

# Lightning Strikes

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Broncos host chef competition

Soldiers honor Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month

Operation Glad Tidings of Benevolence II gears up in Diyala

Hula show brings a hint of home to Task Force Lightning

Engineers help 4th IA build a better Iraq





*A group shot of the command staff of Multi-National Division - North and top-ranking officials of the Iraqi army and the Peshmerga May 10. Earlier the group toured the battlefield at Gaugamela, where Alexander the Great defeated a Persian army more than five times the size of his in 331 B.C. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Daniel Nelson, 145th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)*

# Leaders look into past wars

## *MND-N Command Group visits historic battlefield*

**By Spc. Daniel Nelson**  
**145th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment**

The epic battle of Gaugamela took place more than two-millennium ago where Alexander the Great's forces faced and defeated an army of Persian soldiers more than five times greater than their own. This superior leadership and military genius of Alexander the Great enabled him to control the battlefield and overcome the menace of the Persian onslaught in 331 B.C.

Brig. Gen. Robert Brown, deputy commanding general (support), Multi-National Division-North, and Soldiers from Command Post-North, Task Force Lightning, hosted a command group briefing to discuss Alexander the Great's battle tactics used during this ancient battle at an area located just north of Mosul, Iraq May 9.

The group included Maj. Gen. Robert L. Caslen Jr., commanding general, MND-N, and brigade commanders and command sergeants major from throughout MND-N.

The command group received a detailed briefing on battlefield operations, maneuvering, and other specifics of the battle. The overview was presented by Capt. Wendy Wright, commander, 54th Military Historian Detachment, who provided details of the life of Alexander to include: his rearing, his father, King Phillip II, his father's assassination, and how he ascended to the throne as king at the age of 20. Wright further detailed Alexander's campaign into Persia and generalship during his campaign.

Even though the battle happened in

331 B.C., lessons can be learned from the victory Alexander the Great achieved by overcoming incredible odds and defeating the Persian army led by King Darius III.

"His tutelage at his father's side and his valor at the battle of Chaeronea earned him the immediate loyalty of his father's army," stated Wright. "Alexander wanted to fulfill his father's final battle plans; an invasion into Persia. In the spring of 334 B.C., Alexander set forth to the Persian western sea port."

Maj. William Epolito, deputy force protection officer, 25th Infantry Division, concluded the briefing to the command staff by asking the question, "Why is the battle of Gaugamela important to us today?" His aim for this question was to provide relevance in what can be learned from a battle that took place so long ago; how Alexander led his army to defeat a powerful adversary on a battlefield that was hand-picked and made to give advantage to the Persians.

"This, even though it was so long ago, gives us basic infantry and cavalry tactics," added Epolito. "We still can learn from this."

Making the closing remarks to the group for the night was Caslen. He highlighted how important the event is, being able to go to a battlefield, which is studied by historians around the world.

"We have a tremendous opportunity to be on a battlefield that's one of the most significant battles in the history of warfare," said Caslen. "There are a lot of lessons to be learned from it: from tactics to strategic."

Caslen added that U.S. Soldiers have an opportunity to share, develop and train an Iraqi army in the same sort of camaraderie, which Alexander had built with his army.

"More importantly, is that we have a venue to bring two foreign factions that have fought each other in war before together," added Caslen. "This is an opportunity for engagement, for transparency and more than anything, for the future of this country. It's an opportunity for these two warring factions to build trust."

Before leaving the battle site, Caslen and Alex Laskaris, the provincial reconstruction team leader for the Ninewa province of Iraq, presented a marker to serve as a monument for the battle waged there. The words—etched into the marker in English, Arabic and Kurdish—don't depict a winning side to battle, but honor the noble warriors who fought.

As the words on the tablet were read to the group in each of the languages, Laskaris ended the ceremony by reading the English, "...You relinquished beloved youth for the rough cloud of war."



*A Soldier looks on the field of Gaugamela, the site of a battle between Alexander the Great and King Darius III in 334 B.C. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Jesus J. Aranda, Task Force Lightning Public Affairs)*



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*Cover illustration by Pfc. Jesus J. Aranda, Task Force Lightning Public Affairs  
Original photo by Sgt. 1st Class Marvin L. Daniels, 982nd Combat Camera (Airborne)*

*A hulu dancer performs for service members and civilians during an Asian-Pacific American Month celebration at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, near Tikrit, Iraq, May 24.*



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# Commander's Update



The month of May provides us an opportunity to celebrate Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month, and once again recognize the diversity that is one component of the overall strength of our Army. This diversity is seen in every one of our units, and is represented in all our Services – Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard.

For Task Force Lightning our island ties run deep, as Schofield Barracks, Hawaii is the home and birthplace of the 25th Infantry Division, so celebrating the Asian-Pacific culture reminds many of us of family and friends back home.

Throughout the month and across northern Iraq, from Baqubah to Kirkuk to Mosul, units hosted various celebrations and events to recognize the dynamic culture that exists within our ranks. The culminating event was a special exhibition of traditional dances of the Pacific Islands here at Contingency Operating Base Speicher. Male and female Soldiers from within Task Force Lightning performed dances from Hawaii, New Zealand, Samoa, Tahiti and Tonga.

I find it amazing to be in an organization as diverse and broad as the United States Army. Few other organizations in the world exist with the diversity needed to hold such an event with the participants coming wholly from within. We hold similar celebrations for every other Heritage month, and what other institution can claim the same?

The military has been integrated for over 60 years, and it has often been said that our greatest strength is our diversity. Our various backgrounds, ethnicity, beliefs, religions, and experiences give us each a unique pair

of eyes to see the world, while the seven Army Values gives us a common lens to peer through.

Our diversity coupled with our shared values enables the U.S. Army to always have the edge in innovation, problem solving, and creativity in all challenges we face throughout the world. Our policy of embracing people for who they are, while not always easy, has made us the greatest equalizing institution in America.

The theme for this year's Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month is "Lighting the Past, Present and Future." This is an idea we can carry forward for the rest of the deployment. We can demonstrate our respect for diversity with the Iraqi Security Forces and provincial governments and highlight a future where Iraq is not wholly defined by Arab or Kurd, Sunni or Shia, Muslim or Christian, but instead is defined by Iraqis of all backgrounds working together for a better future in Iraq.

Look at this month as the opportunity to reinforce our long held respect for the Iraqi Security Forces and provincial governments, who continue to work towards reconciliation among Iraq's own diverse population and religions in order to pave the way for a stronger nation. Our respect for a sovereign and stable Iraq, for her people and our security partners, that respect defines the strength and commitment of this Task Force.

Through our ongoing partnership, the Iraqi Security Forces continue to improve in their capabilities and performance, and through this combined effort we can achieve an enduring security throughout northern Iraq.

Our diversity has always been our greatest strength, and today I ask each and every one of you to assist the Iraqi Security Forces in lighting the path to a future where one of their greatest strengths comes through embracing their diversity.

TROPIC LIGHTNING!

Maj. Gen. Robert L. Caslen Jr.  
Commanding General  
Task Force Lightning  
Multi-National Division - North



Service members throughout Task Force Lightning have made tremendous strides in the implementation of the Iraqi Security Agreement. This phenomenal task has not changed our mission or objective; with change comes adaptability and a new mind set as to what our role is. With the shift in mind set, we must develop Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTP's) that will reach the same effect on the ground. We must identify ways to continue to influence the Iraqi Security Forces while having less contact and engagements with them. Sharing these TTP's with one another will be the key to the success of TF Lightning in this transition. As a Multi-National Division, we will continue to assist and support the Iraqi Security Forces as they take the lead in the security of their country and establish a Sovereign, Stable, and Self-reliant Iraq.

As we continue to shape conditions for the Government of Iraq to lead their country forward and provide a sense of normalcy, we cannot forget that we are in a combat environment. Over the last few weeks, we have experienced a significant decrease in attacks across Multi-National Division North's area of responsibility. This is the direct result of several contributing factors: understanding the complexities of a counterinsurgency fight and Iraqi culture; and understanding the importance of partnership which allows the transition of Iraqi forces into the lead. With that said, we must ensure that we remain vigilant, ensuring that we continue to hone our combat skills and experience in order to assist the Government of Iraq and its forces.

Every Soldier, Sailor, Airman and Marine contributes to the fight daily, to the point that some of the

contributions become routine and mundane. Over time things can become complacent and overconfidence can lead to laziness for things like Pre-Combat Checks, Pre-Combat Inspections, and normal supervision. We owe it to our service members to check and inspect what we expect, and not lose focus as we continue operations in this combat environment. We cannot afford to create a lull in the momentum that everyone had a hand in pushing forward and it can easily occur if we do not stay vigilant in our daily operations. Making sound judgment, conscious decisions, coupled with combat experience plays a critical role in ensuring our operational mission is accomplished.

The extensive period of low-level insurgent activity and reduced presence that we are witnessing can be attributed to the successful partnered operations and is why we cannot let our guard down. Partnered combat operations and shared facilities are also vulnerable to attack, so we must ensure that we are prepared to react to a kinetic event and be prepared to fight. This is difficult if we become complacent to the point where we allow ourselves to remove individual protective gear while conducting combat operations, or lower our standards in general.

We must remain attentive and remove the stigma of "We have been doing this for months, or have been coming here for months, and nothing has happened." If you have heard this or you have stated this yourself, you may be the reason for an unforeseen catastrophic event that you could have prevented. Do not allow yourself or someone else to be placed in that position. We owe it to our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines and must do everything we can to protect them, stay focused, and fight the rigors of becoming complacent.

We are all responsible in ensuring that we are successful in our mission, and we do this by adhering to standards. All service members across MND-N are phenomenal and it is evident in the professionalism of combat operations and professional conduct, leaving no doubt that we are a tremendous fighting force. Every operation is a combat operation when departing an Operations Base and there is no room for complacency. Stay safe, Tropic Lightning!

TROPIC LIGHTNING!

Command Sgt. Maj. Frank M. Leota  
Command Sergeant Major  
Task Force Lightning  
Multi-National Division - North

Command Sgt. Maj. Update



# Bronco Brigade hosts chef competition

*Honors Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month with secret ingredients*

Story and photos by Spc. Nivea Lucio  
145th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

With his “secret ingredients,” food preparation skills and a little creativity, Sgt. Tony Sanders, a native of Fort Worth, Texas, won the Bronco Chef Competition held in the north dining facility at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, near Tikrit, Iraq, May 16.

