and Lt. Gen. Kathleen M. Gainey, Director of Logistics, J4, the Joint Staff, listen to a briefing at the Convoy Support Center at Joint Base Balad, Iraq July 23. The officers toured the facility as part of a conference to discuss ongoing drawdown operations in Iraq.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Kiyoshi C. Freeman

Senior logisticians from all branches of the armed forces pose for a photograph at Joint Base Balad, Iraq July 23. The general officers toured facilities and attended a conference here to discuss ongoing drawdown operations in Iraq.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Kiyoshi C. Freeman

From left to right: Brig. Gen. Michael J. Lally, commanding general, 3rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary); Vice Admiral Michael K. Loose, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Fleet Readiness and Logistics, N4; and Lt. Gen. Kathleen M. Gainey, Director of Logistics, J4, the Joint Staff, listen to a briefing at the Convoy Support Center at Joint Base Balad, Iraq July 23. The officers toured the facility as part of a conference to discuss ongoing drawdown operations in Iraq.

Logistics Soldiers train Iraqis in fuel, ammunition

BY 1ST LT. JENNIFER DYRCZ
UPAR, 18TH CSSB, 16TH SUST. BDE.

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE MAREZ-EAST, Iraq — Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, have a unique mission providing logistical training and support for numerous American and Iraqi units in Kirkuk.

Their mission is designed to improve the relationship with the 18th CSSB personnel based in Kirkuk, who provide support as the Logistics Training Advisory Team for the 4th Motorized Transportation Regiment of the Iraqi Army.

The training focuses on direct support maintenance, safe refueling methods and ammunition handling procedures.

“I was sent to assist and teach them how to properly receive, inventory, store and ship future ammunition shipments,” said Staff Sgt. Charles Price, ammunitions noncommissioned officer.

The Sandford, Maine, native is responsible for advising LTAT members and the Iraqi Army on ammunition handling procedures. He is also responsible for advising and supervising the utilization of a new ammunition storage bunker for grenades and other sensitive explosives ensuring proper storage and management of explosives.

The bunker can store and receive up to 300

short-tons of ammunition for training and 200 short-tons of incoming shipments. The Iraqi Soldiers are also trained on proper disposal of ammunition, such as methods of separating spent ammunition from live ammunition and understanding sensitive storage items.

“It is very important that they understand and follow the proper procedures of explosive safety and fire guidelines,” said Price.

Sgt. 1st Class Irvin L. Moultry, a native of Tallahassee, Fla., is the battalion’s bulk and retail fuel noncommissioned officer in charge.

“(The Kirkuk area) is still undergoing construction of a new fuel distribution point,” Moultry said. “Once completed, it will be able to store 400,000 liters of diesel and 200,000 liters of benzene.”

The unit is not cutting any corners on safety, he said.

“Safety equipment, such as eye washing stations and fire suppression systems, will be implemented in the upgraded fuel point,” said Moultry.

The fuel point, once completed, will safely supply what the Army calls “class III,” or fuel, to the K-1 command and the 4th MTR. The new

fuel point will help reduce the amount of waste and corruption in usage, establish a strategic reserve of fuel for future use, as well as provide spillage containment areas and new traffic lanes.



U.S. Army photo by Capt. Natalia Mercedes-Williams

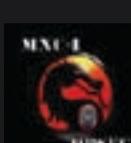
Sgt. 1st Class Irvin Moultry, bulk and retail fuel noncommissioned officer in charge, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, and Staff Sgt. Charles Price, ammunitions noncommissioned officer, HHC, 18th CSSB, pose by a battalion “T-wall” at Contingency Operating Site Marez-East, Iraq July 5.

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- ✓ Personal information
- ✓ Notes and briefs
- ✓ CDs , pictures, receipts
- ✓ *and a whole lot more*



ONE YEAR AGO THIS WEEK



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Charlotte Martinez

During a live burn training exercise two Soldiers from the 548th Quartermaster Company spray an Armored Security Vehicle with a chemical called ‘Purple K’ at Al Asad, Iraq July 25, 2008 as part of their training to become part of a fire suppression team.

NCO balances demanding op-tempo with higher education

BY CAPT. PATRICK T. LYONS
UPAR, 497TH TRANS. CO., 395TH CSSB,
16TH SUST. BDE.

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq – Pursuing a higher education can be a challenge for anyone.

For a deployed Soldier, pursuing a degree can seem like “mission impossible,” due to the stressors of combat and limited resources. However, one noncommissioned officer has proven that with a little sacrifice and a lot of hard work, Soldiers can make their higher education goals a reality, even while deployed.

Staff Sgt. Tamara Patrick, operations sergeant, 497th Transportation Company, 395 Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th

Sustainment Brigade, out of Fort Lewis, Wash., successfully balances her unit’s missions and her educational goals. Patrick has completed 30 credit hours towards her bachelor’s degree in business management at Thomas Edison State College, Trenton, N.J., since arriving here in October.

“It has been more challenging than I thought it would be to balance work, school and even sleep,” said Patrick, a native of Burrton, Kan. “But it has been well worth the time and effort knowing that I pursued my goals while defending my country.”

Prior to her deployment, Patrick earned an associates degree in general studies and has continued her education in Iraq.

Although challenging, Patrick has received help along the way from her chain of command.

First Lt. Bradley Nowack, platoon leader,

497th Trans. Co., has proctored five final exams for Patrick during this deployment.

“As a Soldier who knows the importance of a higher education, I have been honored to help my Soldiers achieve their education goals,” said Nowack.

Patrick, like many deployed Soldiers, has utilized the federal tuition assistance in conjunction with eArmyU.com. Soldiers can work toward their associates, bachelors and master’s degree programs while deployed in support of a contingency operation. The online program, “eArmyU,” provides Soldiers web-based access to over one-hundred degree plans at regionally-accredited colleges and universities, offering “anytime, anywhere” flexibility for Soldiers to study at times that are most convenient for them.

For more information, go to www.eArmyu.com

Highlander PSD team recognized for outstanding job

BY SPC. KELLY ANNE BECK
304TH SUST. BDE. PUBLIC AFFAIRS

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – A platoon of Soldiers from the Washington Army National Guard’s 1st Battalion, 161st Infantry Regiment personnel security detail received individual achievement awards from the Riverside, Calif., 304th Sustainment Brigade commander during a ceremony here June 30.

The PSD team consisted of 34 Soldiers from 3rd platoon, Company C, 1st Bn, 161st Inf. Regt.,

of Bremerton, Wash., who conducted many missions around Iraq for senior leaders from the 304th Sust. Bde., to include several missions escorting Lt. Col. Norman B. Green, the 304th Sust. Bde. commander.

“You guys always dotted every ‘I’ and crossed every ‘T,’” said Green. “Every single one of you is going home and that means you have done it right. I always knew I’d be safe when I was riding with you guys.”

Green said he knew the Soldiers of the PSD were always ready and aware while conducting their missions.

“If the enemy wants to bring it, then they can bring it, but they

better be ready because you guys are always ready,” Green said after personally shaking each Soldiers hand and presenting individual awards, to include Army Achievement Medals, Army Commendation Medals, to each Soldier.

First Lt. Don W. Arnold, the platoon leader for the PSD team, Co. C, 1st Bn., 161st Inf. Regt., said he is proud of each and every Soldier that he had the chance to serve with on this deployment.

“My Soldiers performed their duties professionally and did not complain, if you ask me, I have the best Soldiers,” said Arnold, a Lacey, Wash., native. “There is no finer group of men to serve with-I would put them up against anyone.”

As the Soldiers ate their dinner, their platoon sergeant attributed his award to their hard work.

“This award has my name on it, but it has every single one of your names on it too,” said Sgt. 1st Class Robert D. Cayce, Co. C, 1st Bn., 161st Inf. Regt., from Spokane, Wash. “Every time I look at it, I will think of every single one of you, thank you.”

