

# EXPEDITIONARY TIMES

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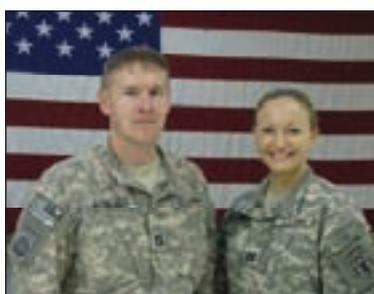
The general is in



Brigadier General Vandal  
visits 260th

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It takes two



Husband and wife take  
command

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Laughs at JBB



Comedians take the stage  
at Joint Base Balad

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## Soldiers, KBR continue efforts to end water shortage



Soldiers set over 1000 feet of pipeline, connecting two pump houses and increasing the water pressure flow to Q-West.

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SPC. MICHAEL V. CAMACHO  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

Q-WEST, Iraq – In the hot summer months, seasonal trends at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq, and the surrounding areas make water a commodity and water conservation a necessity



to prevent depletion of the area's water reserves.

In an effort to assist in this important task, service members are limited to roughly 15 gallons of water per day.

Local nationals share water lines with Q-West to irrigate their crops during the planting and growing seasons, and have been for roughly nine years. Its occupants are accustomed to the trend and the associated decrease

in water pressure.

"A lot of the locals from the surrounding villages have utilized this time frame to prepare their crops and their irrigation fields by using taps that have been placed throughout the line," said Capt. James Hatcher Jr., water operations officer, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms. "This has decreased the water pressure that comes to the (COL)."

An ongoing effort by Army

units and Kellogg, Brown and Root, Inc. contractors—to increase the amount of water distributed to the lakes by boosting the water pressure closer to the COL—means mitigating pressure loss caused by use of the taps.

As cooler weather sets in and planting gives way to harvesting, the taps are turned off, said Hatcher. This increases the wa-

**SEE WATER ON PAGE 3**

## Triple Nickel dimed out by 194th

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. RYAN TWIST  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The 194th Engineer Brigade took command from the 555th Eng. Bde. in a transfer of authority ceremony Aug. 29, here at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

The ceremony marked the end of a year-long deployment for the 555th, nicknamed the Triple Nickel, out of Fort Lewis, Wash., and the beginning for the 194th.

Brig. Gen. Heidi V. Brown, the Multi-National Corps –

Iraq deputy commanding general for sustainment, spoke to the Soldiers at the ceremony.

"As I look out at the Soldiers and leaders here and think about all you have done as a team, I am inspired and invigorated," said Brown. "The missions planned and executed by Triple Nickel have certainly contributed to the many successes experienced in Operation Iraqi Freedom and have been nothing short of world class."

During the 555th's deployment, the Soldiers did more than 4,000 route clearance patrols, travelling more than

**SEE CHARGE ON PAGE 2**



Brig. Gen. Robert A. Harris, the brigade commander for the 194th Engineer Brigade, speaks at a transfer of authority ceremony Aug. 29 here at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

## Balad Blotter August 26 - September 2

### DISORDERLY CONDUCT/UNLAWFUL ENTRY:

A complainant telephoned the law enforcement desk and reported an unlawful entry had occurred at the location. The complainant showed patrol where the subject, victim and victim's co-workers were located. The subject was detained and transported to LED by the patrol for further processing. The victim stated she was in the female latrine brushing her teeth when a Soldier walked into the latrine. She screamed and asked the subject what he was doing, and then grabbed her towel to run after the subject but he had disappeared. The victim stated that she went back inside and got dressed to report the incident. The victim further stated that she saw co-workers and informed them of the incident; they accompanied her back to the female latrine to retrieve the rest of her belongings. The victim also stated as they were outside the female latrine the subject walked by them and a co-worker confronted the subject about the incident, but the victim walked off because she was angry. The subject was advised of his rights. The subject acknowledged his rights, declined legal counsel, and agreed to accomplish a written statement. The subject stated that he went to the latrine to shower but found the male latrine was closed due to new paint and silicone, and since the male latrine was closed he decided to check to see if the female shower was empty so he could take a fast shower. He also stated that when he saw the victim in the latrine she shrieked, he apologized and left.

### LARCENY OF PRIVATE PROPERTY (SECURED)

A complainant telephoned the law enforcement desk to report a larceny of private property. The complainant stated that he returned to Joint Base Balad from rest and relaxation leave. Upon arrival to his quarters he noticed all his personal property was missing and the lock to his wall locker was cut. A witness stated he was instructed by personnel to inventory and remove complainants belongings from quarters. The witness stated he and an unknown male Third Country National from the AMC Housing Office removed complainant's belongings from quarters. The witness stated property was not inside quarters and he did not take property or see the TCN who was assisting take property. The complainant was unable to present proof of ownership of property.

NIPR: 443-8602

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# Chaplain's corner...

BY MAJ. PETER STRONG  
BRIGADE CHAPLAIN  
304TH SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE



**"If you are going to achieve excellence in big things, you develop the habit in little matters. Excellence is not an exception, it is a prevailing attitude."**

-Colin Powell

I will take excellence over mediocrity every time. How about you?

If you were going to have major surgery, would you want your surgeon to be a person committed to excellence or one who is just average? Would you prefer to have your car repaired by a mediocre mechanic or an excellent one? If you were going into combat, would you feel more confident being led by a General like Colin Powell, or someone who only did enough to get by?

Excellence is something we appreciate in others

and should desire for ourselves. Men and women of excellence set high standards for themselves. They practice daily the habit of giving forth their best effort. They routinely demand more of themselves and consequently expect more from others.

It is important that we don't confuse excellence with perfection. To be perfect usually has to do with a one time event (scoring a 10 in gymnastics, bowling a 300 game) while excellence is more about a lifestyle. A person cannot go from average to excellent in an instant – it takes time and commitment to become excellent.

Excellence is not so much a skill as it is an attitude. The Bible encourages us, "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men..." (Colossians 3:23). Excellence should be a lifestyle – it should affect how we perform our jobs and how we treat other people.

We prize excellence in others; the challenge is to practice it personally. Let us all strive for excellence – it beats mediocrity every time.

## TAKE CHARGE: 194th Engineering Brigade replaces 555th Engineering Brigade

CHARGE FROM PAGE 1

411,000 km. They also found and cleared 172 improvised explosive devices, as well as 33 caches.

"The Soldiers of Triple Nickel have accomplished exactly what we expected; they've done what was needed, when it was needed and then delivered some more," said Brown.

She said many of the Soldiers with the 194th were deployed in 2004 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, during which they commanded and controlled engineer units at the corps level for the southern two-thirds of Iraq. Brown said the unit's experience would aid in the execution of the mission.

"Your experiences, your commitment to service, your flexible competence, will serve us well in the challenging days ahead," said Brown. "You must prepare to lead the transition, as our forces begin to bridge from counter insurgency operations to stability operations."

"This will not be an easy transition," Brown

said. "It will require from your command some remarkable planning, rapid adaptability and herculean efforts as we embark on the largest strategic reposturing of forces in 40 years."

Col. Randall L. Fofi, commander of the 555th, wished the incoming unit success in their mission.

"You have a great brigade," said Fofi. "I wish you and your team the best. I know that you will do well."

Brig. Gen. Robert A. Harris, commander of the 194th, said the unit will assume control of the corps engineer brigade and assume control for the operations in Iraq.

"To the Soldiers of the 194th Engineer Brigade Headquarters, let's buckle our chin straps and set out to accomplish the mission we've all been training for and pondering for months," said Harris. "Let's do the job we came to do, earn the respect of our partners, our subordinate units and our supported units. It's our time. Let's make our country and our state proud."

# EXPEDITIONARY TIMES

13th ESC Commanding General, Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz

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16th Sustainment Brigade  
287th Sustainment Brigade  
304th Sustainment Brigade  
41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team  
155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team  
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing  
555th Engineer Brigade

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**Mission Statement:** The Expeditionary Times Staff publishes a weekly newspaper with the primary mission of providing command information to all service members, partners, and Families of the 13th 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.

# The Weekly Standard: Awards, Flags, Policy

By LT. COL. MELANIE MEIER  
155TH HBCT  
13TH ESC INSPECTOR GENERAL



It is the MNC-I Commander's intent that every Service Member who honorably completes a tour of duty in Iraq will be appropriately recognized for their service. The goal is to present awards prior to redeployment. There are misconceptions about flagging ac-

tions blocking awards or causing an award to be downgraded.

According to AR 600-8-22, Military Awards and medals will not be awarded or presented to any individual whose entire service subsequent to the time of the distinguished act, achievement, or service has not been honorable. The determination of "honorable" will be based on such honest and faithful service according to the standards of conduct, courage, and duty required by law and customs of the service of a member of the grade to whom the standard is applied. Individuals on whom favorable personnel actions have been suspended neither are recommended for, nor receive awards during the period of the suspension.

Exceptions to the above are Soldiers who are flagged for APFT failure. In accordance with AR 600-8-2, Suspension of Favorable Personnel Actions, flags for APFT failure do not prohibit awards. There is a misconception that the APFT and height/weight requirements are automatically waived while deployed. Commanders have the discretion to administer the APFT based upon mission requirements but do not have the authority to suspend the requirement for Soldiers to be weighed at least every six months. Soldiers that fail the

height/weight requirements will be flagged and will not receive an award with one exception.

Flags for weight control do not block the Purple Heart, an award based on valor and/or heroism, or a retirement award.

Flags have nothing to do with an award being downgraded. The Commander, with approval authority, has the discretion to approve, disapprove or downgrade an award at his or her appropriate approval level. The approval authority does not have to explain their decision to anyone. However, recommending officials may request reconsideration of a disapproved or downgraded award. The request for reconsideration and justification memorandum will cite specific reasons or new information supporting the award. Such recommendations will be considered on a case-by-case basis and a one-time reconsideration by the approval authority shall be final.

Joint Base Balad: DSN 433-2125  
LTC Reginald Howard (Command Inspector General)  
MAJ Scott Peters (Deputy)  
MSG Roy Thacker (NCOIC)  
SFC Danilo Egudin  
SFC Javier Cruz

Q-West (16th SB): DSN 827-6115  
LTC Kyle Peterson  
Taji (10th SB/ 155 BCT): DSN 834-3079  
LTC Timothy Norton/ LTC Paul Bird  
Adder/Tallil (287th SB/ 41 BCT):  
DSN 833-1710  
LTC Melanie Meier/ MAJ Jeffrey Copek  
Al Asad (321st SB): DSN 440-7049  
SFC Tamera Wynn

## SHORTAGE: Local nationals share water with Q-West

WATER FROM PAGE 1

ter pressure on base and allows more water to reach Q-West, making it possible to fill the lakes and lift the water restrictions, he said.