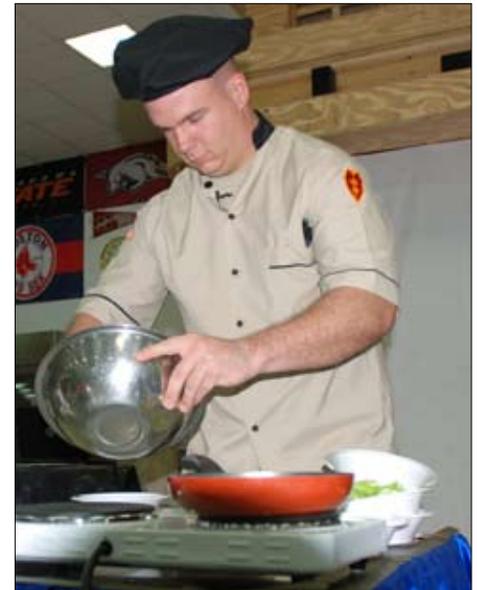
The first-ever showdown of its kind for the 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division required the five contestants to prepare a three-course meal.

Each contestant was given a review of their “secret ingredients” beforehand. Pineapple was a key item in honor of Asian-Pacific American Month and the Hawaiian Islands, where the Soldiers are stationed at Schofield Barracks.

Preparation was timed and each contestant had an assistant to hand them utensils and ingredients. Taste and display were keys to winning the competition.

Sanders, a food service noncommissioned officer assigned to Company G, 3rd Battalion, 7th Field Artillery, created a stir-fry of rice, pineapple and cheese with a salad and an appetizer.

Warrant Officer Tomeki Saunders and Sgt. 1st Class Tavares Burton, both from the 3rd IBCT “Broncos,” helped coordinate the event as a spin-off from their quarterly chef board. Saunders, a food service technician, and Burton, a food service manager, felt participating in the event would help the Army cooks develop their “technical and tactical knowledge” besides providing a break in the day-to-day routine in the combat zone.



*Sgt. Tony Sanders, above, a food service noncommissioned officer, prepares a dish, which helped him win the first Bronco Chef Competition, hosted by 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division May 16.*



*Samples of some of the food prepared by the food service specialists during the Bronco Chef Competition held at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, near Tikrit, Iraq May 16. 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division hosted the competition.*



*Servicemembers and civilians watch an exhibition of traditional dances from the Pacific Islands honoring and celebrating Asian-Pacific American Month at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, near Tikrit, Iraq May 24. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Marvin L. Daniels, 982nd Combat Camera (Airborne)).*

## Deployed Tropic Lightning Soldiers celebrate Asian-Pacific American heritage

By Pfc. Jesus J. Aranda  
Task Force Lightning Public Affairs

Soldiers of the 25th Infantry Division and attached units took time from their deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom to honor and celebrate Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month with a special exhibition of traditional dances from the Pacific Islands at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, near Tikrit, Iraq, May 24.

In addition to the dance exhibitions, attendees of the celebration received shell leis and a luau feast of Kahlua pork and other Hawaiian favorites.

Maj. Rizaldo Salvador, a logistics planner assigned to 25th Inf. Div., was the guest speaker for the celebration. Salvador, from Cleveland, Ohio, spoke about emigrating from the Philippines in 1978 at the age of three.

“This immigrant stands before you today as the fulfillment of a dream, which at

times seemed improbable to overcome,” Salvador said during his speech. “This immigrant is the product of our country, and endeavors to contribute back to our American society, and answers our nation’s call to duty.”

Salvador expanded on the theme of the month: “Leadership to meet the challenges of a changing world.”

“Ultimately, the leadership challenge is within us. We must continue to embrace cultural diversity and maintain our cultural heritage and values. We must always remember the essence of who we are because this only strengthens the organizational culture,” said Salvador. “Be the lighthouse of culture at each crossroads. Let your heritage shine and be the guiding light which paves the way for future generations.”

Male and female Soldiers performed traditional dances from Hawaii, New Zealand, Samoa, Tahiti and Tonga.

Sgt. 1st Class Itua Tunufa’i, assigned to Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Inf. Bde. Combat Team, 25th Inf. Div., and a native of Pago Pago, American Samoa, emceed the show.

Tunufa’i was one of many Task Force Lightning Soldiers who participated in the Pacific Island cultural event. Participants representing all ranks and backgrounds kept the 25th Inf. Div.’s “Tropic Lightning” spirit alive.

“Today, I think, this was the perfect show. Everyone danced with their heart,” said Pfc. Melenaite Lokotui, a Seaside, Calif. resident assigned to 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Div., who performed a dance from her native Tonga.

“I was raised on the island, I came straight from the island to join the Army, and I still love my island. I still hold the culture and the tradition from the island,” said Lokotui.

# DO THE RIGHT THING & STAY SAFE

*“A lot of times you hear about Soldiers trying to take shortcuts, or becoming complacent and that’s when people get hurt.”*

## Recognizing Fatigue and Stress

A stressor is any event or situation that requires a non-routine change in behavior.

- *Physical stressors include environment condition such as heat and noise, weight of equipment and terrain underfoot.*
- *Mental stressors involve information that places demands on either your thoughts or feelings.*
- *Combat stressors can be physical or mental and occur during the course of combat-related duties.*
- *Stress is what your body and mind do to counteract stressors.*
- *Positive stress helps you to respond appropriately to normal stressors.*
- *Some stress can make you distracted, forgetful or cause you to fall asleep.*
- *Extreme stress may cause you to “CHOKES” or become agitated and flee.*
- *Prolonged extreme stress can cause physical and mental disablement.*

## Reactions to Fatigue and Stress

Inappropriate reactions to combat-induced stress are called misconduct stress behavior and include unacceptable and even criminal activities such as:

- *Substance abuse.*
- *Brutal violence.*
- *Desertion.*
- *Malingering.*
- *Fraternalization.*

*Battle fatigue/combat stress reaction is usually present in all unit personnel in a theater of combat operations. Soldiers and leaders are responsible for identifying personnel who require treatment for these reaction. Watch for the indicators in fellow Soldiers and encourage others to self-report. Your attitude is the key element to complacency.*

Complacency is most often cited as the primary cause of contributing to Soldier casualties in Iraq and is described as follows:

- *Lack of situational awareness*
- *Lack of attention to detail*
- *Failure to obey standards or procedures*
- *Carelessness/horseplay*
- *Lack of discipline*
- *Underestimating the enemy*
- *Too comfortable with surroundings*
- *Lost battlefield focus*

Soldiers’ personal attitudes and behavior are key elements for complacency. Whenever signs are apparent, immediate corrective action is necessary. NCOs must ensure standards are met through training, checking and enforcement. These are core NCO responsibilities.

## Training

Soldiers need training on all individual skills required to perform the mission including shooting, moving, communicating and surviving. Cross training is essential as Soldiers also need to know how to perform the tasks of their crew, team or section counterparts. Leaders are responsible for developing and conducting cross training.

## Checking

Subordinates perform best those tasks the boss checks. There are informal and formal systems of checking performance. Informal systems consist of self and buddy checks. Out of concern for others and yourself, ask or remind others—*“Do you have this?”* or *“Don’t forget that!”* Formal systems include pre-combat checks and inspections. Failure to conduct such checks and inspections may compromise mission effectiveness and Soldier readiness.

## Enforcement

When a check or inspection reveals a deficiency or shortfall, corrective action must result. When it comes to their safety, most Soldiers will respond appropriately to positive enforcement measures.

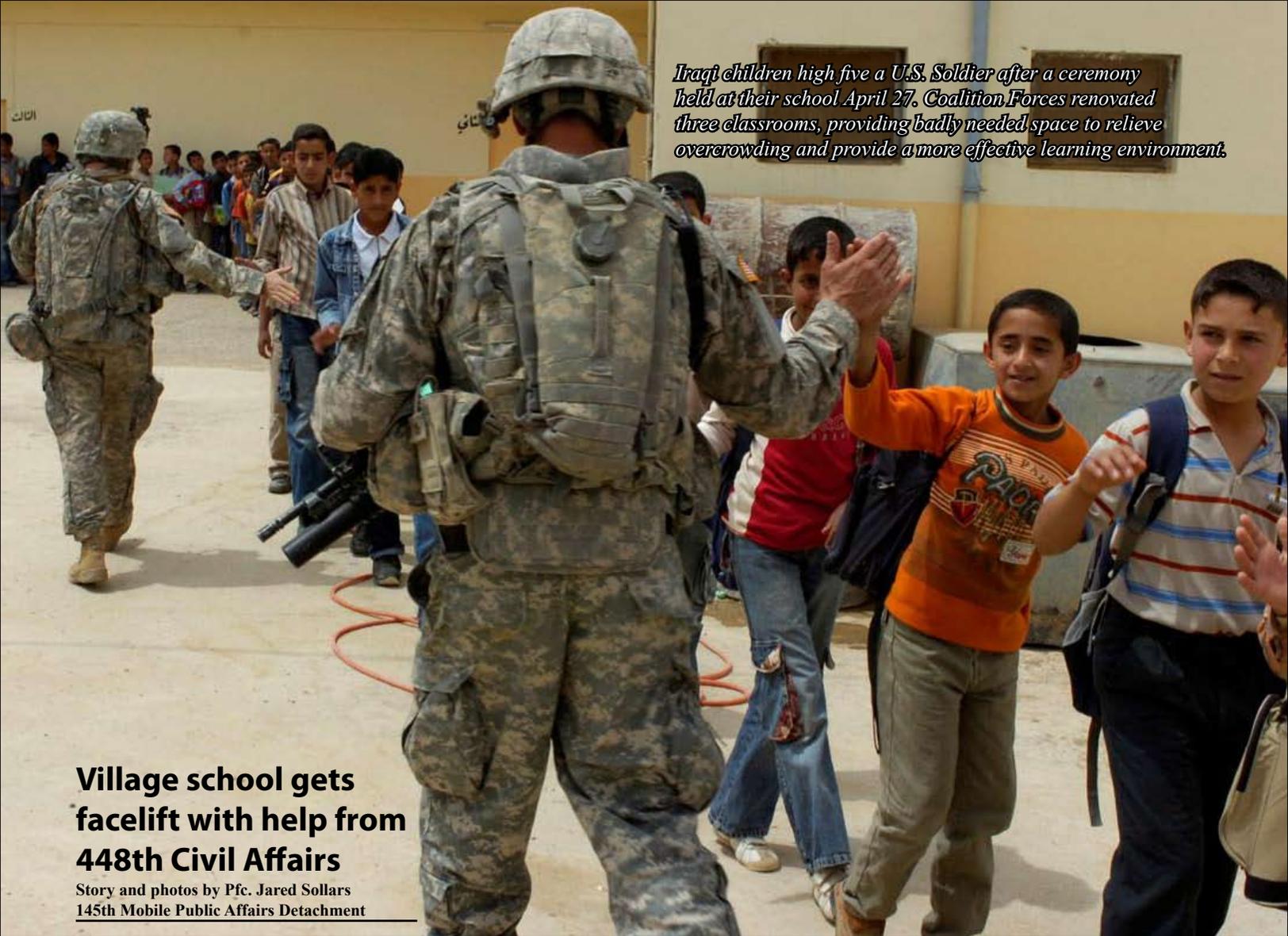
## Avoid Routines and Patterns

Routines can lead to trouble when conducting missions outside the wire. Remember, the enemy is always watching you for an advantage by:

- *Looking for repeated behavior patterns.*
- *Identifying patterns in your tactical mission.*
- *Templating your times, routes, organization of march column, and other actions.*



*Iraqi children high five a U.S. Soldier after a ceremony held at their school April 27. Coalition Forces renovated three classrooms, providing badly needed space to relieve overcrowding and provide a more effective learning environment.*



## Village school gets facelift with help from 448th Civil Affairs

Story and photos by Pfc. Jared Sollars  
145th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Just a few weeks ago students of a school in Isfaya, Iraq, were crammed as many 60 in a classroom before a Civil Affairs team assisted in adding three new classrooms.