Cayce said he couldn’t be more proud of the effort his Soldiers put forth throughout their entire deployment.

“You’ve done a 110 percent, you’ve given 110 percent in everything I’ve asked,” Cayce said. “Everything I’ve earned is a credit to you, so thank you.”

JOINT BASE BALAD
FIRE MUSTER
Aug. 9, 2009 0600-1600
Fun Filled Team Events:
-Relay Race -Hose Roll Race - Litter race
-Firefighter Tug of War -Bucket Brigade
5-person Coed teams
Competitive Individual Events:
-Desert Firefighter Combat Challenge
-Five event timed challenge
-Toughest 5 minutes in Firefighting

To enter a team or in the individual event
Contact SSgt Guy Carriveau / SrA Kevin Andrews at 443-6627
Or email at: guy.carriveau@blab.afcent.af.mil
kevin.andrews@blab.afcent.af.mil
Event to be held at H-6 Gym basketball courts

On the Web

16TH SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE

16th Sustainment Brigade
“Knights” at COB Q-West
<http://www.16sustainment.army.mil/>

JTF Eagle NCOs 'Span the Gap' with Iraqi Partnership Bridge Training

STORY AND PHOTO BY
CAPT. VANESSA R. BOWMAN
37TH ENGINEER BATTALION PAO,
555TH ENG. BDE.

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – A Joint Task Force Eagle noncommissioned officer, who was raised in Iraq, embodies the Army 'Year of the NCO' spirit during the third partnership bridge training iteration held July 3 to 13 at the Iraqi Army Engineer School here.

Sgt. Mootaz Al-Sultani, from the 50th Multi-Role Bridge Company, 555th Engineer Brigade, combines initiative, experience and unique personal history to orchestrate the latest 10 day training with Iraqi Soldiers of the 4th, 5th and Headquarters IA Field Engineer Regiment.

Al-Sultani along with Staff Sgt. Fernando Villa from Tucson, Ariz. and Staff Sgt. Jason Peace from Felicity, Ohio are the primary 50th MRBC partnership bridging trainers. Villa, a platoon section sergeant, who has seven years of experience as an Army Bridger, is partnered with the 5th IA FER. Peace, another section sergeant, who has nine years of experience, is partnered with the 4th IA FER.

Currently serving as a crew chief and bridge park NCO in charge, Al-



Joint Task Force Eagle Sgt. Mootaz Al-Sultani and Staff Sgt. Jason Peace review leadership lessons with Iraqi Army Field Engineer Regiment platoon leaders after a day of partnership bridge training at the Iraqi Army Engineer School at Camp Taji, Iraq July 8.

Sultani has four years of military bridging experience. His upbringing in Iraq gives him a unique advantage that makes him an invaluable to his counterparts; Peace and Villa said they could not have been as successful without Al-Sultani.

"This training would not have happened without Al-Sultani," said Villa.

Arlington, Texas is home now,

but Al-Sultani was born and raised in Baghdad, immigrated to the United States with his parents in 2000. Al-Sultani said he is glad to serve on behalf of his adopted country by using his military occupation specialty technical experience to help build the capacity of IA engineer counterparts.

"I always wanted to join the Army. I enlisted at seventeen, as soon as I could," explained Al-Sultani. "In the beginning I was mostly just translating, but that turned into making coordination with the Iraqi Security Forces and other Iraqi elements. Eventually it developed into setting up and conducting these bridge training events."

Al-Sultani's fluency in the language, customs and culture of Iraq combined with his experience-based technical understanding has made him integral to arranging and synchronizing 50th MRBC partnership training. He secures logistic support and facilitates coordination between the 50th MRBC, IA FER command elements and Iraqi Ministry of Defense contacts. Additionally, Al-Sultani procures and translates technical manuals and teaching materials.

"I coordinated with the Mabey and Johnson bridge company, which has the contract to provide their bridges to the U.S. Army, to request copies of any manuals they

already had translated," said Al-Sultani. "I took those, went back and then changed them a little so they made more sense to the operators."

Al-Sultani clarifies instructions and provides additional explanations to make it easier for the students to understand. This is especially important as many of the IA FER Soldiers do not have strong reading and writing skills.

"The classroom portion is the hardest because many have trouble with reading and writing," explained IA 2nd Lt. Hader, an IA FER platoon leader and co-instructor at the IA Engineer School partnership bridge training.

The manuals that Al-Sultani translates are not just appreciated by the IA FER Soldiers. The Iraqi Army FER Headquarters, Engineer School, and Ministry of Defense also use the manuals. They requested Al-Sultani help to update and translate additional technical manuals.

"NCOs are accomplished military professionals who have earned the description 'Backbone of the Army,'" said Capt. John Davis, 50th MRBC commander. "The tremendous commitment and initiative of Sergeants Peace, Villa and Al-Sultani to service in training, leading and mentoring Soldiers of both U.S. and Iraq exemplifies 'Army Strong' leadership."

Mississippi National Guardsmen learn to identify IEDs

BY SGT. CRYSTAL REIDY
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Soldiers from a Mississippi Army National Guard unit practiced identifying improvised explosive devices during training at Sgt. Germaine L. Debro IED range here July 5 to July 13.

The training is part of the Multi-National Corps – Iraq requirement for all Soldiers traveling off bases to attend counter-IED level two training within 90 days of arriving in theater.

"This training lets you get hands on and see how IEDs actually work and the different types of IEDs," said Sgt. John E. Rouleau, an intel noncommissioned in charge for the 181st Brigade Support Battalion.

"The training is extremely im-

portant because the life of everyone in the vehicles in front and behind them depends on the Soldiers finding the IED before it goes off," added Rouleau whose unit is responsible for the personnel security detail of distinguished visitors to the 3^d ESC.

Over 130 Soldiers executed two-days of training over an eight-day period at the range hosted the 1st Battalion, 155th Infantry regiment.

The first day of training consisted of a four hour classroom presentation on IED awareness and an intelligence brief on the unit's area of operations.

"The class has been organized and is giving the information that's needed," said Staff Sgt. Thomas L. Guess, a squad leader with Bravo Company, 1st Bn., 155th Inf. Regt. "It's helping us prepare for the road. You can never have enough IED training."

Day two of training consisted of

a minimum of six hours in humvees on a 1.4 mile range. The scenarios included a scan (sniper) lane, speed appreciation lane, along with day and night iterations for IED awareness lanes.

The first task on the training schedule was a range orientation where the Soldiers walked through how to locate hidden IEDs. The instructors then identified the IEDs that were not found, explained what the IEDs were made of and shared other tactics the enemy uses to hide IEDs.

"We came out here with tons of IED training in the past and we still missed some," said Guess. "When they point them out its like 'Oh man!' I see what to look for now."

The most popular exercise was the speed appreciation lane, said Rouleau, a resident of Breton Wash. The vehicles traveled the range at 20 mph looking for IEDs. They then executed another lap around the range at 10 mph. The

normal trend as the Soldiers found more IEDs on the slower iteration, he said.

"The speed lane was the best because we saw the importance of how much more you can see when you slow down," Guess said. "When we speed up, we found six or seven fake IEDs, and then when we slowed down, we found 14."

That shows first hand why we need to slow convoys down."

After everyone in 1st Bn., 155th Inf. Regt. is trained, a select number of individuals will conduct level-three training, which is a train-the-trainer program enabling Soldiers to take the information they learn and train other units.

"The interaction with the instructors and students is really good," said Rouleau. "The training starts out slow but by the end we develop a close relationship because what they are learning saves lives and the companies are extremely appreciative of that."



287th Sustainment Brigade, COB Adder
<http://www.287susbde.com/>



Maintenance & Supply

Topic of the Week



NEED STORAGE OR SHIPMENT SPACE HELP?