The lake water is cleaned and distributed as potable and non-potable water for use on the COL. That water is also used by the water purification plant to make bottled drinking water for the service members and civilians stationed on Q-West.

KBR personnel and Soldiers of the Mayor Cell's water team are planning and carrying out missions to increase the water pressure to Q-West, said Maj. Roger Jackson, the 16th Sustainment Brigade's engineering and construction officer in charge.

They have worked with local officials and set an agreement on which hours the taps can be used and by whom, said Jackson.

The work these groups accomplish now will ease the transition for service members during the responsible drawdown of U.S. forces in Iraq in the coming months, Hatcher said.

"If we can fix this now, we can pass on this knowledge to get water flowing onto the (COL) continuously, without issues of restricting water," said Hatcher.

**Interested in a movie?**

Check the movie schedule on page 20.

## Dealing with debt collectors & your credit report

By MAJ. BRIAN NOMI  
CHIEF LEGAL ASSISTANT  
13TH ESC JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL



The purpose of this article is to inform you about the law on debt collectors and the law on your credit report. You should be aware of the important rights you have under the law.

**Debt collectors:** You have rights against debt collectors under the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act. The FDCPA is a federal law that applies to anyone doing business in the United States.

The FDCPA governs how debt collectors can operate. A debt collector is anyone in the business of collecting debts for another. This does not include the original creditor. For example, if you buy services from a store on credit, the store is a creditor. If the store hires XYZ Collections to try to collect on the bill, then XYZ is a debt collector.

You have important rights under the FDCPA. These include the right to:

- \* Request verification of the debt
- \* Be informed: "This is an attempt to

collect a debt and any information will be used for that purpose."

\* Debt collectors may not harass, threaten or deceive you, and they especially may not threaten to send you to jail

\* Debt collectors must stop contacting you if you so request. It is best to do so in writing, to prove that you have made this request.

\* They may not call you more than three times per week or call you at night between 9 p.m. and 8 a.m.

\* They may not contact others to try to pressure you into paying. It is illegal to contact your commander to try to get the commander to help them collect the debt

Two of the above rights are very useful. First is the right to request verification of the debt. This means the debt collector must send you evidence of the debt's existence, including the amount of the original debt, identity of the creditor and any additional charges. You should dispute the debt in a verification letter, which you can write yourself. This letter should be sent by certified mail. Keep a copy for your own records. Here is the simple letter which you can send to a debt collector:

Dear Debt Collector,

I dispute this debt with -----.  
Please send me verification of the debt to my address as follows: -----.  
Do not contact me again until you send me this proof of the debt.

Sincerely, G.I. Joe

The second important right under the FDCPA is the right to order a debt collector to cease and desist all contact with you. The debt collector can still sue you if you do this, however. In fact, you can be sued at any time, even if you are making payments on a debt.

Here is the letter you can send to a debt collector. Certified mail is recommended, but not required.

Dear Debt Collector,

I dispute this debt with -----.  
Cease and desist all contact with me regarding this debt.

Sincerely, G.I. Joe

**Credit reports:** A federal law called the Fair Credit Reporting Act also protects you. Your credit report is a history of how well you have used credit in the past. Lenders use it to decide whether to give more credit to you.

Under the FCRA, a credit reporting agency is required to investigate errors you report, and remove any inaccurate

information. If someone puts incorrect information about you on your credit report, you can dispute it. The proper way to do this is to send a letter to the credit reporting agency and the creditor. The following website has excellent information on this process, including a good sample letter:

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/credit/cre21.shtm>.

You can get a copy of your credit report for free once per year, or if you were denied credit within the past 60 days based on that particular agency's credit report. Use [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com), which provides a truly free credit report once per year.

Resolving debt collector or credit reporting disputes requires you to keep detailed records of everything you send and receive. You must communicate in writing using the sample letters in this article and you should do so by certified mail.

Legal Assistance can help. Be sure to bring in all relevant documents for your appointment. For further assistance, please feel free to contact our office at DSN 318-433-2836. Building number is 7235 (the castle on Pennsylvania Avenue).

# Brigadier General Vandal visits the 260th

STORY AND PHOTO  
BY CAPT. ROBERT S. BURNETT AND  
CAPT. SEAN FACCHINELLO  
260TH CSSB,  
10TH SUST. BDE.

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Brig. Gen. Thomas S. Vandal, the deputy commanding general for support with the 3rd Infantry Division, and 3rd ID Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse Andrews arrived here Aug. 19 as part of a pre-deployment site survey for their upcoming deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

As part of their visit to Camp Liberty, they visited the 260th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, out of Hunter Army Airfield, Ga. During the visit, Vandal recognized personnel on their first deployment by awarding them the 3rd Sustainment Brigade combat patch.

Both men spoke about the honor of serving during a time of conflict, as well as the pride of wearing the combat patch that makes them part of a proud heritage.

Vandal then spoke to the Soldiers about the importance of their mission and the upcoming deployment of the 3rd ID, assuring them their families would be taken care of at home in Savannah, Ga.

These Soldiers will provide units in the Baghdad area of operations with the critical supplies needed to conduct their operations, a mission both Vandal and Andrews stressed as critical.

**Brig. Gen. Thomas Vandal, the deputy commanding general for support with the 3rd Infantry Division, awards first-time deployed Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 260th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, their 3rd Sustainment Brigade combat patch.**



## Mail handlers work hard to keep morale up

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SPC. JOHN STIMAC  
*Expeditionary Times Staff*

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Receiving mail at Joint Base Balad can be a big morale booster for service members and civilians, which is why the men and women responsible for making it happen work 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Members of the Joint Military Mail Terminal process bulk mail for seven zip codes, including northern Iraq.

In July alone, 1.7 million pounds of incoming and outgoing parcels, the equivalent of 130,000 pieces of mail, came through the JMMT, said Staff Sgt. David R. Cunningham, the noncommissioned officer in charge of JMMT North, with the 81st Military Mail Terminal.

December is the heaviest

month, with roughly 2.85 million pounds, or 220,000 pieces of mail, coming through JBB's JMMT, said Cunningham, a Fort Lauderdale, Fla. native.

JMMT employees load the mail on flight pallets, which Air Force and Department of Defense contractors prepare for shipment. Roughly 10 to 14 planes full of mail fly in and out of JBB each week, said Cunningham.

Cunningham said their mission focuses on the mail coming in and out of JBB, as well as generating postal operating directive reports.

"When the contractor turns in (contraband) items such as knives, etc., we have to open the package, provide a picture of the item and notify the mailer and the person receiving the mail that their package was opened by us," said

Cunningham. "Those items should be sent registered mail, that way this would not occur."

Cunningham said another aspect of the mission is the oversight of the 86 Kellogg, Brown and Root, Inc. employees, through monthly performance evaluation boards and a series of bi-monthly inspections. This is done to maintain a standard of operations, said Cunningham.

"We basically let them know how they are doing," said Cunningham. "They are a highly professional staff, which makes our job easy and the facility pretty much runs itself."

First Lt. Jamie D. Vestal, the officer in charge of postal operations and a contract-



ing officer representative of JBB postal operations, with the 2nd Battalion, 38th Human Resource Company out of Schweinfurt, Germany, said he provides direct support and ensures parcels and letters get to each Soldier in their respective units.

"We want to make sure Soldiers can receive mail and have no issues sending mail out," said Vestal, a Chicago native.

All units on JBB must meet military and postal regulations.

Staff Sgt. Johnny Nieves, with the 2/38th HRC, a Lima, Peru native, said his unit conducts quarterly inspections of

135 units' mailrooms to ensure they are following correct procedures and policy guidelines.

"We also check suspicious mail referred to us by KBR," said Nieves. "We assess the situation and make sure it goes through the proper channels."

Receiving mail in a timely manner is a concern for most Soldiers and can also be a morale booster.

Vestal said with the advances in communications such as emailing and texting, sometimes it is just more personal to receive a hand-written letter.

"People are receiving their mail on a timely basis due to better technology, more workers and tracking systems," said Vestal. "A lot of the KBR staff were prior-service military, so they understand that it boosts Soldiers' morale when they receive packages from back home and they are ensuring that happens."

# Are you ready for some football?

Looking for 20 second Football shout outs - and a singer to perform the National Anthem.

Think you have what it takes?

Run this hot route idea through your chain of command and have them contact 1st Sgt. Aangi Mueller.

POC: 1SG Aangi Mueller Email: aangi.mueller@iraq.centcom.mil Phone: 483-4601

# 96th Trans. Co. supports movement of troops in Iraq

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2  
MICHAEL ANGELO  
419TH CSSB,  
10TH SUST. BDE.

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – With every military conflict comes great demand for a logistical transportation unit, whether it is to transport heavy equipment throughout the battlefield or to move resupply packages to support troops and military operations.

Those needs are the primary focus of the Soldiers with the 96th Transportation Company, assigned to the 180th Transportation Battalion, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), that arrived in October 2008.

Originally, the 96th Trans. Co.'s focus was the movement of units and equipment in and out of central Iraq.

Following the announcement of the drawdown of troops from Iraq, the 96th was called upon to shift gears and redirect their focus to the transportation of equipment to the south, to assist the efforts of the drawdown.



At the 96th Transportation Company, 419th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade's motorpool, heavy equipment transporters line up prior to moving out. Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicles are moved throughout Iraq via HETs. The 96th Trans. Co. hauled more than 2,000 MRAPs to Contingency Operating Locations all over Iraq.

The unit's primary piece of equipment, the heavy equipment transportation truck, commonly referred to as the HET, has long been a great asset to the military in its deployed environments. It is capable of transporting the heaviest loads of any vehicle in the military's fleet.

With a weight of roughly 231,400 pounds, the HET is the largest ground transportation vehicle, the king of the road in the transportation arena.

The 96th has traveled 387,000 miles in this, their sixth deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The unit typically deploys as

a company, and is assigned to the 419th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, located in central Iraq. The 96th provides all heavy lift and transportation support required in and around central Iraq, with convoys traveling as far north as Tikrit and as far south as Basra.

With thousands of miles remaining for the 96th, the mission to draw down forces and equipment in Iraq continues.

With all cargo delivered and each convoy completed, it is one step closer to completing the mission and the end of a deployment.

# Delta and Echo 949th receive awards

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
PFC. MICHAEL SYNER  
10TH SUST. BDE.,  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

seph Dixon, the commander of the 260th CSSB.