“The school plays the major educational role for children in this very rural area,” said Staff Sgt. Dennis Wiechmann, a member of Civil Affairs Team 14, Company B., 448th Civil Affairs Battalion, adding that the school serves 320 students.

Team 14 coordinated the classroom renovation and provided educational supplies for the students, including pens, crayons, notebooks and other items. The school was specifically chosen for renovation because it was severely overcrowded, according to Wiechmann.

With the addition of three new classrooms there are fewer students in each classroom, and teachers are able to work more closely with each student. Lower pupil-to-teacher ratios have proven to increase learning.

Two new rest rooms, a refrigerated drink station and a water storage system were also installed, giving the students and faculty a better quality of life.

The project employed 20 local workers, who spackled and painted the entire school except for the headmaster’s office at his request.

“I would like to thank the Coalition forces for their assistance with our school and for valuing the education of our children,” said Yihya Mohammad Sultan, the school’s headmaster.



*Children, along with an Iraqi sergeant major, applaud Coalition forces for their assistance in renovating their school during a ceremony April 27. The school, located in Isfaya, Iraq, serves approximately 320 students.*

# Building the “backbone” of the Iraqi Army

Story and photo by Pfc. Justin Naylor  
2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs, 1st Cavalry Division

Noncommissioned officers were first called the “backbone” of the American Army when Inspector General Friedrich Von Steuben wrote his guidelines dictating the NCO’s duties and responsibilities in 1779. Throughout the wars that would follow, NCOs have served important roles—teaching, training and leading troops.

With the Iraqi Army making progress, Command Sgt. Maj. Lawrence Wilson, Multi-National Force - Iraq, addressed concerns regarding the future of the IA NCO Corps during a visit to K-1 Military Base, Kirkuk, Iraq April 27.

“It’s a new thing to get sergeants major and NCOs involved in the training,” said Wilson.

According to Wilson, IA officers handled nearly all issues regarding soldier training and Army indoctrination. He said the officers need to let the sergeants major and other NCOs take charge of certain things, like regular training.

“Right now, the Iraqi officers are doing all the legwork, and they are just using them [NCOs and sergeants major] for the heavy lifting,” said Master Sgt. Joseph Rhodes, a member of the Joint Headquarters Advising Assistance Team at K-1, which works with the IA. “We need to convince them to trust their enlisted [soldiers].”



*Iraqi Army ‘jundi’, an Arabic term for lower-enlisted soldiers, and noncommissioned officers stand together in a formation wearing camouflage after a training exercise at K-1 Military Base, Kirkuk, Iraq. The future of these soldiers is still in the making, but U.S. military leaders are working to build the trust officers place in enlisted soldiers in the IA.*



*Sgt. Maj. Haady (left), a garrison sergeant major at K-1 Military Base, Kirkuk, Iraq, walks with Command Sgt. Maj. Lawrence Wilson, command sergeant major for Multi-National Force - Iraq, during Wilson’s visit to the base April 27. Both leaders discussed the future of the Iraqi Army Noncommissioned Officer Corps and lower enlisted soldiers.*

The issue of basic instruction within the IA was also brought to Wilson’s attention. Rhodes said the biggest thing that IA soldiers need is literacy.

“It is harder to train those soldiers who are illiterate,” said Rhodes. “The command also does not want to give them additional responsibility because they are illiterate.”

Literacy will allow them to be trained to make good decisions, Rhodes added.

Bringing IA together in the same uniform was another major issue.

“Professionalism is increased with a standardized uniform,” said Rhodes, noting that the IA soldier is learning to take pride in his uniform, and by standardizing them, this pride will only increase.

Besides specific issues, U.S. Army Soldiers had the opportunity to explain how the IA NCO Corps is improving and what is to come.

“Their [IA] NCO Corps has been observing us,” said Rhodes, referring to the way U.S. officers treat NCOs. He said Iraqi NCOs need to continue to show they are capable of handling some things on their own.

“This will allow the officers to concentrate on the big picture, such as where the IA is going,” said Rhodes. “The NCOs will focus on the troops.”

As the IA continues to train young ‘jundi’, an Arabic term for lower-enlisted soldiers, to become future NCOs, things will continue to get better, said Wilson.

“They will not know the old way, they will only know the new Iraqi Army,” said Wilson.

# Iraqi Police graduate in Ninewah



Story and photos by Sgt. Chris Kozloski  
145th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

More than 1,000 Iraqi Police recruits stood at attention on the Mosul Public Service Academy parade field as dignitaries and guests gathered to celebrate their graduation from basic police training.

Their graduation signifies Ninewah's compliance with an Iraqi Ministry of Interior directive requiring all currently-employed IPs receive formal training.

Provincial Governor of Ninewah Atheel al-Nujaifi and General Director of Police Khalid Hussein Ali al-Hamdani watched the newly-trained officers demonstrate clearing a building of insurgents using smoke grenades, blank ammunition and pyrotechnics.

Guests watched a series of hand-to-hand combat demonstrations during which instructors and students broke concrete blocks with their fists, cracked inch-thick wooden dowels over their arms and legs, and staved off attackers while escorting a dignitary.

"I am happy to be here today," said al-Nujaifi. "Our people of Ninewah are trained to do their job better than ever before."

Each officer completed the four-week course covering topics such as human rights, use of firearms, crime scene protection, basic investigative techniques and report writing.

The officers, who were hired last year in preparation for the Iraqi Police to assume ownership of security in the cities, will return to their previously assigned police stations.

Demetria Franklin, an international police advisor working with the 302nd Military Police Company, said this training is the first link in the chain of Iraqi Police primacy in the region. These officers will work in their communities with a new perspective.

"They have pride in themselves as police officers and understand how it feels to wear that uniform and represent their country, their community and take responsibility of the security of their country and community," said Franklin.

As al-Nujafi addressed the graduates, he told them they are the first line of defense against lawlessness in their communities.



An Iraqi Police training graduate receives a gift from Ninewah General Director of Police Khalid Hussein Ali al-Hamdani for a job well done during graduation, May 15. This group of officers is the last to fill a directive from the Iraqi Ministry of Interior requiring employed policemen be formally trained.



Ninewah Provincial Governor Atheel Al-Nujaifi and Ninewah General Director of Police Khalid Hussein Ali al-Hamdani render honors to Iraqi Police basic training graduates. The graduates are conducting a ceremonial pass and review during their graduation in Mosul, May 11. This group of officers is the last to fill a directive from the Iraqi Ministry of Interior requiring employed policemen be formally trained.

"My brothers and sons, I must first say to you that your brothers, sons and friends are the people of your country. Serve them," said al Nujaifi. "You have to be aggressive to those who operate outside of the law—no matter who they are."

Legitimizing the Iraqi Police as the primary security element in the cities will allow the Iraqi National Police to operate as an expeditionary force for the country.

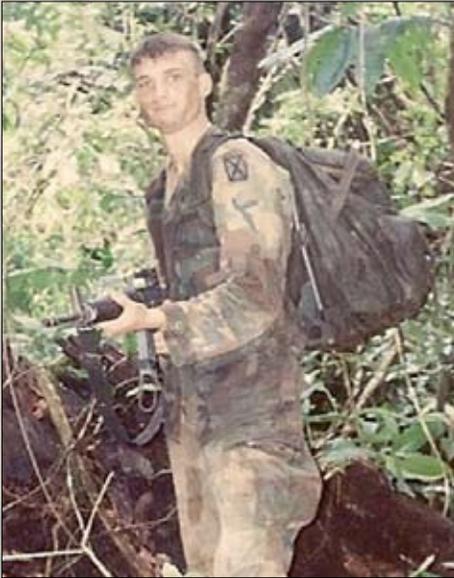
"As Iraqi Police primacy develops, the function of the Iraqi Police will change. They will become more of the primary security force in the region," said Lt. Col. Quinton Arnold, 3rd Brigade, Special Troops Battalion commander. "Right now, the Iraqi Army and Iraqi National Police are the primary security force. As that changes, they [the IA] will move into a more supportive role and the IP will take over. It's all about the IP's becoming the primary security force in the region."



A combatives instructor breaks a slab of concrete with his elbow at an Iraqi Police graduation in Mosul, Iraq, May 11. An Iraqi Ministry of Interior directive requires all Iraqi Police currently employed receive formal basic training. This graduating class is the last group of Iraqi Police who were hired before being formally trained.

# “Why I reenlisted in the U.S. Army”

## Two command sergeants major share their stories



*Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Stout  
3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment,  
3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th  
Infantry Division*

After more than 20 years of service in the Army, I am glad I decided to reenlist and continue to serve. I originally joined the U.S. Army to serve my country and to receive the Army College Fund and the GI Bill in order to continue my education. It was not my intent when I first joined to stay in the Army for a career. I only had to complete my initial enlistment to receive the benefits and continue my life. However, during my first enlistment in the 10th Mountain Division, my noncommissioned officers and their leadership made my decision to stay in the Army easy.

My first platoon sergeant was the epitome of a noncommissioned officer; he was very hard but fair. He established very high standards and assisted each Soldier in reaching those goals. The platoon and the accomplishment of each mission became more important than each individual Soldier. The pride we felt being a part of a standards-based organization, which could accomplish any mission, was overwhelming. Soldiers who could not reach or maintain the standards of performance, conduct, and discipline, did not stay in the organization. This created an environment where each and every Soldier performed to a higher standard because we were proud of who we were and what we had accomplished. We were a team who truly cared about each other and we all wanted to succeed. The camaraderie, high standards and discipline I enjoyed in my first platoon represent some of the reasons that made me want to reenlist.