GOPS.

A NEW CONTAINER CAN HELP SOLDIERS AVOID THE PROBLEMS OF CRUSHED BOXES DURING TRANSPORT. READ ON...

YOU KNOW SPACE IS VALUABLE WHEN YOU PACK YOUR DUFFLE FOR DEPLOYMENT.

THE SAME IS TRUE WHEN YOU PACK THE ISO CONTAINER FOR YOUR UNIT.

BUT ODD-SHAPED BOXES AND ITEMS OFTEN LEAVE GAPS. THOSE GAPS ADD UP TO WASTED SPACE AND SHIFTING LOADS.

Which would you rather have protecting your stuff? Boxes and plastic wrap or JMIC?

ES MORE

ULTIMATELY, WHEN YOU OPEN THE ISO CONTAINER YOU FIND BROKEN BOXES, LOOSE CONTENTS AND DAMAGED EQUIPMENT.

IT'S A MESS YOU CAN DO WITH OUT.

BUT THERE IS A REASON IN YOUR STORAGE AND SHIPMENT AREA THAT WILL HELP YOU REDUCE WASTED SPACE AND DAMAGE TO EQUIPMENT.

IT'S CALLED THE JOINT MODULAR INTERMODAL CONTAINER-JMIC.

JMICs make it easier to move supplies by forklift than having loose boxes on pallets.

THE JMIC MAXIMIZES THE USE OF SPACE AND PROTECTS CARGO FOR TRANSPORTATION.

THE JMIC HAS PROVEN TO BE MUCH MORE THAN JUST ANOTHER BOX BY PROVIDING USEFUL STORAGE IN DEPLOYED SETTINGS.

THE FULLY ASSEMBLED JMIC IS 52 INCHES LONG, 44 INCHES WIDE AND 48 INCHES TALL.

HOWEVER, JMICs CAN BE COLLAPSED TO ROUGHLY A FIFTH OF THEIR SIZE WHEN NOT BEING USED.

EMPTY, THE JMIC WEIGHS 320 POUNDS BUT HAS A GROSS WEIGHT CAPACITY OF 3,000 POUNDS. THEY CAN BE TOP-OR SIDE-LOADED.

JMICs CAN BE STACKED TOGETHER, HAVE INTERNAL QUICK-RELEASE CARGO RESTRAINTS, AND INCLUDE A BUILT-IN SPACE FOR RFID TAGS.

JMICs can be top or side-loaded.

JMICs can be collapsed and stacked for shipment or storage.

THE JMIC IS ALSO HELICOPTER SLING-LIFT CAPABLE USING CORNER POST LIFT EYES.

PS 680

Current Uses

JMIC USE IN OEF, ODF AND ELSEWHERE HAS SHOWN ITS ABILITY TO CONSOLIDATE CARGO, REDUCING THE NUMBER OF TRUCKS, SHIPS OR PLANES NEEDED TO MOVE IT.

THAT TRANSLATES INTO LOWER DISTRIBUTION COSTS AND FEWER SOLDIERS AT RISK DURING DISTRIBUTION AND RETROGRADE OPERATIONS.

JMICs can be stacked and shipped in ISO containers.

JMICs can be used AS SUPPLY ROOM STORAGE CONTAINERS, PROTECTING CONTENTS FROM WEATHER AND PILFERAGE.

THE ABILITY TO DROP THE FRONT PANEL ALLOWS EASY ACCESS TO CONTENTS, AND STORAGE SHELVES AND BINS CAN BE DEVELOPED FOR USE AS CLASS IX STORAGE CENTERS.

JMICs provide convenient securable supply storage.

JMICs COME IN THREE COLORS:

- UNPAINTED ALUMINUM, NSN 8145-01-551-5311
- WOODLAND GREEN, NSN 8145-01-564-5802
- DESERT TAN, NSN 8145-01-564-6796

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE JMIC, EMAIL: hdhjmic@navy.mil

ES END

Soldiers maintain physical fitness with combatives

BY LT. COL. RENEE A. ROUSE
304TH SUST. BDE., PAO

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq - Capt. Roy Stiff, of Greenville, Miss., a 304th Sustainment Brigade Soldier, became certified in Level I combative in May and Level II in July here.

Master Sgt. Jonathan F. Napier, of Yatesville, Ga., and four instructors: Sgt. 1st Class Juan C. Bruno, 602nd Maintenance Company

from Fort Hood, Texas; Sgt. 1st Class Larry J. Hufford, 3^d Sustainment (Expeditionary), from Fort Knox, Ky.; Staff Sgt. Nicholas L. Green and Sgt. 1st Class Lee, 20th Quartermaster Company from Fort Campbell, Ky., implemented a level I and II combative program while helping Soldiers to maintain their physical fitness.

Stiff said, "It was a very challenging course and it was very physically demanding."

Napier, a communications chief with the 3^d ESC, and his instruc-

tors rotationally teach combatives three times a month.

Level I combative consist of a forty-hour, one-week course tailored to developing the basic combative techniques.

Level II combative is more advanced and an eighty-hour, two-week course that builds on the basic course while improving techniques as well as teach the philosophy and methodology of the program.

Napier said, "The course is always full." He said he has twen-

ty-five slots and twenty-eight students usually enrolled however anticipates losing one to two students because "it is physically demanding."

"Since May 2008, we have had one thousand Soldiers graduate and about fifty Airmen become certified," he said.

"I would recommend combatives to anyone who wants to physically challenge themselves. It's a form of good physical discipline," said Stiff.

Fire Safety Prevention - A first line of defense

BY SPC. KELLY ANNE BECK
304TH SUST. BDE.,
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq - As the summer temperatures continue to rise, Soldiers and Airmen from the JBB Fire Department partnered to educate service members on different ways to prevent buildings fires here and minimize accidents.

"Fire safety is important because it is the first line of defense in saving lives, property and preventing injuries to all military personnel," said Spc. Anthony J. Sweat, a combat fire-

fighter with the Grafenwoher, Germany based - 23rd Ordnance Company. "Safety comes first, especially when dealing with fire."

One of the strongest defenses against fires is the knowledge of how to prevent them before they occur, said Sweat, a resident of St. Louis, Mo.

Sweat said it's important for everyone to understand electrical problems, and ensure they don't plug a transformer into a power strip. He said transformers can overheat and make sure power strips don't exceed the maximum rated capacity on the front of the transformers.

"Only use the power strips and adapters issued

by self help or the base fire department. Anyone needing approved power strips should contact self help or our office," Sweat said.

Another thing to be aware of is overloading power outlets. Also, every unit should establish a safety officer and safety noncommissioned officer to answer questions pertaining to the power chords they may safely use.

"Many of the Solutions are simple," Sweat said. "Be sure to check the batteries in your fire alarms, be sure to smoke only within smoking areas and dispose of cigarette butts properly."

The JBB Fire Department averages around 10 to 15 fire related incidents

every month and many of them seem to be caused by complacency, said Sweat.

"Even housekeeping helps prevent fires," Sweat said. "Don't forget 'check CHU-Tuesdays' because a messy cluttered CHU (container housing unit) only hinders escape in the event of a fire."

However, when coming across a fire or witnessing one being put out, it is important to notify the JBB Fire Department.

"Just dial 9-1-1," Sweat said. "You wouldn't believe how many fires we would've been able to put out if people just called."

The joint firefighters are diligently trained on emergency response procedures

and would rather be safe than sorry when regarding fires because the fire may not be entirely extinguished.

"In case of a fire, notify the fire department, make sure to cut the power to the affected area and evacuate the building," Sweat said. "Just because you don't see the fire does not mean it's not present and safety of personnel in the building is paramount."

The JBB Fire Department believes it is better to be overly cautious than to risk someone's safety.