Both companies provided convoy security for ground logistics movements throughout Iraq, a job that earned them more than 200 awards, including 10 Bronze Stars and two Combat Action Badges.

"It's nice to get recognized like this," said Staff Sgt. Benito Gonzales, an assistant convoy commander with D Co., and a native of San Antonio. "My Soldiers worked hard the past year. They deserve this."

The two companies will return home shortly, an event the Soldiers are eagerly awaiting.

"I can't wait to get back," said Spc. Jose Z. Gomez, a mechanic with E Co. and a native of Lubbock, Texas.

VICTORY BASE CAMP, Iraq

– On Aug. 8, two companies attached to the 260th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment



Brigade, received recognition and awards for their year-long deployment to Iraq.

Two separate award ceremonies were held for D and E Companies, originally with the 949th Brigade Support Battalion, Texas National Guard.

"I can't thank you enough for your service," said Lt. Col. Jo-



E Company, 949th Brigade Support Battalion, 260th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, was awarded their end of tour awards for their deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, in a ceremony Aug. 8.

# House cleaning NCO-style

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. MAJ. JOHN ROSARIO  
13TH ESC

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Soon after the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) assumed authority of all sustainment operations in Iraq, two of the unit's noncommissioned officers began their own operation 'Clean Sweep,' in preparation for the upcoming drawdown of forces and equipment from Iraq.

Sgt. First Class Michael Tiberi, the satellite communication systems noncommissioned officer in charge and property manager, and Staff Sgt. Stephen Murphy, a communications NCO, both with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 13th ESC, took it upon themselves to turn in excess equipment and dispose of items no longer needed, said Lt. Col. Shawn Denny, the 13th ESC communications officer and a native of Minneapolis.

"Despite having to work inside large

metal containers holding the excess equipment, in temperatures rising above 120 degrees, these two NCOs made it their mission to clean the G6 house," said Denny.

Tiberi, a native of Fort Worth, Texas, said he understood the importance of their mission.

"It is hard work, but I knew other units would benefit from getting this excess equipment we have around," said Tiberi. "I'm glad we get to do our part in this fiscally constricted environment."

Tiberi and Murphy found equipment that will now be redistributed to units across Iraq, saving the government and taxpayers more than \$50,000. They also disposed of more than 23,000 pounds of unusable items, doing their part to support the drawdown.

Murphy, a Chicago native, said he and his counterpart made great progress, but they still have more work to do to complete this mission.

Capt. Lucas Fallot, the 13th ESC's logistics operations division officer and a Monroe, N.Y. native, praised the NCOs



Sgt. 1st Class Michael Tiberi and Staff Sgt. Stephen Murphy work to identify excess and unusable property that can be sent to units or disposed of in support of the drawdown of forces and equipment from Iraq.

for their hard work.

"These NCOs did a magnificent job of putting equipment back into the hands of

the Warfighters," said Fallot. "They did a great job of getting rid of stuff and organizing the containers."

# Volunteers help hospital operate smoothly

By SPC. MICHAEL V. CAMACHO  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Soldiers and Airmen at the Air Force Theater Hospital on Joint Base Balad, Iraq, take selfless service to a new level by volunteering their off-duty time and energy to help hospital staff.

This volunteer service allows service members who do not have medical backgrounds to receive medical training and assist the hospital staff wherever they are needed.

Those who sign up for the program go through an introductory course on patient care, safety and proper procedure, said Air Force Staff Sgt. Tricia Williams, the helicopter pad boss with the 332nd Expeditionary Medical Support Squadron. They are familiarized with the different parts of the hos-

pital and what each area does in terms of patient care, she said.

Senior Airman Joe Wallington, a medical technician with the 934th Aero-Medical Staging Squadron, said the volunteers ease stress on hospital employees.

“Our main issue is man power,” said Wallington. “We run low on man power and it gets stressful. (The volunteers) take the rush out things and let us focus more on our patients.”

A limited number of staff is on duty each night, but volunteers add able bodies to assist with moving patients more quickly and getting them proper medical attention, said Williams.

“When we have multiple patients, we rely on our volunteers,” said Williams. “Normally, we’ll have anywhere from eight to 12 volunteers a night, and they work the same shifts we do.”

Every night, Soldiers and Airmen come to the hospital to help, said Tech. Sgt. Brandise Caszatt,

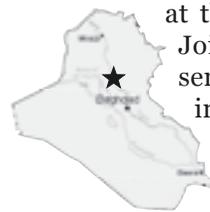
the night shift Medical Command Center noncommissioned officer with the 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group. Their work adds to the comfort of the patients, he said.

Spc. Ezele Green, a truck driver with the 547th Transportation Company and a volunteer, said the work makes a difference for her, as well as the patients.

“Even though my daily job is important, I feel this is really making a difference in my life,” said Green. “I came in sick one day and I was impressed by a group of people—I later found out they were volunteers—handling an emergency situation with a patient coming off a helo. I wanted to be part of that, helping wounded warriors.”

Without the volunteers, the hospital would not function as smoothly, Caszatt said.

“The volunteers are definitely an integral part to the way the hospital functions,” he said. “I don’t know what we would do without them.”



## USO opens new theater

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SPC. LISA A. COPE  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The Joint Base Balad, Iraq, branch of the United Service Organization opened its doors as the first USO in Iraq, February of 2008, and continued this legacy Sept. 1, by being the first USO in Iraq to feature a movie theater.

Eugenio A. Oliva, a duty manager for the USO, said the theater features a 94-inch screen, surround-sound speakers and theater-style seating, able to accommodate 25 service members at a time.

Maj. Brian H. Nomi, chief of client services at the consolidated legal center for the 304th Sustainment Brigade, attended the theater’s opening night.

“The new theater is the best that I have seen so far in Iraq,” said Nomi. “It’s got great digital sound, crystal-clear picture and there aren’t any bats flying across the screen.”

“The theater equipment was made possible by donations from the folks back home,”



Service members watch a movie on opening night of the United Service Organization theater Sept. 1, inside the USO building.

said Teresa Cherry, the JBB USO director.

The theater is available the same hours as the USO, so service members can watch whatever they want, said Cherry. At 8 p.m., however, the scheduled movie of the day is shown.

“There will be a different themed movie each night of the week,” said Cherry.

Reservations and group or unit functions are allowed, as long as they do not interfere with the scheduled movie, said Oliva.

The theater opening is one step in a complete USO renovation project that began Feb. 24 and is scheduled for comple-

tion in November, said Cherry. The completed facility will include two video-game rooms – equipped with Xbox 360s, Nintendo Wiis, and PlayStation 3s – the theater and a lounge, in addition to the services already available, said Oliva.

**Theater info:**  
**Sunday: life**  
**Monday: military**  
**Tuesday: flashback**  
**Wednesday: comedy**  
**Thursday: animation**  
**Friday: action**  
**Saturday: science fiction/horror**

### What is a DSARC?

The Deployed Sexual Assault Response Coordinator is considered the center of gravity when it comes to ensuring victims of sexual assault receive appropriate and responsive care. They serve as the single point of contact to coordinate sexual assault victim care.

### What is a UVA?

The Unit Victim Advocate pro-

vides essential support and care to the victim, including providing non-clinical information on available options and resources to assist the victim in making informed decisions as they progress through resolution and healing. The UVA maintains communications and contact with victims as needed for continued victim support.

If you need a SARC or UVA, call the Joint Base Balad Sexual Assault Response Coordinator at 443-7272 or contact the SARC via pager at 443-9001, pager 159 for help. Soldiers should seek assistance with their Unit Victim Advocate or DSARC. Soldiers may also call 433-7272 or dial 443-9001, pager 122/135 for assistance.

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# 49th MCT conducts professional development conference

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
CAPT. LEONARD D. ACQUISTAPACE  
UPAR, 49TH MCB

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq –The 49th Transportation Battalion, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), hosted its first officers' professional development conference Aug. 28, at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Lt. Col. Pete Haas, the commander of the 49th, said the OPD conference is a key leadership development event for junior officers in the battalion.

The conference focused on Army values, counseling, physical fitness, nutrition and how all these traits help form a sound and balanced officer. Officers also discussed leadership scenarios that introduced ethical dilemmas.

The officers, from both Regular Army and Army Reserve components, came from Contingency Operating Locations throughout Iraq.

"You get a sense of how large our battalion is when you see representatives from each (movement control team), even more so when you consider all of our (Kellogg, Brown and Root, Inc.) employees," said Warrant Officer David Hiniker, the battalion logistics officer with the 49th Trans. Bn., and Killeen, Texas native.

Second Lt. Anshwa Pennington, the 49th's personnel officer, and a Houston native, said the battalion faces special challenges because it is distributed throughout Iraq.

"The 49th has special challenges in getting its leadership together," said



Officers of the 49th Transportation Battalion, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), play a game of ultimate Frisbee, wrapping up an officers' professional development conference Aug. 28, at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Pennington. "Whenever we can get together and talk face to face it's a welcome change, because most of the time we only know each other from our voices on the daily Breeze (online teleconference) sessions."

Junior officers from the battalion's 19 movement control teams and headquarters detachment – from Trebil

Gate, Habur Gate and Basrah to Joint Base Balad – convened for the OPD.

Haas said, "This OPD conference is part of our three-pronged leadership development program, which includes the green tab huddle for our commanders and detachment sergeants, our Web-based (noncommissioned officer professional development) led by Com-

mand Sgt. Maj. Joseph Bivens, and this conference."

As discussed during the conference, part of being a well-rounded officer is having fun. The unit held an ultimate Frisbee team-building tournament, which left all the participants thoroughly invigorated and exhausted, said Haas.

## Iraqi bank moving to base

BY SGT. RYAN TWIST  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq –Individuals throughout Joint Base Balad, Iraq, will have access to the first Iraqi bank on base, opening in roughly two to three months.

The Al Warka Bank on JBB will serve Iraqis, Department of Defense contractors and third-country nationals who have access to get on base, said Maj. David M.

Foster, officer in charge of the Iraqi Based Industrial Zone, with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

"The bank provides a great opportunity here for us

to help develop the infrastructure and help build the economy in Iraq," said Foster.

Foster, a native of Newport Beach, Calif., said they are in the final phase of opening the bank, aimed at providing services previously not available to Iraqis.

He said the hope is that bank employees will take the experience learned from their jobs and spread it throughout the local community.

Foster said there are 110 branches throughout Iraq. He said the Iraqis who work at the bank – if the bank and workers are successful – would eventually transfer to a new bank and help open it to the local economy.