My father also played a significant role in my decision to reenlist. He instilled the importance of teamwork, strong character and values. He also taught me the importance of being a part of something bigger than yourself and the principles of living a life that you can be proud of. Serving in the Army I found the team that I wanted to be part of and I knew that if I stayed I would be proud of my service.

I first enlisted in 1983 at the age of 17 as an infantryman. During the last year of my three-year commitment, however, I found myself working as a door gunner of a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter crew with the 82nd Combat Aviation Battalion, 82nd Airborne Division.

One day I was conducting aircraft maintenance when my company commander, Maj. Smith, came to the flight line to talk to me about reenlistment.

With a strong southern accent, he asked me what my plans were upon my ETS from the Army. I explained to him I really had no plans and I did not really consider staying in. He asked if I liked what I was doing as a door gunner and if I would consider becoming a Black Hawk crew chief. I immediately thought about the doors that would open up to me when I eventually transitioned to civilian life.

You see, the economy was not good back then and learning a trade skill seemed like a smart move. My commander instructed me to stop by his office at 0900 the next morning to discuss my future further.

When I arrived at his office the next day and knocked on the door, I was told to enter. I opened the door to see my

company chain of command and NCO support channel lined around the room with a chair in the middle facing the commander and battalion retention NCO. My commander instructed me to have a seat, which was the center of attention, and I had no idea how important reenlistment was to the Army until then.

It was so important to my chain of command, and so vital to the Army, that the commander assembled his leaders to discuss my options. No one left his office until I got what I wanted, which was to be a 15T, Black Hawk crew chief.

In the end, I signed a six-year commitment with a return assignment back to the battalion after graduation. I've never looked back.

In retrospect, I think about how I would have wound up if my chain of command and support channel never cared about me and the Army retention program. I am not going to tell you that I was mostly driven by patriotism, money or that I just did not want to go back home. It was the message that my chain of command cared about me and the organization that they were a part of—the Army. This helped me realize the Army team was where I belonged.



*Command Sgt. Maj. Ronald W. Dvorsky Jr.  
3rd Battalion, 10th Aviation Regiment  
(General Support), 10th Combat Aviation  
Brigade*

# Soap Box Heroes

## "Raven Mobile" takes first place for creativity

By Sgt. Stephanie van Geete  
10th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs

They may not have been the fastest, but they were definitely the best-looking.

A team from Company C, 277th Aviation Battalion's network extension platoon took the prize for "most creative" with their raven-themed car during the Exchange New Car Sales first ever Soap Box Derby at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, near Tikrit Iraq, May 8.

Sgt. Amber Harvey, Spc. Matthew Cooke, Pfc. David Traylor, Pfc. Kenneth Simerly and 1st Lt. David Edwards worked for a month on their entry, incorporating elements representing their section—including a server stack as the base for their chassis—and using recycled materials they picked up from the Demilitarized Reutilization Management Office.

"We wanted to give the company a good name," Cooke said. "We felt that if we decorated it as the Charlie Raven it would be an eye-catcher."



Pfc. David Taylor pushes while Sgt. Amber Harvey steers in a sprint for the finish line at the first Contingency Operating Base Speicher Soap Box Derby. Although it placed last in the time trials, the Network Extension Platoon, Company C, 277th Aviation Support Battalion's "Raven Mobile" took top honors for creativity. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Stephanie van Geete, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs)

When they were finished, the Raven Mobile's headlight-like claws and winged sidewalls set it apart from the competition.

Topping off the winning look—

literally—was the driver's helmet, designed (and worn) by Harvey to look like a Raven's head, complete with beak and flashing red eyes.

"We wanted it to look like a car, but also like it might take off at any moment," Cooke said, explaining the idea behind the design.

Although the car placed last of six entries in the speed competition, the team was content with taking top honors for creativity.

"We went more for a car that was a team-building thing, as opposed to speed—as the race showed," Cooke admitted. "So it was a good feeling. We all had a good time putting it together, and even if we hadn't won anything it still would have been worth it. It was definitely a positive experience for everyone involved."

The team had so much fun that they're already planning on entering the next competition, slated for late summer. This time, though, they're going to try to design a faster soapbox car; but Cooke thinks they'll keep the Raven design.

"I think the Charlie Raven is gonna come through and win next time," he said.

But if their plans for speed don't pan out, they can always fall back on their artistic abilities, as Cooke joked with his new motto:

"If you're not first, you're creative."

## MPs speed into the soap box win



The 607th Military Police Battalion placed first with their car, Turn-N-Burn, for the first Contingency Operating Base Speicher Soap Box Derby. To honor Earth Month, Soldiers used recycled materials to build their cars. The race had two categories, judged on speed and creativity. The Gladiators, as the MP's call themselves, won the speed category with a time of 35 seconds. They were awarded the first place plaque, coins, T-shirts and Army (and) Air Force Exchange Services gift certificates. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Nivea Lucio, 145th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

# Operation Glad Tidings

By Sgt. Jeremy Pitcher  
145th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Residents throughout Diyala province have been receiving humanitarian aid from Iraqi Security Forces along with members of the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division as part of operation "Glad Tidings of Benevolence II," which began May 1.

Thus far 23 areas have received humanitarian aid distributions while 19 more are planned for the near future. The distributions are conducted as part of a combined venture to help those most in need in the province.

Residents receive rice, sugar, grain or other cooking necessities, and local school children in need of school supplies receive pencils, paper or recreational items such as soccer balls.

The assistance not only aids the people of the region but also helps to build stronger bonds between the residents and the local security forces who distribute them.

"With the greatly improved security posture of a majority of cities in Diyala, which have been cleared as a result of ongoing Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces operations in support of Glad Tidings of Benevolence II in the Diyala Province, the provincial government has begun to provide and reestablish not only critical essential services to the population, but they have provided crucial humanitarian assistance in the form of food, water, and medical supplies to areas in desperate need," said Lt. Col. Thomas Bayer, deputy officer for the southern command post Multi-National Division- North. "These forces have arranged many of these humanitarian assistance packages and have been integrating these delivery operations into their roles of protectors of the people of Diyala," he continued.



*Iraqi soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 21st Brigade of sugar, rice and flour that will go to 30 families in a humanitarian aide mission on May 9th. (U.S. Army)*



# Acts of Benevolence II



*...ade, 5th Iraqi Army Division, distribute bags  
...ilies in the village of Samood, Iraq, during a  
...ir Force photos by Staff Sergeant Ali E. Flisek)*



# The 25th Infantry Division Band Not Sousa's anymore



John Philip Sousa, circa 1890

By Sgt. Robert Carmical  
25th Infantry Division Band, 25th Special Troops Battalion, 25th Infantry Division

There was a time when military music and the legendary John Philip Sousa were synonymous and inseparable. Though modern military musicians still occasionally stand rigid in block formation playing Sousa marches, the reality of a current Army musician is typically much different.

Over time the Army Band has worked to stay on top of one of its primary missions, entertaining deployed troops with current and popular music. Part of this transition has necessitated Bandsmen putting their rich and historic roots on the back burner in order to cook up some hot new hits.

The 25th Infantry Division Band's modern lineup includes rock, R&B, contemporary jazz, heavy metal and even rap. One by-product of embracing a more contemporary model for music is that the band is more versatile in the different genres of music and how the band is structured.

Current "bands" are not one group. It

is now the norm for bands to be divided into several small units that can work independently or collectively.

The 25th Inf. Div. Band is composed of more than a half-dozen small ensembles including two rock bands, complete with horn sections, which can cover a huge variety of music and can deploy independently.

Maj. Gen. Robert L. Caslen, commanding general of the 25th Inf. Div., has focused the band's mission, placing emphasis on installations where support from Morale, Welfare and Recreation is not possible.

The band works to bring a little slice of home to those the furthest away and the most isolated. Musical support is an important part of the band's mission in Iraq.

The band expects to do around 400 musical missions during its 12-month deployment. This is in itself an impressive logistical feat but the amazing part is that the band is performing at such a high

tempo with one arm tied behind its back.

Music is not the band's only mission.

At any given moment about half of the band, which has less than 40 Soldiers, is tasked with the operations of the RAID-A Aerostat balloon. The Aerostat balloon provides an important eye in the sky, watching Contingency Operating Base Speicher, near Tikrit, Iraq, and the surrounding area.

Lt. Col. Eric J. Angeli, 25th Special Troops Battalion commander, said he "has taken a personal interest in the Soldiers in the Band." He paused to elaborate on the word "Soldier," saying he used it purposefully

and that Bandsmen are "51% Soldier and 49% Musician." He was impressed with the Band's ability to juggle multiple contrasting missions simultaneously.

Angeli made the opportunity to go on a trip to Forward Operating Base Dagger with the band's woodwind quintet, The Electric Strawberry Orchestra. He was not sure what to expect, but he said, "I had a ball! It was just phenomenal! It was unlike anything I thought I would ever experience in the Army."

The value and power of music in a deployed environment to directly and positively affect morale is well established. Furthermore, the inherent power of music to uplift and connect people regardless of culture is recognized as a valuable resource in the battle. The days of Army Bandsmen standing rigidly in block formations wailing on sleepy Sousa tunes are largely gone. The current Army Musician is stretched both militarily and musically to achieve more than ever before. The Soldier-Musicians from Hawaii's 25th Inf. Div. "Tropic Lightning" Band stand ready to serve those who serve our great nation.



Soldiers of the Lightning 5 Quintet, a group of the 25th Infantry Division Band, perform during a public performance in Mosul, Iraq March 12. Approximately 300 Iraqis attended and this marked the first public performance of the 25th Inf. Div. Band in Iraq this tour.



Soldiers of the 25th Infantry Division Band recover the RAID-A Aerostat balloon and secure it to the launch pad at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, near Tikrit, Iraq.

# Provincial Investment Commission offers capital to Tuz entrepreneurs



Johar Farhad, chairman of the Salah ad-Din Investment Office, addresses television cameras and an assembly of potential entrepreneurs in Tuz. Johar invited local businessmen to boost the economic growth in the city and further improve the quality of life for citizens by opening new businesses.

Story and photo by Sgt. Angie Johnston  
3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs, 25th Infantry Division

The Salah ad-Din Provincial Investment Commission visited entrepreneurs to discuss potential business partnerships, which will further stimulate the city's economic growth and foster a more stable security situation, in Tuz, Iraq.

"We're here to place investments in Iraq in a strategic context," said Thomas Carpenter, a Senior Financial Economist working with the Provincial Reconstruction Team. "At some points in time circumstances, events and forces—those which we control and those we don't control—compel us to action. Today is one such time."