"Every individual has the power to make a difference when it comes to preventing fires so be sure to do your part," Sweat said.

Liberty's Finance Soldiers promote esprit de corps

BY SGT. ROBERT RHUDY
UPAR, 208TH FM Co.,
10TH SUST. BDE.

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq - Many Army units conducts team-building events and activities to develop leadership skills, promote esprit de corps and foster unit cohesiveness.

Soldiers in the Headquarters section, 208th Financial Management Company are a few days from completing six months here. While the unit Soldiers has

met the Army physical fitness standards, now Soldiers find ways to maintain their physical fitness through other fun-oriented sports activities.

Many Soldiers takes this as an opportunity to interact and get to know each other. Most Soldiers participate in the weekly sporting event with a common goal to develop leadership skills and foster a cohesive unit.

Spc. Denetra Johnson, the operations clerk, and native of Oklahoma City, Okla. said, "Sports such as soccer and flag football, breaks-up the same old push-up, sit-up, and two-mile run

routine."

Every week, the company will coordinate for proper equipment and location based on the activities.

Staff Sgt. John O'Connor, the finance operations noncommissioned officer in charge and native of Sacramento, Calif., said "Get your equipment early, other units are doing the same thing."

Staff Sgt. George Drakakis, native of Brooklyn, N.Y., and the unit safety officer said, "It's okay to be competitive, but the point is to have fun."

Sustainers become Citizen Soldiers

BY 1ST LT. MAN FUNG WONG
855TH QM Co., 620TH CSSB,
10TH SUST. BDE.

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq - Nothing could stop the 855th Quartermaster Company, 620th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, from celebrating a unique Independence day in Iraq, not even a bad sandstorm that halted all flights here due to limited visibility. On July 4th, three

855th QM Co. Soldiers became citizens of the United States at Al-Faw Palace.

Seats lined in perfect symmetry facing an American flag that stretched from the floor to ceiling 50 feet above. "Courtesy of the U.S. of A.," blasting from the speakers in the main atrium, a patriotic song by Toby Keith. One Soldier remarked, "Well... it wouldn't be American without country music."

The excitement was evident on the Soldier's faces on the days leading up to the ceremony.

Spc. Samuel Lekhram from

Brooklyn, N.Y. emigrated from Guyana in 2005 and is the first in his family to become a U.S. citizen. He plans to enroll in college following his tour here, in hopes to receive an accounting degree.

"Becoming a citizen is important to me as it opens up more opportunity for my future. This country has shown me more opportunity than I have experienced in the past," he said.

Spc. Diego Martinez a native of Hackensack, N.J., who emigrated from Colombia said, "I am proud to be an official member of this

society. Growing up in Colombia has shown me limited opportunities whereas in the U.S. I can aspire and become anything I wish to be."

Raising their right hand, were 237 soldiers from all across the different services, were sworn-in thus becoming citizens.

The U.S. Vice President Joe Biden said, "We are not defined by our race... We are not defined by our religion... We are not defined by our creed. We are Americans and that is what the world defines us as".

Sudoku

The objective is to fill the 9x9 grid so that each column, each row, and each of the nine 3x3 boxes contains the digits from 1 to 9 only one time each.

Level: Medium

			4			5	6	1
	1		6	2		9		
		5	9		1	4		
						6	1	
			8	3	6			
	3	4						
		6	7		8	1		
		1		6	2		9	
5	2	7			4			

Last weeks answers

9	1	2	8	6	4	7	5	3
5	8	3	7	1	2	6	9	4
4	7	6	5	3	9	8	1	2
3	2	5	9	7	1	4	6	8
1	4	7	2	8	6	9	3	5
8	6	9	3	4	5	2	7	1
6	3	4	1	2	7	5	8	9
2	9	1	6	5	8	3	4	7
7	5	8	4	9	3	1	2	6

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

- Who was the first hoopster to win eight NBA scoring titles?
- What's the top-grossing U.S. retail chain owned by one family?
- What 1962 crisis prevented the Kennedy brothers from negotiating to buy the Philadelphia Eagles?
- What 10-year-old began earning his bad reputation by throwing puppies off th Kremlin walls in 1540?
- What tree was named for the Native American scholar who created the 85-syllable Cherokee alphabet?

1. Michael Jordan 2. Wal-Mart 3. The Cuban Missile Crisis 4. Ivan the Terrible 5. The sequoia

JOINT BASE BALAD WORSHIP SERVICES

TRADITIONAL

Sunday	0200	Air Force Hospital Chapel
	0930	Provider Chapel
	1030	Freedom Chapel (West Side)
	1100	Castle Heights (Bldg 4155)
	1400	Air Force Hospital Chapel
	1730	Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)
	2000	Air Force Hospital Chapel

GOSPEL

Sunday	1100	MWR East Building
	1200	Freedom Chapel (West Side)
	1230	Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)
	1900	Provider Chapel

CONTEMPORARY

Sunday	0900	Chapel-Ned Iraq/MWR East
	1030	Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)
	1400	Castle Heights (Bldg 4155)
	1900	Freedom Chapel (West Side)
Wednesday	2000	Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

HISPANIC PROTESTANT

Saturday	1900	Provider Chapel
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LITURGICAL -Episcopal, Anglican, Presbyterian

Sunday	1500	Gilbert Chapel (H-6)
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SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

Saturday	1000	Provider Chapel
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CHURCH OF CHRIST

Sunday	1530	Castle Heights (Bldg 4155)
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LATTER DAY SAINTS-(MORMON)

Sunday	1300	Provider Chapel
	1530	Freedom Chapel (West Side)
	1900	Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

MASS

Saturday	1700	Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)
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(Sacrament of Reconciliation Sat 1600 or by appointment)

	2000	Freedom Chapel (West Side)
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Sunday	0830	Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)
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	1100	Provider Chapel
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	1100	Air Force Hospital Chapel
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Thu	1100	Air Force Hospital Chapel
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Mon, Wed, Fri	1700	Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)
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Mon-Fri	1130	555th Engineer Brigade Bldg 7200
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JEWISH SHABBAT SERVICES

Friday	1700	Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)
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Saturday	0930	Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)
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Saturday	1700	Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)
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ISLAMIC PRAYER

Friday	1230	Provider Chapel
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PAGAN/WICCAN FELLOWSHIP

Thursday	1900	The Shack
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Saturday	1900	The Shack
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GREEK ORTHODOX

Sunday	0900	Provider Annex
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For Further Information Please Call:

Gilbert Chapel: 443-7703

Provider Chapel: 433-2430

Freedom Chapel: 443-6303

JB BALAD ACTIVITIES

INDOOR POOL Swim Lessons: Mon., Wed.- 6 p.m. Tue., Thu., Sat.- 6:30 p.m. AquaTraining: Tue., Thu.- 7:30 p.m., 8:30 p.m.	Tue., Thu., 6-7 a.m., 5-6 p.m. Edge Weapons & Stick Fighting Combative Training: Tue., Thur., Sat.- 8-10 p.m.	Friday- 8 p.m. Chess & Dominoes Tourney: Friday- 8 p.m. Salsa Class: Saturday- 8:30 p.m. Poker: Saturday- 7:30 p.m.	Saturday- 10:30 p.m. Cross Fit: Mon., Wed., Fri.- 5:45 a.m., 7 a.m., 3 p.m., 6 p.m. Tue., Thu.- 7 a.m., 3 p.m.	p.m., 8:30 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Tuesday- 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Ping-pong tourney: Tuesday- 8:30 p.m. Spades: Wednesday- 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m. P90x: Monday- Saturday- 4:30 a.m., 4 p.m., 10 p.m. Soccer: Tue., Thu.- 8 p.m. Yoga: Wednesday- 8 p.m. MACP Level 1: Friday- 8 p.m. 5 on 5 Basketball: Saturday- 8 p.m.	Tuesday- 8 p.m. Foosball tourney: Tuesday- 8 p.m. Jam Session: Tuesday- 7:30 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Wednesday- 8 p.m. Guitar Lessons: Thursday- 7:30 p.m. Game tourney: Thursday- 1 p.m., 8 p.m. Enlisted Poker: Friday- 1 p.m., 8 p.m. Darts: Saturday- 8:30 p.m.	Aerobics: Monday, Wednesday, Friday- 7 p.m. Body by Midget Toning Class: Tue., Thu., - 7 p.m. Dodge ball Game: Tuesday- 7:30 p.m. Furman's Martial Arts: Mon., Wed., Sun.- 1 p.m. Gaston's Self-Defense Class: Fri., Sat.- 7 p.m. Open court basketball: Thursday- 7 p.m. Open court soccer: Mon., Wed., - 7 p.m. Zingano Brazilian Jui Jitsu: Tue., Thu., - 8:30 p.m.
EAST FIT-NESS CENTER Open Court Volleyball: Sunday- 6 p.m. Aerobics: Mon., Wed., Fri.- 5:30-6:30 a.m. Yoga Class: Mon., Fri.- 6-7 a.m. Step Aerobics: Mon., Wed., Fri.- 5:30 p.m. Conditioning Training Class: Mon., Wed., Fri.- 7:15-8 p.m. Brazilian Jui Jitsu: Mon., Wed., Fri.- 8-9 p.m. Abs-Aerobics: Tue., Thu., 6-7 a.m., 5-6 p.m.	EAST RECREATION CENTER 4-ball tourney: Sunday- 8 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Monday- 8 p.m. Karaoke: Monday- 8 p.m. Swing Class: Tuesday- 8 p.m. Table Tennis: Tuesday- 8 p.m. Dungeons & Dragons: Thursday- 7:30 p.m. Poetry Night: Thursday- 8 p.m. 6-ball tourney: Thursday- 8 p.m. Caribbean Night: Friday- 8 p.m.	H6 FITNESS CENTER Spin: Sunday- 9 a.m. Mon., Wed., Fri.- 2 a.m., 8 a.m. 2 p.m., 7 p.m., 9 p.m. Tue., Thu., - 5:45 a.m., 9 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Saturday- 9 a.m., 7 p.m. Boxing: Sunday- 4 p.m. Tue., Thu., - 2 p.m. Boot Camp: Sunday- 8:45 a.m. Tue., Thu., - 7 p.m. Power Abs: Mon., Tue., Thu., - 8 p.m. Friday- 9 p.m. CC Cross Fit: Monday- 8 p.m.	Saturday- 10:30 p.m. Cross Fit: Mon., Wed., Fri.- 5:45 a.m., 7 a.m., 3 p.m., 6 p.m. Tue., Thu.- 7 a.m., 3 p.m. Sunday- 5:45 a.m., 3 p.m. P90x: Monday- Saturday- 4:30 a.m., 4 p.m., 10 p.m. Soccer: Tue., Thu.- 8 p.m. Yoga: Wednesday- 8 p.m. MACP Level 1: Friday- 8 p.m. 5 on 5 Basketball: Saturday- 8 p.m.	Wednesday- 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Salsa: Wednesday- 8:30 p.m. 9-ball: Thursday- 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Karaoke: Thursday- 8:30 p.m. Dominos: Saturday- 8:30 p.m. Squat Competition: Saturday- 8 p.m. Karaoke: Sun., Wed., 7:30pm 9-ball tourney: Monday- 8 p.m. Ping-pong tourney: Friday- 7 p.m.	Wednesday- 8 p.m. Foosball tourney: Tuesday- 8 p.m. Jam Session: Tuesday- 7:30 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Wednesday- 8 p.m. Guitar Lessons: Thursday- 7:30 p.m. Game tourney: Thursday- 1 p.m., 8 p.m. Enlisted Poker: Friday- 1 p.m., 8 p.m. Darts: Saturday- 8:30 p.m.	Monday, Wednesday, Friday- 7 p.m. Body by Midget Toning Class: Tue., Thu., - 7 p.m. Dodge ball Game: Tuesday- 7:30 p.m. Furman's Martial Arts: Mon., Wed., Sun.- 1 p.m. Gaston's Self-Defense Class: Fri., Sat.- 7 p.m. Open court basketball: Thursday- 7 p.m. Open court soccer: Mon., Wed., - 7 p.m. Zingano Brazilian Jui Jitsu: Tue., Thu., - 8:30 p.m.

UPCOMING SPORTS ON AFN



Wednesday 7/29/09

Colorado Rockies @ New York Mets, Live 2 a.m. AFN/sports
Phoenix Mercury @ Connecticut Sun, Live 2:30 a.m. AFN/xtra
Toronto Blue Jays @ Seattle Mariners, Live 5 a.m. AFN/xtra
Atlanta Braves @ Florida Marlins, Tape Delayed 10 a.m. AFN/sports
Pittsburgh Pirates @ San Francisco Giants, Tape Delayed 4 p.m. AFN/sports

Thursday 7/30/09

New York Yankees @ Tampa Bay Rays, Live 2 a.m. AFN/sports
Oakland Athletics @ Boston Red Sox, Tape Delayed 10 a.m. AFN/sports
Chicago White Sox @ Minnesota Twins, Tape Delayed 3 p.m. AFN/sports
30th U.S Seniors Open Championship: First Round, Live 8 p.m. AFN/sports

Friday 7/31/09

Philadelphia Phillies @ San Francisco Giants, Live 6 a.m. AFN/xtra
Los Angeles Dodgers @ St. Louis Cardinals, Tape Delayed 10 a.m. AFN/sports
Seattle Mariners @ Texas Rangers, Tape Delayed 3 p.m. AFN/sports

Saturday 8/1/09

Boston Red Sox @ Baltimore Orioles, Live 2 a.m. AFN/sports
Toronto Blue Jays @ Oakland Athletics, Live 6 a.m. AFN/xtra
Colorado Rockies @ Cincinnati Reds, Tape Delayed 10 a.m. AFN/sports
Los Angeles Angels @ Minnesota Twins, Tape Delayed 2 p.m. AFN/sports
New York Yankees @ Chicago White Sox, Live 11 p.m. AFN/sports

Sunday 8/2/09

Chicago Cubs @ Florida Marlins, Live 2 a.m. AFN/prime atlantic
FC Barcelona @ Los Angeles Galaxy, Live 6 a.m. AFN/xtra
Detroit Tigers @ Cleveland Indians, Tape Delayed 10 a.m. AFN/xtra
D.C. United @ Houston Dynamo, Tape Delayed 8 p.m. AFN/xtra

Monday 8/3/09

Chicago Cubs @ Florida Marlins, Live 1 a.m. AFN/xtra
Los Angeles Dodgers @ Atlanta Braves, Live 3 a.m. AFN/sports
Arizona Diamondbacks @ New York Mets, Tape Delayed 7 a.m. AFN/xtra
Philadelphia Phillies @ San Francisco Giants, Tape Delayed 10 a.m. AFN/xtra

Tuesday 8/4/09

Chicago Cubs @ Cincinnati Reds, Live 2 a.m. AFN/xtra
Milwaukee Brewers @ Los Angeles Dodgers, Live 5 a.m. AFN/xtra
Texas Rangers @ Oakland Athletics, Tape Delayed 5 p.m. AFN/sports