He said the banks are fee based banks and the services they provide are foreign currency exchange, wiring money, letter of credit, electronic funds transfer, savings and checking accounts, and fund transfers.

Foster said this bank will also provide services to Iraqis who work on JBB who may not have access to those services in their local communities, and give them the opportunity to learn how to use the banking services Al Warka offers.

Khalid Almoola, the bank manager, speaking through an interpreter, said the bank is here to support the locals.

"The bank is the vein of the economy, the economy is the vein of the country," he said.

Almoola also expressed his gratitude for U.S. assistance.

"We appreciate the Americans because they help us a lot," said Almoola. "They help the Iraqi people because they support the Iraqi people with medical issues, plus they help find jobs for the people."

**Do you have a story idea?**

Contact us at:

[expeditionarytimes@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:expeditionarytimes@iraq.centcom.mil)

# Foreign object debris reduction: JBB spall team prevents runway chipping

STORY BY  
TECH. SGT. JAMES MASTERSON  
332ND EXPEDITIONARY  
CIVIL ENG. SQD.

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron's spall repair team is one of the critical links in the JBB team effort to reduce foreign object debris on the airfield.



"FOD prevention is a wing-wide responsibility," says Maj. Karen Cosgrove, 332nd ECES Operations Flight commander. Her squadron's "Dirt Boyz" are the primary responders to mend parts of the runway that are cracked and susceptible to creating spall, or small fragments of concrete.

When airfield management personnel do their regular checks over the 19 million-square-foot runway, they identify areas that need to be repaired.

"As soon as these areas have been identified to have a potential negative mission impact, our team is on the scene accomplishing the repairs," said Maj. Cosgrove. "Our team is not only repairing the runway - we are saving the lives of pilots and crew, and preventing damage to our high-value aircraft assets."

The spall team consists of a day crew and a night crew, each made up of four Airmen, sometimes working in temperatures exceeding 140 degrees on the runway surface.

"It is a surreal situation," says Staff Sgt. Samuel McDowell, 332nd ECES spall team member. "You are on the brink of dehydration, lungs filled with concrete dust, and the only thing on your mind is completing the job."

Some repairs take more time than others, depending on the size and depth of the damaged area. According to the CE Airmen, experience plays the biggest role in determining repair requirements.

After estimating the size and depth of the repair, the team immediately takes action. They set up all their equipment,

including a K-12 concrete saw, a jackhammer, an air compressor, buckets of concrete-repair mix, and a 200-gallon water tank. Then they saw around the area in straight lines and right angles, which maximizes the strength of the repair material.

Once the broken section is squared off, the Airmen pull out the jackhammer; they use it to break the concrete down to a depth of four to six inches, which gives the repair material a more solid foundation. Throughout the process, a sweeper vehicle stays parked next to the action, its giant vacuum tube sucking in debris from the saw and jackhammer.

After the loose concrete is removed, the Airmen mix "Pavemend," a rapid concrete-repair mix. They add two gallons of water to each pre-filled bucket of dry Pavemend and blend it with a motorized paddle. The water in the material activates chemicals that initiate the curing process, turning it into a thick liquid the Airmen pour into the hole. As the Airmen level Pavemend with the runway, the curing process has already begun. In less than three hours, the restored patch of runway is ready for aircraft use.

"Without the repair of these spalls, flying operations could be suspended due to the smallest amount of FOD, causing a devastating impact on the aircraft," Cosgrove said.

In the month of July alone, the Dirt Boyz manually added 468 five-gallon buckets of Pavemend to fix 168 spall issues on the runway.

"Just as everyone else in the Air Force will tell you, 'we help launch planes' - and we do," said McDowell. "By removing deteriorated concrete, we solve part of the problem with FOD."



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Heather Norris

Tech. Sgt. James Masterson, 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron spall team member, pours a concrete repair mixture into a pre-cut section of damaged runway here Aug. 2., as part of the effort to reduce foreign object debris on the airfield.



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# 368th Soldier becomes US citizen

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. ANGELA FOLEY,  
305TH QUARTERMASTER CO.,  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION ADDER, Iraq – Pfc.



Lisandro Lantigua, a cargo specialist with the 368th Seaport Operation Company, from Buena Vista, Calif., became a United States citizen at a ceremony Aug. 5th, at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.

Lantigua was scheduled for a citizenship interview in May 2009, but was unable to attend when his unit deployed to Contingency Operating Location Adder, Iraq. Lantigua contacted the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to discuss the issue and arrange a new date.

He had the full support of his unit.

Sgt. Nicole Almonte, the 368th SOC orderly room noncommissioned officer in charge and a native of Kissimmee, Fla., ensured that Lantigua was informed and up-to-date on paperwork, so there would be no difficulties obtaining his goal.

Lantigua received an email in June 2009 from USCIS, which stated he could

complete the interview and ceremony July 4. However, poor weather conditions prevented him from attending.

Lantigua's journey to citizenship started at the age of eight, when he and his mother, Mercedes L. Myers, moved from the Dominican Republic to California. Myers is a permanent resident, still attempting U.S. citizenship.

Lantigua graduated from Buena Vista High School in 2007, and in 2008 he joined the U.S. Army in Los Angeles. He started the process to become a citizen while participating in the Home-town Recruiting Program in California that same year.

Lantigua's efforts were finally rewarded when he took the United States' oath of allegiance at Camp Arifjan.

"Waiting to get my citizenship has been a long journey," said Lantigua, "but it has been well worth the wait. I will have better job opportunities now."

As a citizen, Lantigua will be able to



**Pfc. Lisandro Lantigua, a cargo specialist with the 368th Seaport Operation Company, and a native of Buena Vista, Calif., became a United States citizen at a ceremony Aug. 5, at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.**

apply for Warrant Officer Candidate School, as he is now able to obtain the necessary security clearance. He is also

considering becoming a police officer or a U.S. Customs and Border Protection agent.

Thursday, 10 September, 1400 hrs

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SUICIDE PREVENTION  
A Personal Perspective

# Chaplain, unit cope with loss

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SPC. NAVEED ALI SHAH  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

VICTORY BASE COMPLEX, Iraq - For Soldiers in combat zones it can be difficult dealing with the loss of a teammate, but one chaplain here at Victory Base in Baghdad is helping his troops through a ministry of presence.

Capt. Shane Yates, the chaplain with the 41st Special Troops Battalion, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), said being with his Soldiers is the most important aspect of being a chaplain.

Yates said he routinely prays with his Soldiers prior to convoys. However, sometimes God has other plans which no one can prepare for, he said.

Two Soldiers from the 41st STB died in Rashid, Iraq Aug. 28, when their convoy was hit by an improvised explosive device.

A third Soldier was wounded and evacuated to Germany.

The 41st STB, part of the Oregon National Guard, held a memorial ceremony Sept. 2, at Hope Chapel here at VBC for Sgt. Mark D. Werner and Pfc. Taylor D. Marks.

"I believe that the memorial service is important for some sense of closure for the Soldiers," said Yates. "It also allows them time to reflect on our fallen heroes and honor them appropriately."

The convoy started like any other, and though Yates unknowingly chose to talk to Werner personally beforehand, no one knew that night would change their lives.

"I had prayed for this convoy prior to them leaving the



The honor guard stands at attention honoring Sgt. Mark D. Werner and Pfc. Taylor D. Marks, who died Aug. 28, after firing a salute during the 41st Special Troops Battalion, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) memorial ceremony Sept. 2 at Hope Chapel at Victory Base Complex, Iraq.

wire, and I shook hands with Sgt. Werner and attempted to give him a sense of calm and comfort," said Yates.

After hearing of the incident,

Yates said he was able to be on the flight line as the wounded Soldier was brought in by a medical evacuation helicopter.

"I also had the blessing of

being there with (the wounded Soldier) while they worked on his injuries," Yates said. "I prayed with him and stayed by him; it was an honor."

Though the memorial ceremony was emotional, Yates said the unit is trying to look forward.

"The next step for our unit is to drive on and fulfill our mission here in Iraq," he said. "I will closely watch the unit most affected by this tragedy and provide ministry of presence to them as much as I can."

Though the chaplain's duty is to provide support for his troops, his own health is important, as well.

"I believe that in order to cope with this, I will spend some alone time with God," said Yates.

"It is such a privilege to be a chaplain and spend time with these warriors," he said. "They humble me."

## Q-West Soldiers learn art of fighting

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SPC. MICHAEL V. CAMACHO  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

Q-WEST, Iraq - Armed and unarmed combat are crucial skills for all Soldiers, making the Modern Army Combatives Program as necessary as basic rifle marksmanship.

Roughly 400 Soldiers with the 16th Sustainment Brigade in Q-West have been certified at levels one and two of MACP while deployed.

In the program, Soldiers are taught how to defend themselves in real-life situations and think on their feet in the heat of combat.

MACP is composed of four levels. Each builds on the previous one, enhancing Soldiers' fighting skills.

Level one consists of basics, such as grappling and escapes, said Staff Sgt. Travis McGruder, a 16th Sust. Bde. MACP instructor.

Level two teaches Soldiers to counter-attack moves learned in level one, while level three combines all previous levels while teaching Soldiers to fight standing up, as well as some weapons training, said McGruder.

Level four is reserved for trainers, those who can teach and certify fellow Soldiers in combatives, said McGruder.

"(MACP) trains Soldiers for real-world situations, because you never know when things can pop off and you might need to use combatives," said McGruder.

MACP also helps Soldiers to be competent and aware on the battlefield, he said.

"Combatives is a great tool for outside the wire," said McGruder. "Not everybody

is going to fight fair. You need to know how to better yourself, settle yourself and keep a good head."

Spc. Casey Chumney said there's a strong sense of camaraderie in the class. Soldiers build bonds with fellow classmates through matches and help one another better understand the techniques needed to properly execute each move, she said.

"There's a lot of discipline in this," said Chumney. "You've got to know what's going on and keep your eyes open."

Sgt. Daniel Misch, with the 16th Sustainment Brigade, puts Spc. Cassandra Harvey, also with the 16th, in a headlock during a sparring match in their Modern Army Combatives Program class.



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# Troy's Place rededicates memorial portrait

STORY BY  
STAFF SGT. JAKE RICHMOND  
332ND AIR EXPEDITIONARY  
WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq - Members of the wing chapel staff and the company-grade officers council here joined at Troy's Place to rededicate a memorial photograph-illustration of the late Maj. Troy Gilbert, for whom the facility was named.