"This area has been neglected since the time of the old regime," said Shalal al-Marhabi, a Tuz businessman. "What exactly can you do for us?"

Johar Fahad, chairman of the Salah ad-Din Investment Office, outlined several steps potential entrepreneurs can take to receive money from the Government of Iraq to start a new business.

"We are taking all the dust from the last regime off the faces of our people," said Johar. "We can't allow our people to see things through narrow eyes any more."

The roundtable discussion included possible business ventures the city of Tuz needs—including privately-owned electric companies, wireless communications stores and tourist attractions.

"There are no hotels in Salah ad-Din," said Johar. "We can help

you organize what you need in order to get the land and at the same time we can help you get the money to build a hotel."

The group also discussed Iraq's natural resources and agreed they should somehow be better managed.

"We want to build our cities and make use of all the land we have; we have so many resources. We're checking to see what raw materials are here, under Tuz, for mining purposes," said Johar.

Part of the PIC's mission is to keep politics, religion and business separate, which is a new idea to many Tuz citizens. Johar assured the assembly his office will not ask an applicant his ethnicity, laying any uncertainties to rest.

"The bottom line: we don't mix personal business—including politics and religion—with economy," said Johar.

Carpenter, who organized the conference, also works closely with the al-Warka Bank in Iraq to help fund startup businesses. "With the way things are going in Tuz, there should be an al-Warka branch here within six months," said Carpenter. "They're trying to put 17 branches in the Salah ad-Din Province alone."

That itself speaks very highly of the security and stability of Tuz, according to City Council Chairman Qadir Ali Saleh. "There have been problems with security in the past, but they are almost gone now," said Qadir. "Investors coming to Tuz means that people think it is safe enough here."

Land rights have consistently been an issue for potential business owners throughout Iraq. Carpenter says that Iraq's Ministry of Finance owns nearly 85% of the marketable land and the Department of Municipalities owns approximately 10%; that leaves 5% for the private sector.

Business owners can obtain leases from property owners but historically land has been confiscated by the government. That leaves little certainty to a first-time capitalist.

"That's been the major constraint to growth in the whole economy," said Carpenter. "No one wants to start a business if the 'land carpet' can be pulled out from underneath them at any time."

Carpenter has already coordinated meetings between the PIC and local

entrepreneurs in Bayji, Balad and Sharkat.

The PRT continues to work with the Investment Commission, entrepreneurs and banks until the mission is complete. Economic stability will signal a new turn toward complete independence from outside interference for Salah ad-Din.

"We really had a socialist system before, which was controlling us. Now we have the freedom to invest," said Johar. "Come to our department—we'll give you a stack of papers. Tell us the budget, we'll provide the land and the raw materials, and we'll connect you with investors."

*"The bottom line: we don't mix personal business—including politics and religion—with economy."*

**Johar Farhad**  
Chairman of the Salah ad-Din Investment Office

# MND-N HEROES DEMONSTRATE ARMY VALUES



PFC Matthew Kenney  
Denison, TX

On April 12, PFC Matthew Kenney's platoon was struck with an EFP. Kenney quickly triaged three casualties and gave a report to his platoon sergeant to request a MEDEVAC. Kenney then began treating the casualties—controlling their bleeding, treating their burns and managing their airways. His actions saved the lives of two of his fellow Soldiers.



PV2 Edward J. Tretter  
Sauquoit, NY

PV2 Edward Tretter, a combat medic, responded to two VBIED incidents with civilian injuries during a 15-day period. He also helps in daily interactions with the Azadi IP station and continues to build a partnership with the police chief. Tretter also improves his platoon's efficiency by scheduling the day-to-day medical care of his Soldiers.



PFC Michael Guerero & SPC Nicholas Martin  
Killeen, TX

While en-route to Dalesh, PFC Michael Guerero and SPC Nicholas Martin's platoon stopped to investigate the side of a canal when a truck approached the convoy. One of the truck's passengers, an Iraqi woman, was going into labor and could not make it to the hospital in time. Guerero and Martin immediately reacted and delivered the child.



SGT Joshua A. Knea  
Yuba City, CA

SGT Joshua Knea, a combat engineer, was part of an airscan flight supporting a route clearance mission in Kirkuk province when three IED emplacers were spotted running from a road. Knea was able to give a ground patrol the exact location of the hidden insurgents, which resulted in the capture of two of the suspects and the death of another.



SPC Stephen Worthington  
Hutchinson, KS

SPC Stephen Worthington distinguished himself while serving as a team leader during several joint operations in and around Hammam Al Alil. During these operations, Worthington trained his ISF counterparts. He has lead joint operations conducting searches of vehicles and personnel, directing the IA on the proper procedures of these operations.



PFC Brittnee Tillery  
Channelview, TX

PFC Brittnee Tillery was the senior medic at Camp Zaytun for a period of approximately three and half weeks. During the time she was also asked to assist a border transition team during one of their missions. She not only treated local villagers during the mission, but also was the medical support for the convoy. She does an outstanding job performing her duties and responsibilities as a medic.



CPT Michael L. Taylor  
Oxford, MS

CPT Michael Taylor has distinguished himself as the leader of S6 Automations for 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division. His computer background has helped improve the brigade's automation by creating and implementing messaging, authentication and collaboration solutions. Taylor is eager to share his knowledge with other signal and automation specialists, improving their skills.



PV2 Kirk P. Rosenbalm  
Tyler, TX

On April 21, PV2 Kirk Rosenbalm's platoon was attacked with an RKG-3 grenade, which severely wounded a gunner. Rosenbalm rushed to the aid of the Soldier and immediately providing lifesaving care. He continued giving care to the wounded Soldier during the ground evacuation to the Diamondback Combat Surgical Hospital. The doctors at the CSH credited Rosenbalm with saving the Soldier's life.



SGT Brian D. Allen  
Yukon, OK

SGT Brian Allen, a broadcast journalist, was providing video coverage of the 591st Engineer Company during a route clearance in Mosul when his vehicle was struck with an RKG-3 grenade. Allen was filming when the attack happened. His video showed the thrower and a spotter filming the attack. Allen's actions may have contributed to the identification and capture of the two insurgents.



SPC Sharif Rachid  
Victoria, TX

SPC Sharif Rachid, a military analyst, has provided over 200 mission products ranging from weather reports to BOLO lists resulting in 100 percent mission accomplishment. He also has tracked every SIGACT throughout Ninewa Province since December 2008 with very little guidance. He has been vital to the success of his unit during their deployment.



SPC Bobby Guzman  
Huntington, CA

While conducting security for a key leader engagement, SPC Bobby Guzman noticed a Soldier who had collapsed and was unconscious. The Soldier was MEDEVAC'd to FOB Warrior. Guzman administered an IV during the MEDEVAC in the back of a moving MRAP. Upon arrival at EMEDS, the Soldier was conscious and his vitals had improved.



SGT Ronald Francis  
St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands

SGT Ronald Francis has been an invaluable asset during his unit's deployment. As a generator mechanic, he repaired a civilian generator approximately 100 kW in size allowing his battalion headquarters to operate regardless of power outages. He also works tirelessly on troubleshooting and repairing vital equipment for other unit's missions.

# MND-N HEROES DEMONSTRATE ARMY VALUES



SPC Dionysios Papagrigroratos  
Ridgefield Parker, NJ

SPC Dionysios Papagrigroratos' dedication to mission first, fix it right the first time saved the military over \$11,000 and hours of labor. His mechanical knowledge helped identify a better way to diagnose the transmission used in the MRAP vehicles, so they could be repaired rather than replaced.



SSG Ryant Tripeaux  
Iberia Parish, LA

During his unit's deployment, SSG Ryant Tripeaux has ensured his platoon is the most efficient and combat ready in its squadron. Through his supervision, the platoon vehicles are prepared for all elements inherent in full spectrum operations. His platoon has successfully completed more than 35 combat patrols, including Operation Rock the Vote.



SGT Sean Bortle  
Freemont, NY

During a patrol along a volatile area of known insurgent activity, SGT Sean Bortle's platoon was attacked when two insurgents began throwing RKG-3 grenades at the rear vehicle of the convoy. Bortle, the gunner of the second vehicle, saw the insurgents and identified the attackers before engaging, resulting in no Coalition casualties.



PFC Joshua Marion  
Bradenton, FL

While working as a guard at an entry control point on FOB Sykes, PFC Joshua Marion's search of a non-US vehicle resulted in finding a large cache of Class I products. His dedication to the mission and duties saved the U.S. Government approximately \$45,000.



PFC Stanley Call  
Houston, TX

PFC Stanley Call identified five personnel gathered around a fire near South Balad Ruz, an area known to be inhabited by insurgents. Later, Call directed another aerial reconnaissance of the area, this time one person was observed at a hidden site. When close air support checked the site, six personnel were seen in vicinity of their hidden site, consisting of a cave compound and three bunkers.



SPC Hobert Kinsell  
Atlanta, GA

As the alternate vehicle commander of a Stryker in a reconnaissance platoon, SPC Hobert Kinsell engaged the enemy during an attack on his patrol. Kinsell's actions allowed dismounts to take an objective while he coordinated a cordon waiting for engineers to arrive and dispose of a 60mm UXO. He also maintained communications with three separate elements searching for the attackers.



SPC Latasha D. Ray  
Red Springs, NC

During partnership training with the 4th IA Motorized Transportation Regiment and Factory Maintenance Company, SPC Latasha Ray provided training on how to effectively manage and stock repair parts. During a period of a month, Ray also managed more than 400 Direct Support requests while managing the Stock Shop with over \$1.2 million worth of repair parts.



SPC John "Doc" Baah-Mensah  
Accra, Ghana

SPC John Baah-Mensah has always had a passion to help others and requested to serve as a combat medic in an infantry unit. On multiple occasions he has provided medical assistance to locals and provides medical classes for the ISF. He lives by his words, "My passion is to help my fellow Soldiers especially the ones who are here in combat and who need to take a break from the stressful environment."



SPC Shawn Sipes  
Austin, TX

SPC Shawn Sipes distinguished himself during Operation Aswar Hamrin, a 48-hour operation focusing on enabling the ISF throughout Tuz Qada by conducting joint operations. During night-time dismounted operations, Sipes was leading an IA squad and noticed several times individuals moving throughout the area. He relayed to the IA of those breaking the curfew and ensured mission success.



PFC Randall Glahn  
Portland, OR

While on patrol in the city of Quarrya, PFC Randall Glahn's convoy was heading through a busy market street when his vehicle was hit with an RKG-3 grenade. He remained calm and moved his crew to a safe distance. Once there, Glahn and his crew checked the vehicle for any other damage, which could compromise the completion of their mission.