SUSTAINER REEL TIME THEATER

Movie Times

Wednesday, July 29

5 p.m. The Hangover
8 p.m. Harry Potter And The Half Blood Prince

Thursday, July 30

5 p.m. Harry Potter And The Half Blood Prince
8 p.m. My Life In Ruins

Friday, July 31

2 p.m. Year One
5 p.m. The Taking Of Pelham 123
8:30 p.m. G-Force

Saturday, August 1

2 p.m. The Taking Of Pelham 123
5 p.m. G-Force
8 p.m. Year One

Sunday, August 2

2 p.m. G-Force
5 p.m. Year One
8 p.m. The Taking Of Pelham 123

Monday, August 3

5 p.m. The Taking Of Pelham 123
8 p.m. G-Force

Tuesday, August 4

5 p.m. G-Force
8 p.m. Year One

(Schedule is Subject to Change)

YEAR ONE



Jack Black and Michael Cera headline Harold Ramis' Biblical comedy about a pair of misfit hunter-gatherers who embark on a wild journey through the ancient world after



being banished from their primitive village. Zed (Black) and Oh (Cera) may lack in the skills that their cheiftan is looking for, but they have plans to make it big. Zed has a gut feeling that God has "chosen" him, and so he leads his buddy on a trip through the unknown countryside in search of bigger and better things, bumping into several weird characters along the way -- like a feuding pair of brothers named Cain and Abel (David Cross and Paul Rudd). Unfortunately, their quest for greatness hits a few snags, like being sold into slavery, and later becoming the object of interest to a very amorous, very hairy high priest (Oliver Platt) in the oppulent city of Sodom.



G-FORCE



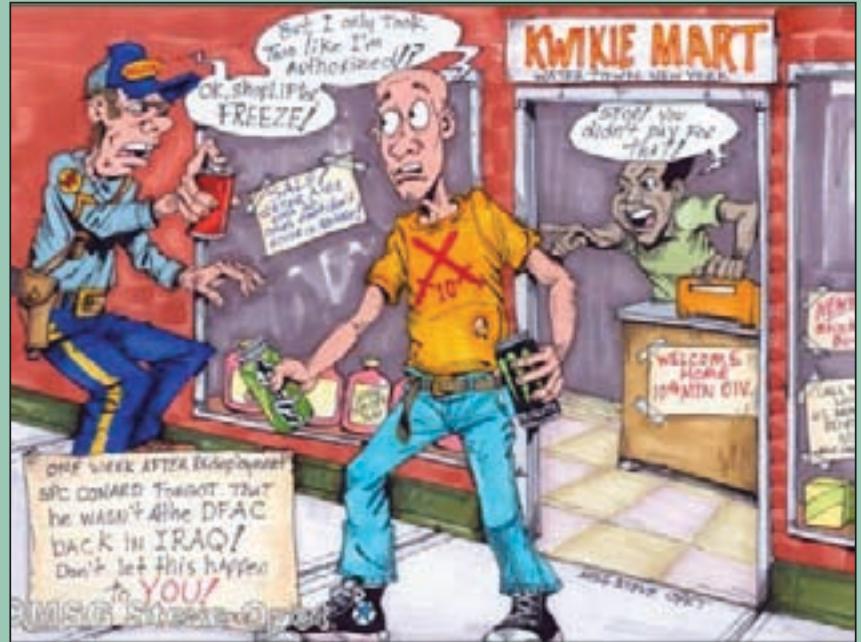
Armed with the latest high-tech spy gear, a guinea pig named Darwin (Sam Rockwell) and his team of specially trained rodents are often the last line of defense against chaos



and destruction. But when the government shuts them down and ships them off to a pet shop, Darwin and his gang will have to find a way to break out and prevent a mad billionaire (Bill Nighy) from taking over the world.

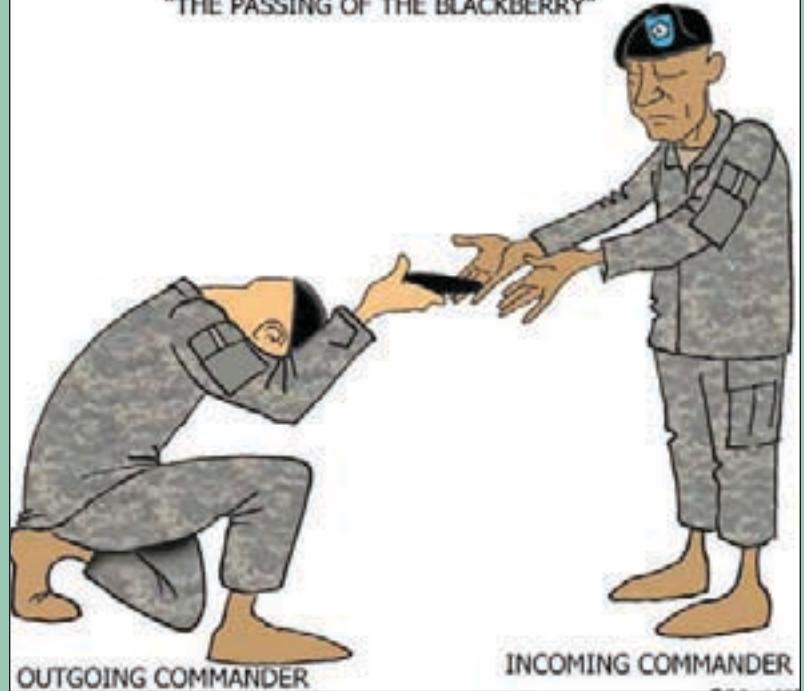


Iraq according to Opet



PVT. MURPHY'S LAW

NEW CHANGE OF COMMAND RITUALS BROUGHT TO US BY TECHNOLOGY: "THE PASSING OF THE BLACKBERRY"



OUTGOING COMMANDER

INCOMING COMMANDER

Depart Fort Riley, Kansas - To Dallas, Texas (Why a trip South in order to head North-West to Colorado? I don't know, but it's OK because Dallas has quite possibly, the best USO in the world) - To Colorado Springs, Colorado (12 hours off plane) - To Newfoundland, Canada (3 hours off plane) - To Shannon, Ireland (2 hours off plane) - To Budapest, Hungary (2 hours ON plane) - To Kuwait (4 hours of training & 8 days of waiting) - To Iraq (EOM)



PHOTOS AROUND IRAQ



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Carmichael Yopez

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Joe Lilly, of Maury City, Tenn., assigned to Bravo Troop, 1st Battalion, 230th Air Cavalry Squadron, conducts maintenance on an OH-58D helicopter at Forward Operating Base Diamond Back, Mosul, Iraq July 14.



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Chrissy Best

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. George Chang, from Hayward, Calif., and Staff Sgt. Marcus Mann, from Vacaville, Calif., both assigned to Bravo Company, 445th Civil Affairs Battalion, along with other Soldiers from their unit participate in tactical range training using M-4s, at Normandy Range Complex, Basra, Iraq July 15.



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Edwin L. Wriston

A U.S. Air Force Airman with the 732nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, attached to the 93rd Military Police Battalion, conducts a range safety briefing during rifle firing training for Abu Ghraib District Iraqi Police at Forward Operating Base Mahmudiyah, Iraq July 8.



U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Benjamin Boren

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Christopher Jasper, from Everett, Wash., and member of the 1st Cavalry Division, briefs several Iraqi National Policemen, during a military working dog demonstration by U.S. military dog handlers, outside Forward Operating Base Falcon, near Baghdad, Iraq July 15.

NEWS AROUND IRAQ

Civil Service Corps graduation in Nimrud

MOSUL, Iraq — Local shaykhs, Iraqi military leaders, and U.S. personnel attended a Civil Service Corps graduation ceremony for 185 students in the Nimrud sub-district of the Ninewa province, July 20.

The CSC program is funded by the United States Agency for International Development and provides on-the-job training to young men approximately 40 kilometers southeast of Mosul. The CSC started the road and canal construction project, Jan. 4, and hired students from the local area to become skilled journeymen.

They built 20 kilometers of paved roads, which provide better access to and from small villages, and 18 canals throughout, intended to allow farmers to irrigate fields.