Capt. James Lisher, CGOC president and lawyer for the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing staff judge advocate office, first visited Troy's Place shortly after arriving here in March. He saw a graphic-enhanced photo board featuring Major Gilbert, an F-16 pilot deployed to JBB who died in combat in late 2006, and noticed it was a little worse for wear.

"I saw the old photo board, and I thought it looked disheveled and just not befitting a person you're trying to honor," the captain said. "It was really worn."

Once he had the idea to improve it, he figured the CGOC would be game to make it happen.

"I said, 'Hey, let's take this upon ourselves and fix it.' Obviously, based on who (Major Gilbert) was and what he did, I thought it was paramount."

He said he thought about getting it professionally printed, but there were concerns about shipping the fragile, original copy overseas.

One member of the CGOC, 2nd Lt. Dave Gattens of the 332nd Expeditionary Communications Squadron, de-



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

**Capt. James Lisher, CGOC president and lawyer for the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing staff judge advocate office, looks at the new memorial portrait (top) honoring Maj. Troy Gilbert, at a rededication ceremony here Aug. 17. Captain Lisher coordinated the effort to create an improved photographic illustration honoring of the namesake of Troy's Place, who died on a close-air support combat mission near Taji, Iraq, in late 2006.**

cidated to solicit the services of his sister, Brooke, who's a graphics student at Pennsylvania State University. After she made some improvements on the old design, Senior Air-

man Courtney Enos of the 332nd AEW Public Affairs office printed the high-resolution image and affixed it to a thin foam board. Suitably, the CGOC used Purpleheart wood

for the frame.

"I think you have to honor somebody with a memorial of quality and meaning," Captain Lisher said. "I think this is a combination of both."

Maj. Mark Roberts, a Protestant chaplain for the 332nd AEW, knew Major Gilbert when they were both young officers. He said he epitomized the purpose of Troy's Place, which is to foster fellowship among deployed servicemembers and give them an opportunity to relax between long work hours.

"He would've loved this place," Major Roberts said. "And he would have been hanging out here."

Chaplain (Col.) Jeff Swanson, the senior chaplain at JBB, said both Troy's Place and the Gilbert Memorial chapel were named after Major Gilbert, "not only in memory of him, but in inspiration of him, because he was an engaged guy."

"We want the Airmen, the Soldiers, the Sailors and the Marines to come here and find this as a place of respite, 24/7, where they can get a cup of coffee or use the computers or just sit and talk and bolster each other for the missions we have at hand."

For his actions in combat on the day he died, Major Gilbert was awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross with Valor. As an F-16CG pilot near Taji, Iraq, in late 2006, he was providing close air support for U.S. ground forces under attack by insurgents employing truck-mounted heavy machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades, small arms fire, and mortars. Even under direct anti-aircraft fire, Major Gilbert's 20-millimeter cannon strafing destroyed one truck and dispersed the others. He was conducting a second strafing pass when he lost control of his aircraft and died in the crash. He's survived by a wife and five children.

## What do you miss most about home?



"I miss the comfort of my own bed, not the bed that others have shared. I miss taking a bubble bath." Cpl. Erika M. Hutchinson, administrative assistant.



"I miss my 3 year old son, Isaiah. The next thing I miss is my home... my kitchen, my bedroom, and my PRIVATE bathroom." Staff Sgt. Vanessa Romero, administrative assistant.



"I miss the conveniences and comforts of the United States. I miss freakin streetlights. I miss wind without dust. I miss the ocean. I miss cold water that comes out of the shower. Also, I miss the freedom to walk outside and have a beer or two." Sgt. Bryan Gravelly, executive administrative assistant.

# Service members le

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SPC. LISA A. COPE  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The Sgt. 1st Class Tricia L. Jameson Combat Medic Training Center on Joint Base Balad continuously offers a three-day combat lifesaver course to service members stationed in all areas of Iraq.

The 40-hour CLS course teaches students enhanced first-aid and selected medical procedures such as initiating an intravenous infusion, performing a needle-chest decompression of a tension pneumothorax, and preparing casualties for evacuation.

The course is taught roughly three to four times each month, with roughly 30 service members each iteration.

Maj. Charles W. Wallace, the staff judge advocate for the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), was one of these, and completed the CLS course Sept. 2.

The class also learned tactical field care, both casualty evacuation and medical evacuation, how to insert a nasopharyngeal adjunct, how to control

bleeding, assess a patient, and fill out a casualty card, said Wallace, a native of Greenwood, Ind.

Sgt. Justin D. Rakes, an instructor for the CLS course, said the first two days are taught to break the skills down and familiarize the students with them in the classroom. Students practice hands-on in the classroom and in the mass casualty evacuation exercise the final day.

Of course there is no substitute for a combat situation, but the MASCAL exercise is as realistic and stressful as possible, given the realities of the situation, said Rakes, an Atlanta native.

Sgt. Michael J. Welsh, an instructor for the CLS course, said CLS-qualified Soldiers are invaluable on the battlefield, as well as a force multiplier because they can start IV's and get patients ready for evacuation. This frees medics to do other things.

"It's like having multiple hands," said Welsh, an Albuquerque, N.M. native. "You know you can rely on the CLS and the skills they know in order to help you do your own job."

Roughly 10 to 12 percent of deaths in Iraq are preventable, and the CLS course is here to help eliminate that, said Welsh.

Welsh also said hemorrhage control is a key point

in class, as uncontrolled bleeding is the number one cause of preventable death on the battlefield.

Learning happens on both sides of the classroom. As the instructors create trained, CLS-qualified service members, they learn more about their own field, Rakes said.

"The more you teach, the more experienced you become," said Rakes. "You never know what you might learn from your students. They have a wide range of experiences."

Spc. Amber M. Booth, an ammunition specialist for the 23rd Ordnance Company, and a Griffin, Ga. native, completed the CLS course Sept. 2 as well.

"I would recommend this course to every Soldier coming into the Army because I think everybody should be CLS qualified, no matter who you are or what your job title is," said Booth.

The staff, composed entirely of non-commissioned officers, frequently teaches service members with more time in service and rank than themselves.

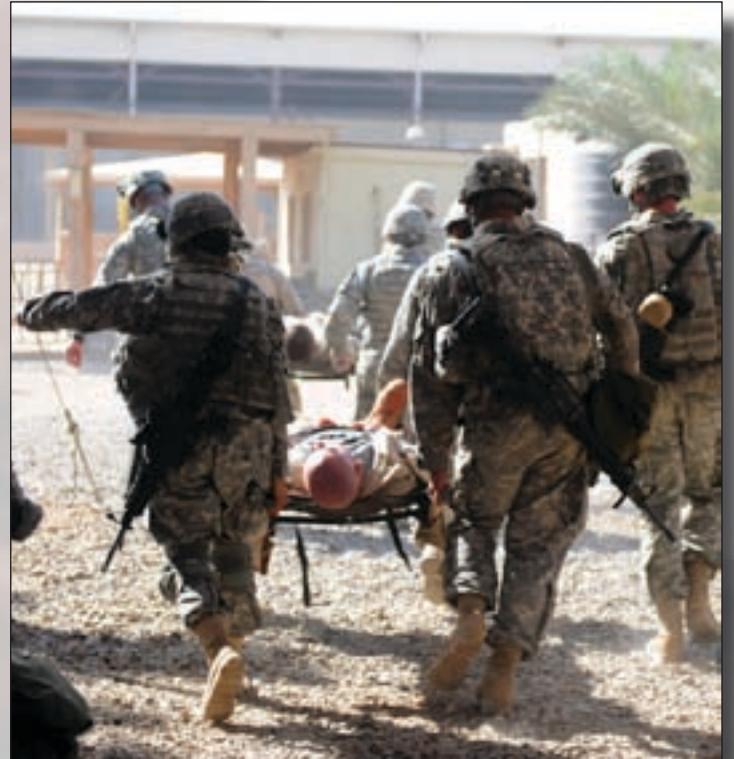
Wallace said, "I got a great lesson in leadership and I learned practical skills that could save someone's life."

The next CLS course starts Sept. 14.



Amber M. Booth, an ammunition specialist for the 23rd Ordnance Company, plays a casualty in the mass casualty evacuation drill Sept. 2, during the combat lifesaver course at the Combat Medic Training Center at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

# Learn to save lives



Service members taking the combat lifesaver course evacuate a casualty during the mass casualty evacuation drill Sept. 2, at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.



Spc. Jason R. Berry plays a casualty with head trauma Sept. 2, during the mass casualty evacuation drill at the end of the combat lifesaver course, taught at the Sgt. 1st Class Tricia L. Jameson Combat Medic Training Center, Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

# NCO creates wartime art

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
STAFF SGT. JOEL F. GIBSON,  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Surrounding most buildings at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, are giant, reinforced-concrete structures known colloquially as T-walls.



These monolithic monstrosities protect Soldiers in the event of indirect fire, and more often than not, bear the insignia of whatever unit they protect.

Since the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Soldiers have painted designs, pictures and signatures on the T-walls in front of their buildings to let everyone who passed know who resides therein.

Staff Sgt. Fernando Flores, the operations non-commissioned officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), took it a step further – he made the drawing three-dimensional.

"I just wanted something different, something that stood out," said Flores.

Flores decorated the three T-walls in front of HHC to the specifications of Capt. Pilar Restrepo, the HHC commander, said 1st Sgt. Frances Halmsteiner, senior enlisted adviser for the company. The designs might be traditional but, by using wood cutouts he fashioned at the self-help center here, Flores added a unique touch.

"The front T-wall depicts who we are, the one to the left of it shows the Texas flag because we deployed from Fort Hood, and the one to the right is Longhorn Orange with a Texas outline and a 13th ESC patch showing exactly where Fort Hood is located," said Halmsteiner.

He said it was the first time he has seen someone use anything other than paint to decorate T-walls.

"They were a lot of work, but I enjoyed the challenge," said Flores, a Houston native and licensed contractor in his civilian life. "I've always believed the saying, 'Everything is bigger and better in Texas,' and since Fort Hood, the Army's largest base is in Texas, I wanted to reflect that saying."

Flores is not done with improvements around the company area.

Referred to by many as the 13th ESC contractor, he is working on a movie room for the company headquarters building, but the velvet ropes and popcorn machine seem to be the most difficult items to find.

"I'm not an office guy," said Flores. "I like to build things to keep busy. It reminds me of home."



Staff Sgt. Fernando Flores, the operations non-commissioned officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), adjusts a line of tape accenting the Texas border on a T-wall in front of the HHC building Aug. 27, at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

# Soldiers create a home away from home

BY 2ND LT. QUERUBIN S. TAGULAO JR.  
260TH CSSB, 10TH SUST. BDE.