SSG Joseph Casmus  
Milford, PA

SSG Joseph Casmus, a squad leader in his unit, received a critically wounded IA Soldier at the entrance of his patrol base. Casmus's quick efforts in transporting the wounded IA soldier to medical personnel contributed to the successful stabilization of the patient and the eventual MEDEVAC, helping to save the life of the IA soldier.



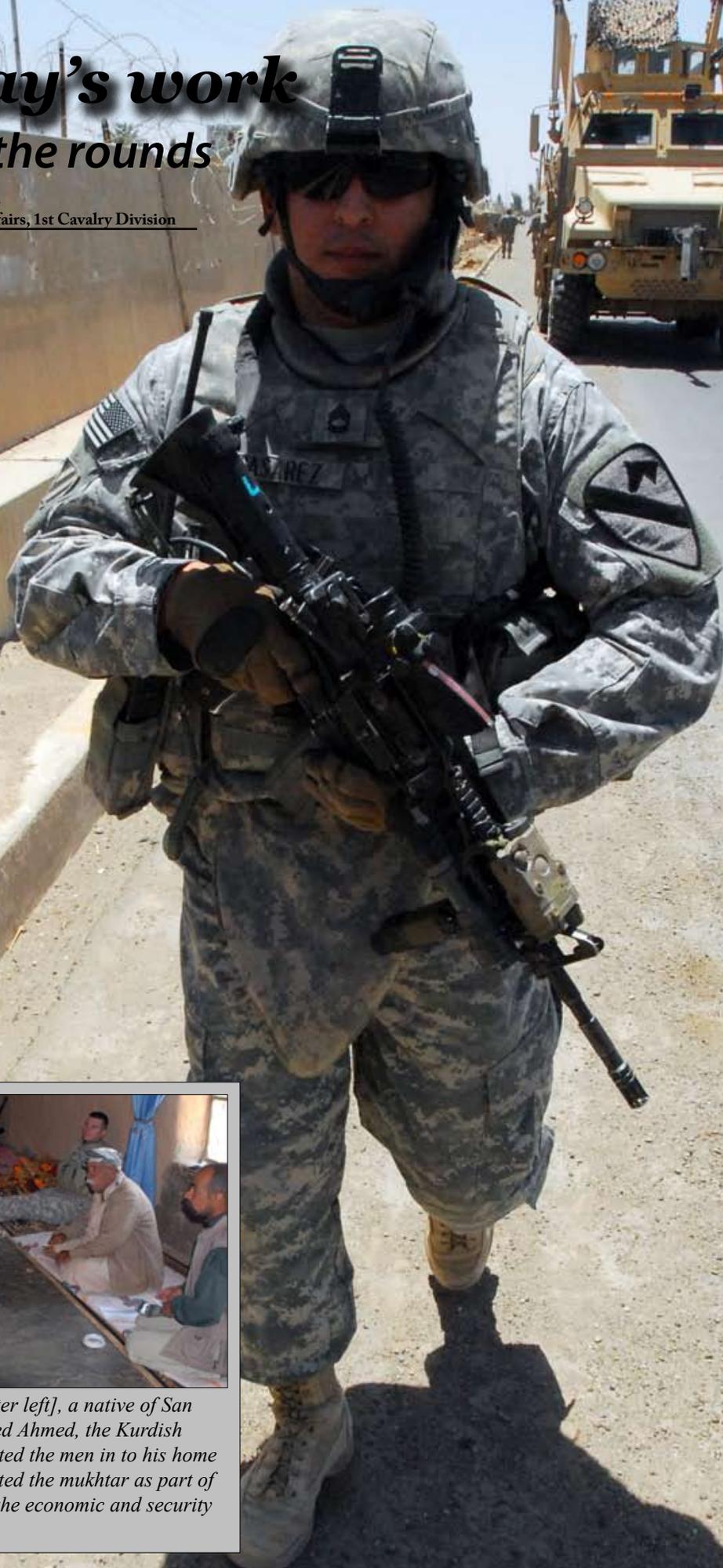
PFC Andres B. Rojasbotero  
Tampa, FL

During a mounted patrol in the Ninewah Province, PFC Andres Rojasbotero, an MRAP gunner, identified an enemy throwing what appeared to be an RKG-3 grenade. Rojasbotero quickly engaged, striking the enemy in a lower extremity, causing the grenade to hit the hood of the vehicle instead of the cab and possibly saving his fellow Soldiers' lives.

# All in a day's work

## Soldiers make the rounds

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Jason Douglas  
2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs, 1st Cavalry Division



*Sgt. 1st Class Miguel Casarez [center left], a native of San Antonio, meets with Naji Mohammed Ahmed, the Kurdish mukhtar, or village leader, who invited the men in to his home for tea and discussion. Casarez visited the mukhtar as part of a key leader engagement to assess the economic and security situation in the village.*



*Sgt. 1st Class Miguel Casarez (right), meets with Salah Wahiz Hassad, a teacher at a school in Arab Kuy village, Daquq, Iraq, April 21. Casarez met with school officials to assess the security of the school and determine what supplies the school might need.*

In an early morning briefing Soldiers of 2nd Platoon, C Troop, 4th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division gathered near their Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicles to receive a pre-mission briefing at Forward Operating Base Warrior, in Kirkuk, Iraq.

The briefing, which covers threat assessments, Rules of Engagement, procedures for encountering an improvised explosive device, medical evacuation and vehicle roll-overs, are routine for Soldiers in Iraq but necessary for all missions.

Following the brief and coordination with the Iraqi Army, Sgt. 1st Class Miguel Casarez, the platoon sergeant, and his platoon began the short drive to Arab Kuy, a rural village in the Daquq district of Iraq. They would be conducting an assessment visit and make contact with the village mukhtar, or leader.

“The key leader meeting [in Arab Kuy] is to assess the economic and security situation in the village,” Casarez said.

Upon arrival, the Soldiers poured out of the MRAPs and immediately provided security around the parked vehicles. As they later moved down a dusty and unpaved road, stray dogs and geese lazily and suspiciously regarded the Soldiers. Casarez and his men found, with the assistance of a translator and a group of children playing nearby, the mukhtar’s residence on the road near the town’s mosque.

Casarez met Naji Mohammed Ahmed, the Kurdish mukhtar, who warmly invited the men into his home.

“I would like a better understanding of the village and how it works and to know how you feel about Coalition forces,” Casarez said to Ahmed.

“We are grateful. American forces did a great thing in Iraq,” Ahmed replied.

The two men discussed issues ranging from ethnic tensions between Arabs and Kurds, essential services like medical care, economic conditions, waste management, and how residents of the village handle security threats.

One topic of lengthy discussion was that of micro grants; up to \$2,500 to assist in economic development, in this case focusing on agricultural ventures.

The meeting ended with exchanged pleasantries and Staff Sgt. David Earls, a squad leader in the platoon, handed out a pamphlet with a detailed list of emergency contact numbers for the residents of Arab Kuy should they need to call.

“I am glad that you are here, coming far from home to Iraq, leaving your families, to help us,” Ahmed said. “Whatever we can do help, let us know.”

Following the meeting the Soldiers of 2nd platoon crossed

the road to the nearby elementary school to meet with school administrators.

“I wanted to see how the school was doing and if they had what they needed to teach the children,” Casarez explained.

Casarez was met by several school administrators and was welcomed into the office of Salah Wahiz Hassad, one of the teachers.

Hassad informed Casarez the school needed writing utensils, but the school was adequately equipped with computers, televisions and books.

Hassad also stated that the school burned down in 2008 and insurgents once threatened an administrator, but security at the school had never been better.

Casarez asked how the children of different ethnic origins interacted, Hassad replied, “The children get along and have a good relationship.”

The only requests the school administrators made was assistance in repairing several classroom doors and, if possible, to help increase the height of the wall surrounding the school.

After a brief tour of the classrooms, each filled with cheerful children diligently working at their studies, the platoon continued their mission.

The final stop was the Iraqi police station in Daquq to visit with Lt. Abbas, the chief of the police station.

Casarez discussed with Abbas a recent arrest in a nearby village. The two men also discussed, among other things, family and security concerns in the town.

After a hearty lunch of red lentil soup, kebabs and chai, the customary tea, the platoon returned to their waiting MRAPs to return to FOB Warrior.

After returning, Casarez collected his notes to prepare his end-of-mission report.

“I hope to make recommendations to the command’s assessment in regards to what we’ve heard today,” Casarez said.

Assessment visits like this one allows Coalition forces operating in an area to determine allocation of resources to help improve quality of life and security of an area against insurgents, according to Casarez.

It’s all in a day’s work.



*Sergeant 1st Class Miguel Casarez, a platoon sergeant with C Troop, 4th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, plays video games during his down time at Forward Operating Base Warrior, in Kirkuk, Iraq. Casarez is a former artilleryman who hopes to become a first sergeant.*

# HEY DOC?

*Answers on life, love and the wound that never healed*



**Lt. Col. John Smyrski is a board certified Family Medicine and Aerospace Medicine physician, with specialty training in Public Health, a former Army Aviator, and the Task Force Lightning and Multi-National Division-North Surgeon.**

**Q. Hey Doc! I'm getting ready to go on R&R. Got any tips? D.A., Normandy.**

A. Hey D.A., enjoy your well deserved R&R. You earned it. Keep in mind the following (not in order of importance) while on R & R:

- Get any scheduled vaccines on time and make sure they are recorded.
- Protect yourself from sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancy.
- Wear your seat belt and be safe.

If you don't feel well (physically or emotionally) seek care. Don't forget to mention you are on R&R and get the visit documented. If the provider needs information on deployment-related illnesses (such as pneumonia, malaria, skin lesions, diarrhea, etc.) and can't get it, contact the Deployment Health Clinical Center at 1-866-559-1627 or visit their website at [www.pdhealth.mil](http://www.pdhealth.mil). If you do receive care during R&R, you should bring copies of all documentation so it can be placed in your deployment health record (DD 2766) upon your return to theater. Again, good question.