"This type of project shows that American forces are dedicated to improving the lives of the Iraqi people," said Capt. Matthew L. Keith, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division.

A U.S. civil affairs team and Soldiers of HHC, 1st Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, conducted quality control inspections throughout the entire phase of construction.

The graduation ceremony was mainly an Iraq-led event. Iraqi Security Forces leaders from 2nd Iraqi Army Division, 7th Iraqi Army Division, and Nimrud Iraqi Police attended the graduation ceremony and provided security for the whole event.

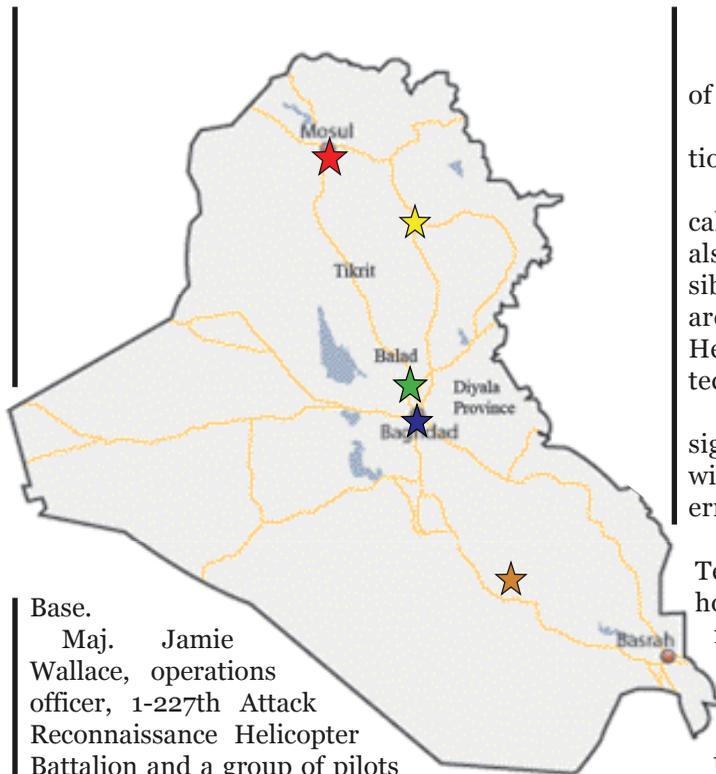
Keith and Shaykh Khalid Sabbah al Jabori were guest speakers at the ceremony. They commended the men on the great work they had accomplished.

Afterwards, Shaykh Khalid and Shaykh Ali presented diplomas to each of the graduates.

U.S. Army Apache Helicopter Unit Hosts Iraqi Students

CAMP TAJI, Iraq - On a night they won't soon forget, 11 Iraqi second lieutenants attending the Iraqi Air Force Training School were exposed to an evening of English conversation, dinner in an American military dining facility, and a tour of one of the Apache helicopter units on Camp Taji.

The students were selected from among 94 Iraqi lieutenants because of their progression within the English Language Training program. The goal of ELT is to prepare the students, using the American Language Course from the Defense Language Institute, to achieve an appropriate level of English proficiency for their selected career in the Iraqi Air Force. Most of the students are future pilot candidates and will attend Undergraduate Pilot Training at Kirkuk Regional Air



Base.

Maj. Jamie Wallace, operations officer, 1-227th Attack Reconnaissance Helicopter Battalion and a group of pilots paired off with the Iraqi lieutenants.

The Army officers said they were impressed with the level at which the lieutenants spoke English and encouraged them to continue studying hard so they could move onto pilot training. Later, the lieutenants explored different sections of the helicopters and learned about their capabilities and mission.

Afterward, one of the Iraqi lieutenants wrote, "Yesterday was an unusual day in my life because I had visited the American air base with my partners and our supervisors. It was such a beautiful tour which motivated us to do better in the future. It was very interesting to meet the American staff. We gained enough information to help us add more experience to our military career. Finally, I would like to thank our supervisors and the Army officers for such an unforgettable tour."

Before they departed, Lt. Col. Charles Dalcourt, battalion commander, advised the lieutenants to remember nights like this so that when they are seasoned officers, they feel comfortable mentoring the next generation of Iraqi officers in this way to continue the growth and efficiency of the Iraqi Air Force.

Managing the ELT program is the U.S. Air Force's 821st Expeditionary Training Squadron, part of the 321st Air Expeditionary Wing and the Iraqi Advising and Training Mission-Air Force.

All elements in theater fall under responsibility of Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq.

Engineers nearing completion of Combat Outpost India construction

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE MAREZ, MOSUL, Iraq — With the sound of hammers and saws resonating in the otherwise still night air at Combat Outpost India, Soldiers of the 643rd Engineer Company are making steady progress to complete construction

of the outpost.

COP India's completion will facilitate the reduction of U.S. forces from the city of Mosul.

The outpost will be used as a training site for local Iraqi Security Forces, and its construction will also make the areas north of Mosul more accessible to the reconstruction teams working in the area, said Capt. Joshua A. Long, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 130th Engineer Brigade technical headquarters officer in charge.

"This is a major construction project that will significantly increase U.S. Force's ability to train with Iraqis, and will facilitate transition to the Government of Iraq," said Long.

Advisory teams from the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, deployed from Fort Hood, Texas, will occupy COP India and their primary role will be training the ISF.

Capt. Kevin P. Arnett, commander, 643rd Eng. Co., said the completion of COP India will help expand the capabilities of the advisory teams and will improve the area.

Initiated in mid-June, COP India has been a big construction project for Arnett's unit, and the engineers are now nearing the final phase of the project.

"The construction of COP India has been the brigade's number one priority. Despite significant constraints, the 643rd adapted, and performed extraordinarily well," Long said.

Once finished, COP India will consist of multiple housing structures, including living quarters and offices, a dining facility, a laundry facility, and a morale, welfare and recreation facility.

"This will be a nice living area for the Soldiers. We've put a lot of pride and hard work in this project and hope it will help them accomplish their mission," said 1st Lt. Emily Hannenberg, platoon leader, 643rd Eng. Co.

GRD Soldier earns staff sergeant rank through battlefield promotion system

TALLIL, Iraq — In a July 18 ceremony at the Gulf Region South district headquarters, Contingency Operating Base Adder, Tallil, Iraq, Sgt. David Halstead was promoted to staff sergeant, becoming the first person in the five-and-a-half-year history of Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq to advance under the provisions of the Army's battlefield promotion system.

Distinguishing himself by executing his duties to the full measure of Warrior Ethos and Army Values, Halstead earned the promotion to staff sergeant through the battlefield promotion system, available only to Soldiers serving within Iraq or Afghanistan in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

Halstead deployed in 2008 as part of the 416th Theater Engineer Command in support of GRD's Iraq reconstruction effort. Located on Camp Echo, Halstead's office has 18 active projects worth more than \$56 million spread over three provinces.

"He constantly places the mission first, ensuring that project visits are planned and conducted on time," said GRS Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Sangren during the ceremony. "This requires coordination, planning, and supervision with our private security contractor in conjunction with district headquarters. He is tenacious in problem solving, never accepting defeat."

GRD Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Prater said Halstead's promotion was not only a personal accomplishment but an accomplishment for the division as a whole.

"The competition was at the theater level or the entire country of Iraq, and one of ours was selected," said Prater. "We had to make a determination of the best qualified and Sgt. Halstead certainly was that. Congratulations! It's been a long time coming and a long time overdue."

During his remarks, GRS District Commander Col. Jeffry Knippel explained the significance of the battlefield promotion system.

"The intended purpose of this program is to accelerate and expeditiously promote courageous and extraordinary soldiers who willingly, unhesitatingly accept and flawlessly perform at levels of increased responsibility on the battlefield," said Knippel. "Battlefield promotions are predicated on extraordinary performance of duty while serving in combat or under combat conditions. Soldiers must display exceptional leadership and performance that is expected of the next higher pay grade than they currently hold, clearly distinguishing them from their peers."