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – As dusk transitions to darkness and the hot sand begins to cool down, the majority of the Soldiers, non-commissioned officers, officers and civilians who work in motor pools, buildings and tactical operation centers return to their living quarters. Simultaneously, those who execute nightly convoy operations prepare to embark on their missions.

Both are signs another day has come and gone in a busy, deployed environment.

When post-work restlessness strikes, each Soldier strives to find a way to feel at home.

First Lt. Michael Johnson, a native of Chester, Va., and the battalion maintenance officer for 260th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, finds his comfort in the TV.

"As long as I have a television and sports showing on it, I'm as satisfied as a fish in the sea," he said.

Camp Liberty provides free cable service to Soldiers through the American Forces Network, which allows Soldiers the comfort of seeing shows they would watch at home.

Pfc. Hanna Cooper, a supply clerk for 1st Maintenance, with the 260th, and a native of Shelby County, Ill., has a different way of unwinding.

"For \$65 a month, I have Internet access and connection so I'm able to be in constant communication with my loved ones back home," said Cooper.

She said this makes her being away from her loved ones bearable.

"With my family just a mouse click away, it makes me feel that they're here with me every day," she said.

Instead of entertainment or communication, 1st Lt. Jon Bender, a platoon leader from 1st Maintenance, 260th CSSB and a local of Albuquerque, N.M., finds comfort in the simpler things.

"Crab legs and steak every Wednesday keeps me going; (those are) two of my most favorite entrées back (home)," said Bender.

Service members are finding ways to cope in deployed environments, especially with the support of the U.S. government and family and friends at home. Through this support, many have found a home away from home.

# Soldiers have New Mexico pride

BY SPC. CORY E. GROGAN  
UPAR,  
41ST IBC

CAMP ADDER, Iraq – A group of New Mexico National Guard Soldiers who volunteered to deploy with the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team from Oregon, to Camp Adder, Iraq, said they understand the importance of camaraderie and hard work.



The 1115th Transportation Company, based out of Taos, N.M., has members from throughout the state, said Sgt. 1st Class Andrew Spears, a native of Albuquerque, N.M. The 1115th arrived in Iraq in mid-July and conducts convoy security and force protection missions around Adder until its redeployment home in the spring of 2010.

"To get the unit thrown together from all four corners of the state—it's hard to explain how fortunate we've been," said Spears. "There hasn't been an argument; there hasn't been a fight, and the esprit de corps is great. We just have a real mature group of guys that are here to do their job."

Spears said this is one of the largest mobilizations of New Mexico National Guard troops since World War II.

Many members of the 1115th who volunteered for this deployment are from 1st Battalion, 200th Infantry Regiment, which was involved in the Bataan Death March during World War II, said Spears.

He said most of the company has been deployed previously, are proud of their history and proud to be serving again.

"Morale is high," said Spears. "Soldiers are in

good spirits, living conditions are better than what we expected, and we believe in our cause. We have a very supportive culture back home."

Spc. Joseph Allred, a truck gunner with the unit, said the company has a great sense of camaraderie and understands the importance of being able to depend on each other.

"There are times when it's a lot of fun and other times when it's really stressful," said Allred. "When you have that range of experiences and emotions you're trying to deal with, you have to rely on each other a lot."

Cpl. Christopher Pawlowski, a native of Albuquerque, said the 1115th effectively balances work and fun on deployment.

"One thing we do religiously, before we leave anywhere: somebody will get their iPod and everybody will sing songs, hang out and have a good time," said Pawlowski. "That is our bonding moment to kind of let the stress of everything else go to the side. We goof off for a minute or two, and then we're focused on what we've got to do right after that."

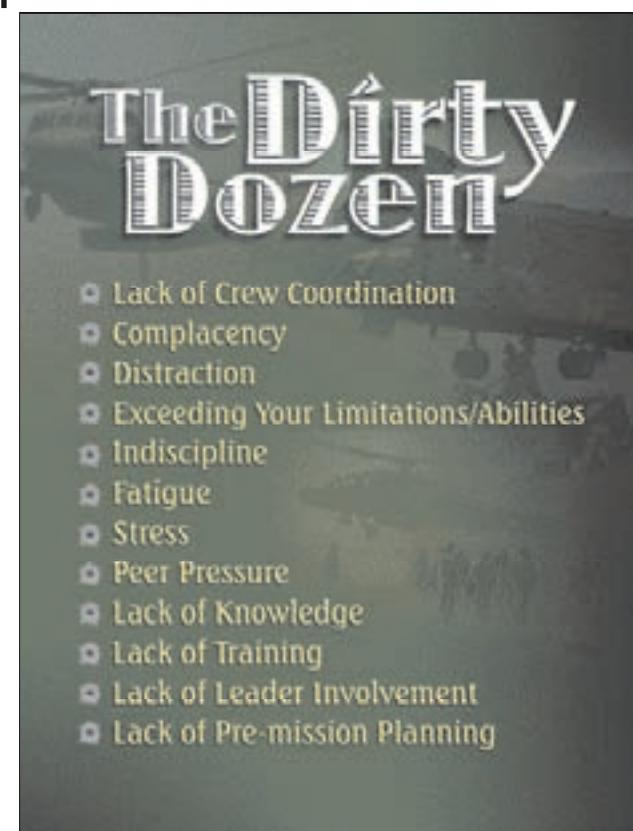
Pawlowski added that the 1115th is glad to be done with training and finally doing what they came to do, protecting supplies moving through southern Iraq.

He said the heat has been one of the most difficult parts for even the New Mexico Soldiers so far.

"Heat in Georgia is one thing, but it definitely took some getting used to here," said Pawlowski.

Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth Cordova, who runs the motor pool for the 1115th, also mentioned the balance between work and fun.

"Everyone is doing really well so far; playing around breaks the tension and when it's time to be serious, we are serious," said Cordova.



# Husband and wife take command

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
1ST LT. MEGHAN E. KEEFE,  
37TH ENGINEER BATTALION PUBLIC AFFAIRS

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – U.S. Army Capt. Vanessa and Brandon Bowman took command of two companies with the 37th Engineer Battalion-Joint Task Force Eagle, as the outgoing commanders bid farewell and best of luck to their replacements Aug. 22, at a joint change of command ceremony at Joint Base Balad,



Iraq.

The 37th's former company commanders, Capt. Aaron M. Williams, a native of Fayetteville, N.C., with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, and Capt. Jason R. Melchior, a native of Fairfax Station, Va., with B Co., passed their guideons to Capt. Vanessa R. Bowman, of Oconto, Wis., and Capt. Brandon Bowman, of Stevens, Pa., during the ceremony.

Williams served five combat tours in his nine years of military service. He is a senior rated jumpmaster and will continue his service at Fort Bragg, N.C.

In his outgoing speech, Williams addressed the company's noncommissioned officers and Soldiers.

"To my NCOs, thank you for your unconditional support; you are my backbone," he said. "To the Soldiers, I thank all of you for what you do every single day; you have my highest appreciation."

Melchior, a United States Military Academy gradu-

ate, is ranger qualified and a senior-rated jumpmaster. He will serve JTF Eagle as the assistant operations officer until his next assignment.

"I have been truly blessed to be the commander for this great company for the past 21 months, and in that time I would like to think that I have developed a partnership with each and every one of the leaders and Soldiers," Melchior said.

Both outgoing commanders have set the stage for this new command team.

The Bowman family has a history with the 37th Eng. Bn. and, in keeping with the airborne leader tradition, both are senior-rated parachutists.

Vanessa Bowman deployed with the battalion in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2004. She later attended the Defense Information School public affairs officer qualification course and deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in 2008 with the 22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, Combined JTF-82.

"She comes into this job with tremendous operational experience," said Lt. Col. Paul Huszar, the 37th's commander, in his speech to the HHC "Roughnecks."

Huszar said his "plot to bring the Bowman team to the 37th with each other worked like a charm."

Brandon Bowman served in the 37th's sister battalion, the 27th Eng. Bn., during which he deployed in support of OIF in 2003. He then deployed with the 27th in support of OIF in 2004, and again in 2005



Husband and wife, Capt. Brandon Bowman and Capt. Vanessa R. Bowman, receive the guideon in a joint change of command ceremony Aug. 22, at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. She will command Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 37th Engineer Battalion. He will command the unit's B Company.

with the 20th Engineer Brigade.

Both commanders said they are pleased to share this deployment with each other and their Soldiers.

"This is our third deployment at the same time, but the first time that we are able to be together," said Brandon Bowman.



80<sup>th</sup> ORD BN and 102<sup>nd</sup> QM CO  
Present : 10 October 2009

The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Joint Base Balad



ARMY  
TEN-MILER



- REGISTRATION FOR PARTICIPANTS AT: All MWR Fitness Centers
- REGISTRATION DEADLINE: 1 OCTOBER 2009 !!!!
- TROPHIES WILL BE GIVEN TO 1<sup>ST</sup>, 2<sup>ND</sup> AND 3<sup>RD</sup> PLACE FOR MALES AND FEMALES
- LOCATION: HOLT STADIUM
- TIME: 0445
- T-Shirts available for the first 1000 registered participants.

POC: CPT Allen @ 483-4316 or allen.charles@iraq.centcom.mil

# Comedians take the stage at Joint Base Balad

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
SGT. KEITH S. VAN KLOMPENBERG  
*EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF*

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Service members were treated to a night of laughs Friday when the Comics Ready to Entertain tour made a stop at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Stand-up comedians Scott Kennedy, Mike Pace and Bob Kubota performed for hundreds of Warfighters at the base's east side Morale, Welfare and Recreation Center.

Scott Kennedy, who has performed on Comedy Central, said this was his 33rd trip to Iraq.



Comedian Mike Pace performs for hundreds of Warfighters during the Comics Ready to Entertain tour Sept. 4 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Pace has been to Iraq three times in the past 12 months to entertain service members.



Comedian Bob Kubota jokes with the crowd during the Comics Ready to Entertain tour Sept. 4 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

such as being served too much food at the dining facility.

Pace, on his third tour to Iraq in 12 months, said when he performs for service members, he believes he is doing more than just comedy – he is doing his own bit of service.

"It's become a second vocation for me," Pace said. "The crowds here are unlike anywhere else."

The audience roared with applause throughout the evening, showing their appreciation for

"I'm usually at the (Forward Operating Bases) and (Contingency Operating Bases), but I'll never forget my second home at Joint Base Balad," said Kennedy.