**Q. Hey Doc! I saw Hydroxycut was pulled from the PX. Should I be concerned? S.H., Speicher.**

You're right to be concerned. This is from the FDA's website:

*The FDA has received 23 reports of serious health problems ranging from jaundice and elevated liver enzymes, an indicator of potential liver injury, to liver damage requiring liver transplant. One death due to liver failure has been reported to the FDA. Other health problems reported include seizures; cardiovascular disorders; and rhabdomyolysis, a type of muscle damage that can lead to other serious health problems such as kidney failure.*

*Liver injury, although rare, was reported by patients at the doses of Hydroxycut recommended on the bottle. Symptoms of liver injury include jaundice (yellowing of the skin or whites of the eyes) and brown urine. Other symptoms include nausea, vomiting, light-colored stools, excessive fatigue, weakness, stomach or abdominal pain, itching, and loss of appetite.*

*"The FDA urges consumers to discontinue use of Hydroxycut products in order to avoid any undue risk. Adverse events are rare, but exist. Consumers should consult a physician or other health care professional if they are experiencing symptoms possibly associated with these products," said Linda Katz, M.D., interim chief medical officer of the FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition.*

I think the issues surrounding the recent Hydroxycut incident highlight why it is important for us to be informed consumers of any dietary supplement. The law requires products to be properly labeled. However, manufacturers may purchase and use ingredients without adequately testing for ingredient purity and/or quality. The product may not contain what is listed on the label, could contain contaminants, or higher than reported levels of active ingredients. Before using a supplement consider:

- The risk(s) of consuming the supplement.
- Whether claims of effectiveness are backed up by independent research on humans (not rats).
- Whether the supplement will help you achieve your performance goals.
- Manufacturer practices are not regulated. Therefore, products may contain harmful contaminants.
- If its use will compromise your health or well-being.
- Whether the substance interacts with prescribed medications.
- If consumption of the substance interacts with a particular health condition.
- Whether the product claims to replace food or good training practices.

If you want more information about the use and usefulness of dietary supplements, download Technical Guide 295, Dietary Supplements Pocket Guide from the United States Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine website.



**If you have a question you'd like to ask the Doc, e-mail [heydoc@id25.army.smil.mil](mailto:heydoc@id25.army.smil.mil) or [heydoc@25id.ds.army.mil](mailto:heydoc@25id.ds.army.mil). Hey Doc is not intended for emergency situations. If you are experiencing an emergency, seek care immediately at your supporting medical treatment facility.**



*Iraqis receive free medical care at a temporary clinic set up by the Ministry of Health at Shuzayf, Iraq, April 23. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Christopher Bruce, 145th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)*

## **Iraqi medical clinic visits small town; big turnout in Diyala**

*More than 150 patients were treated, more than 100 children immunized during visit*

**By Spc. Christopher Bruce**  
**145th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment**

In a small village south of Al Udaim, located in the Diyala province of Iraq, children, women and men lined up outside a school house eagerly anticipating receiving medical care that would otherwise be difficult to receive. As children frowned and cried from seeing the needles that would deliver vaccinations of all types, parents smiled knowing their kids were receiving the best medical care in the area.

More than 150 patients were treated and more than 100 children were immunized at a temporary clinic in the once al-Qaida-controlled village of Shuzayf April 23.

The leading doctor of the clinic and Director of Al Udaim Medical Center, Dr. Omar Hashim Achmed, said the villagers were too far from Al Udaim and needed the medical treatment after years of fighting with al-Qaida.

"We came to this village to give medical care and vaccinations to the children. We are very happy to do our work here in a village for people who were exposed to terrorism for a long time," Achmed said.

The medical visit included immunizations, health screenings and the administration of medicines of all types. Men and women were able to consult with several doctors, get routine

checkups and have their injuries inspected. Children received routine vaccinations and checkups as well.

At one point, a child receiving a vaccination clenched his fists and began to cry as the doctor poked a needle into his skin. As the needle penetrated his skin, his face lit up and he giggled and joked to his brother, amused at the lack of pain. His enthusiasm helped to persuade other children not to worry.

Iraqi doctors were in charge of setting up the clinic and the Iraqi Army provided security. The IA checked everyone who entered the area for any weapons or explosives. Soldiers with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment were also on hand but played more of an over watch role for the entire process. They kept out of the way and let the Iraqis take charge of the operation.

IA soldiers, working with Coalition forces, passed out flyers the day before, helping the event to succeed, according to Staff Sgt. Toloai Sosene, HHC, 1/24 Inf. Reg. He said the flyers were passed out in Shuzayf as well as all the neighboring villages.

"We went yesterday and passed out flyers to everyone, and had a great response immediately. Preparation is everything and the flyers made this a great turnout," Sosene said.

# Engineers help 4th IA build a better Iraq

By Staff Sgt. Claudia Bullard  
145th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Nestled inside the Iraqi Army base Contingency Operating Location Spider on the edge of southern Tikrit, a team of U.S. Army engineers live and work with their Iraqi counterparts.

Second Lt. Eric Flood, 2nd Platoon leader, 95th Engineer Company, 65th Engineer Battalion and his Soldiers occupy Patrol Base Wolf for four days at a time.

While there, they work with their Iraqi counterparts on clearing main routes of improvised explosive devices and debris—and simply build relationships through shared common experiences.

Flood, of Lithopolis, Ohio, attended Reserve Officers Training Corps at Ohio University. He has closely followed the contingency operations in Southwest Asia since watching the collapse of the World Trade Center while still in high school. He continually seeks opportunities to interact with his Iraqi counterparts at Spider. This morning, he heads for the Iraqi officer's mess with his interpreter, Chuckey.

Chuckey, a former Republican Guard, speaks excellent English. He is passionate to see a viable Iraq, he says.

This morning the dining hall serves lentil soup with unleavened bread and sweet, black tea for breakfast. The small room is crowded and the Iraqi officers are talking and laughing animatedly.

Flood asks Chuckey what the joke is.

A young Iraqi lieutenant leans forward. He says his route clearance patrol from 4th Iraqi Army Division found an IED during an earlier mission. When U.S. forces showed up, the Iraqi lieutenant refused to relinquish the site. From start to finish, the patrol successfully handled the IED without any Coalition force help.

Flood congratulated the Iraqi lieutenant.

"They have come a long way in route clearance," he said. "In the beginning, the Iraqis would hurry through the route. Now they are more likely to slow down and deliberately clear the road. They are taking ownership of the IEDs they find."

Back inside the tiny patrol base, Sgt. Matthew Perdue, the platoon's medic, demonstrates a rapid trauma assessment to six Iraqi soldiers. They set up a class outside, sitting on some Army cots, braving the extreme heat. Quickly, Purdue demonstrates evaluating a casualty for breathing, broken bones and bleeding while the interpreter explains.

One Iraqi soldier, Sgt. Mustapha Fadil, is particularly adept. He belongs to the 4th IA's explosive ordinance disposal unit and speaks about saving a friend's life because he had learned to use a tourniquet.

"We cannot leave the base without knowing this type of training," said Fadil.

Another soldier, Pvt. Mohammed Kahled, agrees. He worked previously with a team that removed land mines by hand. One of his team members was not as lucky as Fadil's.

Perdue, of Roanoke, Va., says the Iraqis are very perceptive and pick up on first aid right away.

"The most important thing we can do is teach them well," said Perdue, who observes the Iraqi soldiers closely as they apply bandages and start IV fluids.

"We teach combat casualty care because blood loss would be the most likely cause of death," said Perdue. "They need to know how to stop the bleeding, replace the fluid and save the life of the soldier."

In another area of COL Spider, dust, as fine as talcum powder, lazily drifts and settles on everything in sight, as soldiers scurry around to the sound of hammering and circular saws resonating in the stifling air.

Sgt. Nicholes Leffert is a carpentry/masonry squad leader with Co. C, 84th Eng. Bn. He is a project noncommissioned officer-in-charge of a training

area. His unit is helping the Iraqis build at COL Spider. Though it's 110 degrees and Leffert is covered in the fine, powdery dust that sticks to every part of his skin and uniform, he is cheerful. He is holding plans for two frame buildings—a classroom and bomb house—the Iraqi Army will use to train soldiers.

"That's the kind of building the Iraqis do," said Leffert, indicating some brick buildings in the distance. "Since there isn't much wood, the Iraqi soldiers haven't had a lot of experience building with it. Their bricks are excellent though."

Nearby, Leffert's crew is putting trusses together. Three Iraqi soldiers and their interpreter are cutting scabs from a stack of plywood with a circular saw.

"It's hard to get the Iraqis out here every day because they have patrols and administrative duties," said Leffert, flipping through the schedule. He has approximately six IA soldiers out working per day.

For the Soldiers of Patrol Base Wolf and COL Spider, the Iraqi-American partnership is a memorable experience, both sides learning from the other. And as time draws closer for U.S. forces to leave, these Soldiers are confident with what has been accomplished.



*Sgt. Matthew Perdue, of Roanoke, Va., demonstrates how to start an IV to Iraqi soldiers at Patrol Base Wolf. Purdue, a medic with 2nd Platoon, 95th Engineer Company, 65th Engineer Battalion, spent a day teaching combat-casualty care to the 4th Iraqi Army Division soldiers, whose mission is clearing main roads of improvised explosive devices and debris. "We teach combat casualty care because blood loss would be the most likely cause of death. They need to know how to stop the bleeding, replace the fluids and save the Soldier's life," Perdue said. (Photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Melanie Trollinger)*

# 277th Aviation Support Battalion ammo handlers have a blast with EOD

Story and photos by Sgt. Stephanie van Geete  
10th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs



A pod of damaged rockets set aside by the 277th Aviation Support Battalion awaiting destruction.



Spc. Kelvin Conyers, ammunition handler for the 277th, helps deliver the damaged rockets to the range for demolition.



Ammunition handlers of the 277th form a chain to pass the defective rockets to members of the Navy Explosive Ordnance Detachment for disposal.



Navy Petty Officers 2nd Class Michael Lynch (left) and Harry Atchison (right), of the Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal Detachment, plant C-4 plastic explosives in preparation of detonating the defective rockets.

The ammunition handlers from Headquarters Support Company, 277th Aviation Support Battalion, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade teamed up with Sailors from the Navy Explosive Ordnance Detachment to dispose of some damaged rockets—by blowing them up—at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, near Tikrit, Iraq.

“We get ammo turn-ins from other units,” explained Sgt. George Tucker, ammunition yard noncommissioned officer in charge of the COB Speicher Ammunition Transfer Holding Point. “[The ammunition] gets inspected, and from that inspection they tell us whether or not it’s still usable.”

Tucker said many things could render a rocket unserviceable.

“Being banged, dropped—any little thing,” he said. “If a fin is bent, we have to get rid of those. They can’t be fired and it would be dangerous to our aircraft if we try to use them.”

Once it is determined that a rocket or round is defective, Tucker said, they set it aside for later destruction.

“These are live explosives,” he explained, saying even though they are unserviceable, they could still cause a lot of damage. “We need to make sure they’re not just laying somewhere where anyone can get to the ammo and use it for their own means.”

That’s where the EOD technicians come in. Stationed on COB Speicher, their main mission is responding to improvised explosive device encounters and destroying weapons’ caches; however, said Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Michael Lynch, EOD team leader, helping the Army get rid of unserviceable munitions benefits everybody involved.