Knippel thanked and recognized Halstead's family who attended the ceremony through a live video teleconference with the help of the 416th Theater Engineer Command in Darien, Ill.

Military Family Member Creates Blog for Kids of Deployed Personnel

 BAGHDAD, Iraq – Army family member Katie Glenn has created a cool way for kids of deployed military personnel to express their feelings about their parent being away or who have lost a parent from the conflicts in Iraq or Afghanistan.

With the assistance of Families United, a non-profit organization, Glenn started a blog – www.militarykidsblog.com. She said she got the idea after taking a "new media" course at American University in Washington, D.C., where she is a senior.

"I read a lot of articles on how political campaigns, charities and social activism organizations were learning to use new forms of media like Twitter, Facebook, texting and blogs to get the message out," said Glenn, whose deployed father is U.S. Army Col. Harry C. Glenn, chief of staff of the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq.

At Families United, she worked as a Military Family Fellow during an internship program earlier this year. She thought her idea for a website was something they would be interested in supporting.

"I learned a lot about how Families United helped

military families to get their voices heard," Glenn said. "Kids can go onto the site and put their feelings into words. They can link up with other kids who might be going through similar emotions.

"I love it so far," she continued. "I have been reading the different posts that have been going up. I can identify with a lot of it. Sometimes it feels safer to talk to someone you can't see or you feel better when you write it down."

With her father deployed and she away at college rather than at home, Glenn said this introduced another situation in which she felt the blog helped her express her feelings.

Glenn's father has served 24 years in the U.S. Army and has been deployed several times, including to Afghanistan and now Iraq.

"I am extremely proud of my daughter and her desire to help younger kids whose parents are deployed. This was her initiative and she has had the perseverance to see it through," he said. "I believe it is a good thing any time people can discuss issues with those who are in similar circumstances. If it just allows them to relieve a little stress, it is worth it."

When asked what she hopes the blog will do for kids, Glenn replied, "I mostly hope that military kids realize that this life is something they share with a relatively small group of the American population. This [military kids' blog] is a whole group of kids who know just how they feel."

Glenn said she is hopeful that the blog will someday expand into something much bigger -- hosting pictures, contact information -- sort of like a Facebook for military kids.

She also foresees the website hosting interesting articles and scholarship information.

Glenn testified about her life as a military child at a congressional hearing July 14 on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.

Ravens fly Iraqi skies providing "bird's eye" view

 FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq – Launching an unmanned aircraft by throwing it in the air might not sound too technologically advanced, but with surveillance equipment and auto navigational systems it could be the difference between life and death.

This aircraft, known as a "Raven," is operated by two Soldiers assigned to Forward Operating Base McHenry, with the 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, who use it as an "eye in the sky" around the base.

Spc. Andrew Larsen and Pfc. Eloy Martinez, both infantrymen with Company B, 1st Bn., 8th Cav. Regt., have been maintaining, repairing and operating the Raven during their deployment in addition to their infantry missions.

Before launching the aircraft, Martinez and Larsen program coordinates into it. Once the Raven is airborne, the Soldiers need only to control take offs and landings, while the aircraft does everything in between on its own.

"It is a lot easier for someone to use," said Martinez.

The Raven also has the added benefit of not needing a large launching area, and it can also get into

the air faster than traditional UAVs.

"This (Raven) is for people on the move...it is a lot more mobile," explained Martinez.

While in the air, the Raven monitors situations on the ground and sends a live feed back to the Soldiers.

Rather than sending Soldiers into potentially dangerous situations, the Raven can be sent instead, said Larsen.

Leaders can use the information to make decisions about how they want to approach situations and where they want to send Soldiers, said Larsen.

"It saves lives," Larsen said. "It keeps Soldiers out of harm's way."

Larsen used one scenario to illustrate the effectiveness of the Raven.

The Raven gets sent out alongside one of the main roads, and while it is flying, the camera takes a video that shows someone emplacing an improvised-explosive device, said Larsen. This information is then analyzed and dispersed to Soldiers in the area who can be sent to investigate the scene and prevent Iraqi civilians from going near the explosive.

"As an infantryman, it is not something I would have ever expected to do," said Martinez.

"Every unit should have an aerial asset like this," said Larsen.

Role of Religion Introduced in Partner School

 BAGHDAD, Iraq - "The Role of Religion in the West" is an addition to the new Partner School that was created to give the Iraqis a better understanding of how religion affects Western culture.

The Partner School assists Iraqi Security Forces by enhancing their grasp of Western cultures and values, encouraging long-lasting partnerships with Western counterparts and understanding the role of the coalition advisor. A group of chaplains from all over Iraq came to share in the introduction of Western religion to the class participants.

U.S. Army Chaplain (Maj.) William Steen, Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq chaplain, began the discussion by telling the group that religion will always be a part of the Western culture.

"And because of the many different religions in the Western culture, we have to respect the different religious beliefs and practices of others," he said. "Different faiths come together to share a common goal—human beings caring for human beings."

Other chaplains in attendance were U.S. Army Col. R. Michael Coffey, Multi-National Force-Iraq command chaplain, U. S. Army Lt. Col. Dan Ames, Multi-National Force-Iraq deputy chaplain and U. S. Army Lt. Col. Timothy Bedsole, Multi-National Corps-Iraq world religion chaplain. "Through dialogue we can learn. History can be a stepping stone," said Coffey, when asked about the importance of religion being added to the course.

The Partner School was expanded to include "The Role of Religion in the West" in part, to accommodate the wishes of the participants, said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Sandra Kolb, chief, Training and Development Branch, MNSTC-I. "We wanted to give them more information, question and answers sessions, as well as comparisons between the west and Iraq," said Kolb.

Sustaining the Line



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Keith M. Anderson

Capt. Argentina A. Gibson, commander, Bravo Company, 16th Special Troops Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, re-enlists Sgt. Tiffany Franklin, operations noncommissioned officer in charge, Co. B, 16th STB, in the company conference room at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq July 13. Franklin, a native of Martinsville, Va., re-enlisted to go to Alaska and on her first deployment, said the Army offers stability for her and her Family.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Brian Barbour

Spc. Jeremy T. Carter from Tri-cities Wash., and Sgt. Jason S. Allaway from Bel-fair, Wash., are members of Company A, 1st Battalion, 161st Infantry Regiment, Washington Army National Guard, were presented the Army Commendation Medal by Command Sgt. Maj. Frank A. Grippe, Multi-National Corps-Iraq senior enlisted leader, at Joint Base Balad, Iraq July 22. Carter, Allaway and Sgt. Timothy Braaten from Richland, Wash., (not present for the award) were recognized for their quick reaction during a non-combat related medical emergency which saved the life of 1st Sgt. Eric Colvin, from the 669th Maintenance Co., a Fort Irwin, Calif., based unit, at JBB July 14.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Beau R. Stefka

Pfc. Michael Syner, a public affairs specialist from the 10th Sustainment Brigade and Louis-burg, N.C. native, trains a group of Iraqi Army leaders on the importance of maintaining a positive image during media awareness training inside the Iraqi Army compound, Camp Taji, Iraq July 19. The class was part of a three-week course held by Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq who is advising and mentoring the leaders on skills to interact with civilians and the media.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Alex Snyder

Spc. Brian R. O'Brien, a Soldier and trainer with Co. D, 949th Brigade Support Battalion instructs Spc. Nicholas A. Mobley, a Soldier of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Special Troops Battalion, 41st Brigade Combat Team on how to climb up the front of Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle during training at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, July 10. The training is an initiative by the 3rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) to help reduce vehicle accidents in Iraq.