Kennedy thanked the crowd for their service and showed off his arm, which features a tattoo for each branch of the military.

"You guys let us be a little part of your brotherhood," he said.

Kubota, who joked about his short stature and spent time bonding with vertically challenged Soldiers in the crowd, said he has been visiting service members since 1996, when he performed in Bosnia on a United Service Organization tour.

"Visiting troops has really opened up my world," he said.

The comedians addressed topics close to the hearts of the service members, from the hardships of being separated from loved ones to more trivial annoyances,



Comedian Scott Kennedy, who is on his 33rd tour to Iraq, performs for service members during the Comics Ready to Entertain tour Sept. 4 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

the men who traveled across the globe to entertain them.

First Lt. Kizzie Butts, the deputy chief of protocol for the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), said she appreciates the comedians' contribution to service members at JBB.

"It's a good way for them to support the troops, and it definitely builds morale for us," she said.

## ON THE WEB

13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)

"Phantom Support"

<http://www.hood.army.mil/13scc/>



VIEW YOUR PHOTOS ON PROVIDER COMMON:

- CLICK THE START MENU AND GO TO RUN
- TYPE IN:  
\\BALAFSV11ZNO3\PROVIDER\_COMMON
- CLICK THE PAO FOLDER
- CLICK 13TH ESC PHOTOS FOLDER
- PHOTOS ARE ORGANIZED BY THE DATE OF THE EVENT

# Transforming Conflict: Replacing Blaming “You”s with Tactfully Assertive “I”s



**“The Stress Doc”  
Mark Gorkin**

During a Practice Safe Stress and Team Building workshop for legal assistants and support staff of a major law firm, a paralegal, with an edge in his voice, recalled a frustrating encounter with one

of the firm’s partners. Apparently, misinformation or a misunderstanding led to a project being mishandled and an important deadline being missed. The paralegal, in response to perceived one-sided criticism, counterpunched.

“It’s not my fault ... you didn’t give me the right instructions,” he said.

Now, I can practically hear some in the reading audience saying, “you go guy!” and while our heart may be momentarily appeased, I’m not sure the head has been most effectively engaged.

Actually, in conflict situations, the most effective communication invariably blends both head and heart. For when the two aren’t working together, it’s easy to succumb to blaming you messages.

For example, “you didn’t give me the right instructions.”

Even if the partner didn’t provide the necessary information, our paralegal’s blaming you blast basically is imitating the attorney’s initial adversarial thrust. Too often, when only fighting fire with fire, both parties get burned. As the partner usually has the bigger flamethrower, it’s rarely a fair fight. It’s pretty predictable who winds up with the lasting scars.

## Self-Defeating yous

There are other problems when arguing with finger-pointing yous. (And, for the moment, I’m not referring to the proverbial finger.) Let me count the misguided ways:

1. **Defensive Habit.** A pattern of blaming messages means you are into “acc-you-sations.” It’s fair to ask: “Are you a becoming a blameaholic?” Not only are you attempting to put others on the defensive but there’s another problematic dynamic. While believing you are standing up for yourself, many will see such overreaction as evidence you are too thin-skinned or aren’t able to stand the firm’s high demand, high standards (at least for some) or pressure climate.

2. **Power Transfusion.** By solely blaming another for a problem or for compromised performance you are forsaking your “authority, autonomy and accountability” – what I call the triple ‘A’ of personal/professional responsibility.” In actuality, you are accepting

the other party has all the power to define your competency, your identity and the problem-solving dynamics of a situation. Of course, when dealing with contemporary conflicts, unresolved, still painful psychological issues with parental or other significant authority figures heighten feeling hurt and your emotional defensiveness or reactivity. Some people become defensive by too quickly seeing the provocative interaction as an issue of respect. I think the words of the universally admired first lady, Eleanor Roosevelt, have much relevance.

“No one can take away your self-respect without your active participation,” she said.

3. **Power Struggle.** Unless you are dealing with a person who is submissive or passive or, conversely, a truly mature professional – who will respond, not lash out when verbally attacked – your blaming reaction likely fuels a mutual cycle of invective and incrimination. Now the drive becomes who is right, who will back down, or who’s in control. I can’t help recall the words of French novelist, Andre Gide, from his book, “The Immoralist.”

“One must allow others to be right... it consoles them for not being anything else!” he said.

Even if you momentarily get a non-assertive person to back down, don’t be surprised if that passivity eventually turns into a getting even passive-aggressive underhandedness: “Oh I’m sorry, I guess it is the third time this week that I forgot to give you that report.”

## Assertive “I” Messages

So how do you replace blaming you messages with appropriately assertive I messages? First, let me highlight the importance of making this shift through a two-word example. Say you are in a heated argument with a colleague, perhaps related to politics or whether the e in email often stands for escaping face-to-face communication. You’ve been making several thoughtful arguments but the other party is dismissive or just gives you a blank, “whatever” stare. Finally, in a state of frustration you blurt out, “You’re wrong” or, with greater poise, declare, “I disagree.” Those two words make quite a difference. The former basically tries to invalidate the other person, not just the argument. By definition, “I disagree” acknowledges the other person’s position, even if there is disagreement.

There are three dynamics infusing I messages with positive energy. Emphatically assertive Is:

a) convey respect; it’s a more adult-to-adult, as opposed to a one up vs. one down, style of communicating and relating.

b) Openly state a position or a feeling. For example, “what I like or don’t appreciate, what I’m concerned

about, what I fear, what I expect,” etc.

c) Take responsibility for one’s actions or balance self-responsibility and situational factors or consequences.

With this conceptual and communicational foundation, how might our aforementioned paralegal handle that adversarial partner?

Consider these Tactfully Assertive Steps for Disarming a Critical Aggressor:

1. **Gut Check.** To forestall a defensive (or offensive) reaction the proverbial wisdom has been to count to 10. For me, that just delays the message. When feeling attacked you need to resist blurting out and do some quick reading of head and heart. What are your thoughts and, especially, what are you feeling? And especially, if starting with a you, such as, “You didn’t give me...” hit pause and process before engaging the play button. In other words, count to 10 and check within!

2. **Take Some Responsibility, Show Some Empathy and Preserve Integrity.** Acknowledging responsibility doesn’t mean accepting all of the blame. However, it does entail recognizing that a problem has arisen or an error has been made. For example, one might say, “This was my understanding of the instructions. Obviously, I wasn’t on your page.” While in some circumstances it might be acceptable to note, “I guess we weren’t on the same page,” with a frustrated authority I’d take the first approach. You don’t have to say, “I guess I screwed up,” but you may want to let the other party know you understand why he or she is upset, for example by overtly verbalizing some consequences of the message sent not being the message received. While not a guarantee, sometimes by taking the self-responsibility initiative, it frees up the other person to acknowledge his part in the problem. This is more likely to happen if you allow the other party to express some anger as you are acknowledging confusion or a mistake.

However, if the other person is not just expressing anger, but is being abusive, then you may have to say with conviction, “I’m sorry for whatever part I have played in this problem, but I will not accept such an attack.” If the party does not show some self-control, then inform your antagonist that you will call again in a defined period of time, when, you hope, there can be a professional discussion. Sometimes you may need a third party as a conflict mediator. You also may have to report such an encounter to a firm authority, for example, a paralegal administrator, human resources director, etc. If the problem persists and management won’t address the firm bully, alas, you should be upgrading your resume. Of course it’s not fair...

3. **Ask a Humble Question.** To soothe troubled egos, sometimes a you message, when part of a question, is just what the doctor ordered. If both parties are evincing a professional and respectful manner, you may want to simply ask, “How can I make this right?” or “What will help you feel we are back on track?” Not only are you showing some contrition, but also are willing to serve. Finally, asking someone’s opinion or asking for guidance says, “I don’t have all the answers” and “I value your experience, expertise, perspective, etc.” As Ernest Becker, a 20th century sociologist and philosopher said, the strongest human desire is the desire to feel important.

I hope an extended examination of this law firm encounter has created a better appreciation of the dangers in using reactive you messages and the productive potential when blending empathy and assertion as part of a responsive and responsible I message. Not only will these tools and techniques assist you in finding the pass in the communicational impasse, but such verbal and psychological fluency will also help you...Practice Safe Stress!

**Mark Gorkin, LICSW, “The Stress Doc”™**, is an acclaimed keynote and kickoff speaker, training/OD & team building consultant, psychotherapist and “Motivational Humorist.” He is the author “Practice Safe Stress: Healing and Laughing in the Face of Stress, Burnout & Depression” and “The Four Faces of Anger: Transforming Anger, Rage, and Conflict into Inspiring Attitude & Behavior.” A kickoff speaker for Estrin Legal Education Conferences, the Doc is America Online’s online psychohumorist™ and pioneer of a USA Today Online “HotSite” – <http://www.stressdoc.com> – recognized as a workplace resource by National Public Radio. For more info on the Doc’s speaking and training programs and products, email [stressdoc@aol.com](mailto:stressdoc@aol.com) or call 301-875-2567.



# Consider before you Twitter

BY SGT. KEITH S. VANKLOMPENBERG  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The Internet has become an indispensable tool for Soldiers, allowing them to keep in contact with friends and family and share deployment stories from across the globe through social networking sites and blogs.

Maj. Brian Nomi, chief of client services for the consolidated legal center at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, said he started his blog August 2008 after being notified he would be deploying.

“My blog depicts what life is like for

a Soldier in Iraq,” said Nomi, a Camarillo, Calif., native. “It shows people back home what life is like and helps them support us better.”

The Army respects every Soldier’s First Amendment rights to publish what they want as long as operational security is enforced, according to Army regulation 530-1.

“If a Soldier is going to start a blog or Web site, they need to make sure their chain of command is notified,” said Staff Sgt. Samuel Shoemate, the noncommissioned officer in charge of intelligence and security, with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

According to the regulation, Soldiers are required to report to their immedi-

ate supervisor and OPSEC officer about their wishes to publish military-related content in any public forum.

Once the chain of command has been notified, they must register the Web site with Multi-National Corps-Iraq. The supervisor must then train the Soldier on the importance of OPSEC.

MNC-I does not require that every online post by a Soldier be monitored or approved.

“Soldiers need to use common sense and decide for themselves, before posting, what affects the mission and what doesn’t,” said Shoemate.

Shoemate said the most common mistake Soldiers make, in regards to OPSEC, is posting flight times and leave dates on social networking sites.

“It’s usually unintentional,” Shoemate said, “but all it takes is someone to dig a bit deeper.”

Foreign intelligence agencies regularly monitor social networking sites for any information they can use against Coalition forces, said Shoemate.