“We’re getting rid of spent rounds and staying proficient in our ability to do demolitions,” Lynch explained. “And for [the ammunition handlers], it gives them a chance to get off the base and get out. They work with this ordnance a lot, but they don’t really get to see what it does. This allows them to stay at a safe distance and watch. It’s a good time, and a morale booster.”

After transporting the damaged munitions—23 HA-11 flechette and 24 HA-12 high explosive rockets—to Memorial Range on COB Speicher, the “ammo dogs” watched and learned as the EOD team placed the munitions, covered the load with 275 pounds of C-4 plastic explosive and wired it for detonation. Once the munitions were wired and ready to go, everyone moved back to the safety of up-armored vehicles positioned a kilometer away.

Soldiers kept their eyes on the detonation site and were rewarded when, after a quick countdown by Lynch, a massive fireball erupted from the pit.

“It was very entertaining,” said Spc. Kelvin Conyers. “This was the first time I’ve seen the HA-12 [high-explosive rocket] explode—that’s something you don’t see every day, and I got to experience it.”

While it was a novel experience for the Soldiers, it’s another day’s work for the EOD Sailors. Still, Lynch said, the thrill of blowing things up never fades.

“It’s never the same-old, same-old,” he said. “There’s always something new, always something you have to worry about. When it starts getting boring, that’s when it starts getting dangerous.”



Navy Lt. j.g. Chris Kowalczyk, an Explosive Ordnance Disposal technician, demonstrates to 277th Soldiers how to detonate the explosives from the safety of an up-armored vehicle.



A cloud of fire erupts as the bundle of damaged rockets, rigged with 275 pounds of C-4 plastic explosives, detonates at Memorial Range on Contingency Operating Base Speicher.



# A letter from the Chaplain



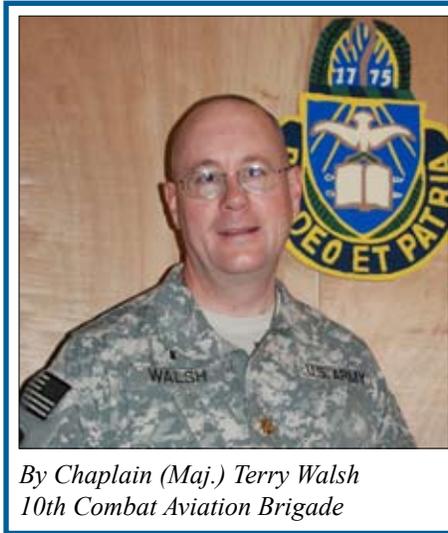
In the year 1751 the Pennsylvania State Assembly ordered a 2,000 pound bell from a foundry in London. The Speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly, Isaac Norris, requested that a Bible verse be inscribed on the bell: "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof" from Leviticus 25:5. Since the day the bell was first hung in Philadelphia in 1752, the Liberty Bell has been a symbol of America's yearning for freedom and independence.

Tradition holds that the Liberty Bell tolled for the First Continental Congress in 1774 and the Battle of Lexington and Concord in 1775. On July 8, 1776, the bell summoned the people of Philadelphia to hear a reading of the Declaration of Independence, which was signed four days earlier.

In the 1830s the Liberty Bell became a symbol of the struggle against slavery. After the end of the civil war, the Liberty Bell was sent on tour around the United States, as a symbol of national unity.

There are many bells located in state capitols, court houses, and churches across America. Yet it is only this bell, located in Philadelphia, which is known and beloved as The Liberty Bell because of the Bible quotation inscribed around the top of the bell.

As I write this column, Memorial Day is being observed in the United States



By Chaplain (Maj.) Terry Walsh  
10th Combat Aviation Brigade

and among American forces in Iraq. On Memorial Day we remember with gratitude those Americans who died in order to proclaim liberty throughout the land. We acknowledge the sacrifice and pride of surviving mothers and fathers, wives and husbands, brothers and sisters, and the children of fallen American heroes.

President George W. Bush said "... freedom is not America's gift to the world, it is the Almighty God's gift to every man and woman in this world." Expressing much the same sentiment in 1831, the Rev. Samuel Francis Smith wrote the patriotic hymn "My Country, 'Tis of Thee." Rev. Smith wrote his hymn just

about the time the anti-slavery movement adopted the Liberty Bell as a symbol of their cause. The fourth stanza of the hymn reads:

**Our fathers' God, to Thee,  
Author of liberty,  
To Thee we sing:  
Long may our land be bright  
With freedom's holy light;  
Protect us by Thy might,  
Great God, our King**

American forces in Iraq and Afghanistan are today engaged in the work of proclaiming liberty throughout the land, as our fathers did in Germany, Italy and Japan in World War II. We mourn those who have died in the struggle to set these ancient lands free, but we press on.

I give thanks to God that for the 233 years of American independence, God has raised up brave men and women who have fought, bled, and died to keep our country free. As we observe Memorial Day, may we remember those who died, say a prayer for their families, and join in the work of proclaiming liberty throughout the land, to all the inhabitants thereof. Long may our land be bright, with freedom's holy light!

## INTEGRITY

Integrity is our armor. We are honest and transparent in word and deed. We are true to ourselves and others. We tell the truth regardless of consequences or position. We maintain our spiritual center.

## Trust

Our trust is a matter of integrity and personal relationships. Trust is the foundation of all of our relationships. We earn each other's trust through words and deeds. We respect the competency of others and they respect ours.

## COMMITMENT

Commitment is a unity of effort. We are totally committed to our team, the accomplishment of our mission, the values of our organization and the development of One Iraq.

## EMPOWERMENT

We are empowered to make decisions. We make decisions in accordance with the Commander's Intent. We provide authority commensurate with responsibility. Through empowerment we underwrite risk in order to encourage innovation and initiative.

## ADAPTABILITY

We are an adaptive team. We rapidly anticipate changing conditions and impending challenges. We develop innovative solutions, exploit opportunities, and execute with agility, collaboration, and teamwork.

## Na Koa Pono



# **Task Force Lightning's Fallen Warriors**

We Will Never Forget Those Who Have Sacrificed



**Sgt. Christian E. Bueno-Galdos**  
3rd Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment  
172nd Infantry Brigade



**Pfc. Michael E. Yates Jr.**  
3rd Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment  
172nd Infantry Brigade



**Spc. Shawn D. Sykes**  
215th Brigade Support Battalion  
3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team  
1st Cavalry Division



**Staff Sgt. Leroy O. Webster**  
3rd Bn., 82nd Field Artillery Regiment  
2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team  
1st Cavalry Division

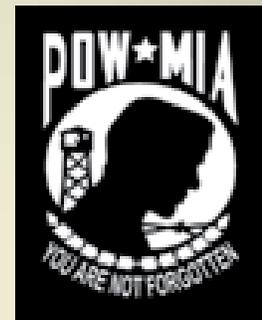
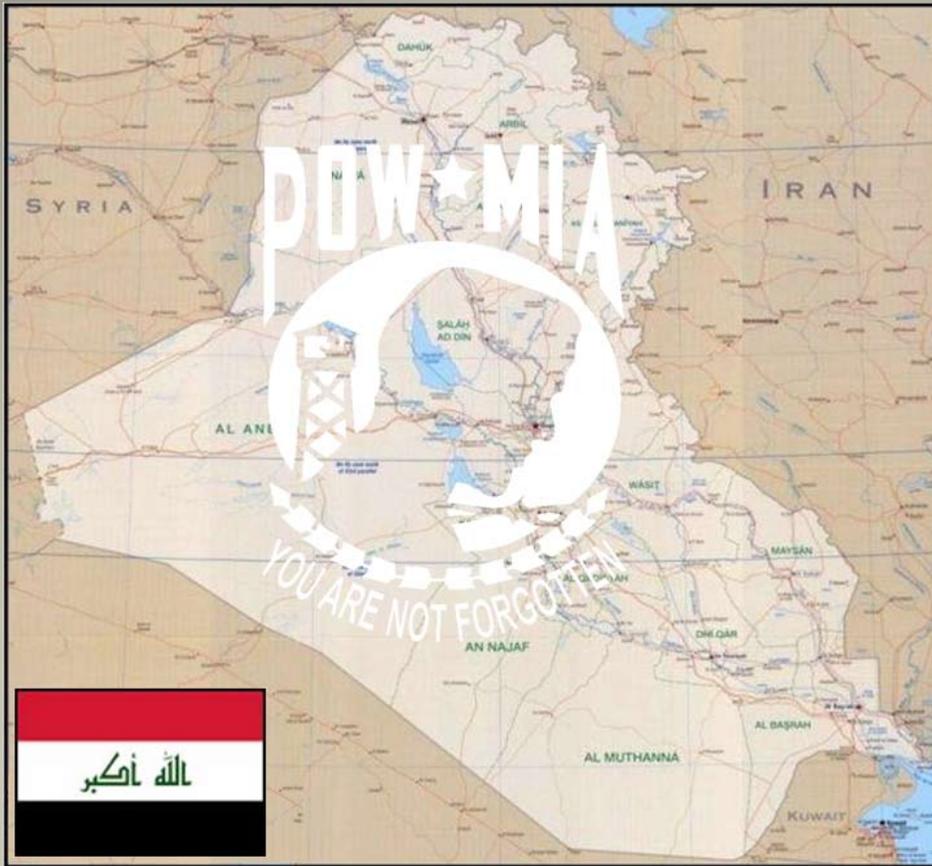


**Spc. Jake R. Velloza**  
1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment  
3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team  
1st Cavalry Division



**Spc. Jeremiah P. McCleery**  
1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment  
3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team  
1st Cavalry Division

# OPERATION LIBERATOR: "Never Leave a Fallen Comrade" ISOLATED, MISSING, DETAINED, or CAPTURED (IMDC) PERSONNEL IN IRAQ



SGT Al-Taie Baghdad 23 Oct 06	  
Jeffrey Ake Al Taii 11 Apr 05	 
Adnan Al-Hilawi Baghdad 3 Mar 07	 
Abbas Naama Baghdad 27 Sept 05	 
Dean Sadek Baghdad 2 Nov 04	 

Badri Hamze Tikrit 6 Nov 04	 
South African 4 Baghdad 10 Dec 06	 
CAPT Speicher Al Asad AB 17 Jan 91	  
UK 5 Baghdad 29 May 07	 
Hussein Al-Zurufi An Najaf 3 Dec 05	 

MAJ Gilbert IVO Al Taji 27 Nov 06	  
Neenus Khoshaba Baghdad 17 May 05	 
Aban M. Elias Al Taii 3 May 04	 
Timothy Bell Abu Ghuraib 9 Apr 04	  
Michael Chand Al Amarah 17 Aug 07	 