“If you put this stuff out there, you run the risk of getting your buddy killed,” he said.

The Army is still reviewing its policy for Internet use, which approves the use of social networking sites.

Nomi, whose blog can be found at <http://www.briannomi.wordpress.com>, said Soldiers should review MNC-I policy letter 9 themselves, to get a better idea of the policy on blogging.

“It’s the best four pages you can read before you start a blog,” he said.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Naveed Ali Shah

## 13th ESC CG meets with Iraqi counterpart

Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz, commanding general, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), meets with Iraqi Maj. Gen. Muniem, director of electrical and mechanical engineering, Sept. 1 at Baghdad’s Victory Base Complex. During his visit, Wentz and Muniem discussed the critical responsibilities they share during the drawdown of personnel and equipment from Iraq. Managing all this is a big job, and cooperation will help balance it out, said Wentz.

TELL YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS HOW MUCH YOU MISS THEM  
E-mail: [expeditionarytimes@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:expeditionarytimes@iraq.centcom.mil)

# 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.

Last week's answers

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

Level: Hard

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

# TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. What famous document begins: "When in the course of human events...?"
2. Who said: "I'm the president of the United States and I'm not going to eat any more broccoli"?
3. What president was shot while walking to California Governor Jerry Brown's office?
4. Who convinced Jamaicans he'd made the moon disappear during a lunar eclipse in 1504?
5. What group of professionals did U.S. Gulf War troops nickname "headaches"?

1. The Declaration of Independence 2. George Bush 3. Christopher Columbus 4. Journalists 5. Journalists

## 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- Next Iraq/MWR East  
 1030 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)  
 1400 Castle Heights (Bldg. 4155) 1900 Freedom Chapel (West Side)

### Wednesday

2000 Gilbert Memorial Chapel

### LITURGICAL (Episcopal, Anglican, Presbyterian) - Sunday

1500 Gilbert Chapel (H-6)

### SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST - Saturday

1000 Provider Chapel

### CHURCH OF CHRIST - Sunday

1530 Castle Heights (Bldg. 4155)

### 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)  
 2000 Freedom Chapel (West Side)

### Sunday

0830 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

### Thursday

1100 Air Force Hospital

### Mon., Wed., Fri.

1700 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

### Monday-Friday

1130 555th Engineer Bde. (Bldg. 7200)

### JEWISH SHABBAT SERVICES- Friday

1700 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

### Saturday

0930 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

### ISLAMIC PRAYER - Friday

1700 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

### ISLAMIC PRAYER - Friday

1230 Provider Chapel

### PAGAN/WICCAN FELLOWSHIP - Thursday

1900 The Shack

### Saturday

1900 The Shack

### GREEK ORTHODOX - Sunday

0900 Provider Annex

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CALL:

Gilbert Chapel: 443-7703

Provider Chapel: 433-2430

Freedom Chapel: 443-6303

## JB BALAD ACTIVITIES

<b>INDOOR POOL</b> Swim Lessons: Mon., Wed., - 6 p.m. Tue., Thu., Sat., - 6:30 p.m. Aqua Training: Tue., Thu., - 7:30 p.m., 8:30 p.m.	a.m., 5-6 p.m. Edge Weapons & Stick Fighting Training: Tue., Thur., Sat., - 8-10 p.m.	p.m. Caribbean Night: Friday- 8 p.m. Chess & Dominoes Tourney: Friday- 8 p.m. Salsa Class: Saturday- 8:30 p.m. Poker: Saturday- 7:30 p.m.	CC Cross Fit: Monday- Saturday- 10:30 p.m. Cross Fit: Mon., Wed., Fri., - 5:45 a.m., 7 a.m., 3 p.m. Tue., Thu., - 7 a.m., 3 p.m.	Hold'em: Mon., Fri., - 2 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. Salsa: Wednesday- 8:30 p.m. 9-ball: Thursday- 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Karaoke: Thursday- 8:30 p.m. Yoga: Wednesday- 8 p.m. MACP Level 1: Friday- 8 p.m. 5 on 5 Basketball: Saturday- 8 p.m.	Ping-pong tourney: 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. Officer Poker: Saturday- 1 p.m., 8 p.m. Squat Competition: Saturday- 8 p.m. Darts: Saturday- 8:30 p.m.	Friday- 7 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.
<b>EAST FIT-NESS CENTER</b> 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	4-ball tourney: Sunday- 8 p.m. Karaoke: Monday- 8 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Monday- 8 p.m. Swing Class: Tuesday- 8 p.m. Table Tennis: Tuesday- 8 p.m. Plastic Models Club: Wednesday 7 p.m. 9-ball tourney: Wednesday- 8 p.m. Dungeons & Dragons: Thursday- 7:30 p.m. Poetry Night: Thursday- 8 p.m. 6-ball tourney: Thursday- 8	<b>EAST RECREATION CENTER</b> 4-ball tourney: Sunday- 8 p.m. Karaoke: Monday- 8 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Monday- 8 p.m. Spin: Sunday- 9 a.m. Mon., Wed., Fri., - 2 a.m., 8 a.m. 2 p.m., 7 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.	<b>H6 FITNESS CENTER</b> Spin: Sunday- 9 a.m. Monday- Saturday- 4:30 a.m., 4 p.m., 10 p.m. 12 a.m. Soccer: Tue., Thu., - 8 p.m. Wednesday- 8 p.m. MACP Level 1: Friday- 8 p.m. 5 on 5 Basketball: Saturday- 8 p.m. <b>H6 RECREATION CENTER</b> Bingo: Sunday- 8 p.m. Texas	Monday- Saturday- 10:30 p.m. Fri., - 5:45 a.m., 7 a.m., 3 p.m. Tue., Thu., - 7 a.m., 3 p.m. Sunday- 5:45 a.m., 3 p.m. Monday- Saturday- 4:30 a.m., 4 p.m., 10 p.m. 12 a.m. Soccer: Tue., Thu., - 8 p.m. Wednesday- 8 p.m. MACP Level 1: Friday- 8 p.m. 5 on 5 Basketball: Saturday- 8 p.m. Karaoke: Sun., Wed., 7:30pm 9-ball tourney: Monday- 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. Officer Poker: Saturday- 1 p.m., 8 p.m. Squat Competition: Saturday- 8 p.m. Darts: Saturday- 8:30 p.m.	Friday- 7 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.

## UPCOMING SPORTS ON AFN



### Wednesday 9/09/09

2009 US Open: Men's and Women's Fourth Rounds USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center, Live 2 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 Atlanta Braves @ Houston Astros, Live 3 a.m. AFN/sports  
 San Diego Padres @ San Francisco Giants (JIP), Live 6 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 Baltimore Orioles @ Boston Red Sox, Tape Delayed 10 a.m. AFN/sports  
 St. Louis Cardinals @ Milwaukee Brewers, Tape Delayed 2 p.m. AFN/sports

### Thursday 9/10/09

Wednesday Night Baseball: Tampa Bay Rays @ New York Yankees Live 2 a.m. AFN/sports  
 Seattle Mariners @ Los Angeles Angels (JIP), Live 6 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 Oakland Athletics @ Chicago White Sox, Tape Delayed 10 a.m. AFN/sports

### Friday 9/11/09

ESPN College Football Primetime: Clemson @ Georgia, Live 2:30 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 Sunday Night Football: Tennessee Titans @ Pittsburgh Steelers, Live 3:30 a.m. AFN/sports  
 2009 US Open: Men's Quarterfinals USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center, Tape Delayed 10 a.m. AFN/sports

### Saturday 9/12/09

Atlanta Braves @ St. Louis Cardinals, Live 3 a.m. AFN/prime pacific  
 ESPN College Football Primetime: Colorado @ Toledo, Live 4 a.m. AFN/sports  
 Los Angeles Dodgers @ San Francisco Giants, Live 5 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 Tampa Bay Rays @ Boston Red Sox, Tape Delayed 10 a.m. AFN/sports  
 2009 US Open: Men's Semifinals (USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center, Live 7 p.m. AFN/xtra

### Sunday 9/13/09

NASCAR Sprint Cup Series: Chevy Rock & Roll 400, Live 2:30 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 2009 FedEx Cup - BMW Championship: Third Round, Tape Delayed 810 a.m. AFN/sports  
 20th Annual Southern Heritage Classic: Jackson State vs Tennessee, Live 10 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 Chicago Fire @ Real Salt Lake, Tape Delayed 4 p.m. AFN/xtra

### Monday 9/14/09

Sunday Night Baseball: New York Mets @ Philadelphia Phillies, Live 3 a.m. AFN/prime atlantic  
 2009 FedEx Cup - BMW Championship: Final Round, Tape Delayed 9 a.m. AFN/sports  
 NFL Opening Weekend: Denver Broncos @ Cincinnati Bengals, Tape Delayed 10 a.m. AFN/xtra

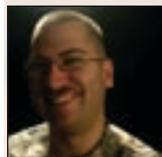
### Tuesday 9/15/09

Los Angeles Angels @ New York Yankees, Live 2 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 Pittsburgh Pirates @ Los Angeles Dodgers, Live 5 p.m. AFN/xtra  
 Colorado Rockies @ San Francisco Giants, Live 5 p.m. AFN/xtra

# Arts & Entertainment

## “Fallout 3,” Bethesda does it again

BY STAFF SGT. JOEL F. GIBSON  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



It's like digital methadone for the massive multiplayer online role-playing game addicted among us who lack the Internet speed to indulge in World of Warcraft, EVE online or whatever your particular game of choice.

Fallout 3, set in a post-apocalyptic Washington, offers all features the average gamer has come to expect of single-player linear RPGs and then some, in a style mastered by the good folks at Bethesda Softworks.

I've heard the game referred to as a first-person shooter but anyone who buys the game expecting that will be sorely disappointed. This is a role playing game first and foremost; you will level a character, complete quests and acquire gear. The shooting part is secondary.

If you played Oblivion IV, powered by the same

Havok engine at the heart of Fallout 3, this game will feel incredibly familiar from the outset. However, the combat model seems to have taken a small step backward, as melee combat is a little choppy and ranged shots are only consistent within 100 meters, kind of a pain when you're rocking a sniper rifle.

The game is challenging, especially from a logistics standpoint. Near the beginning of the game, ammunition is hard to come by and must be conserved for boss fights. Drinking water from irradiated sources restores health but causes radiation poisoning. Sleep is necessary to restore damaged limbs, though renting a bed is often costly and time consuming.

The game world is enormous. It would probably take more than an hour to run across the game from one corner to the opposite, and you'd only see roughly 5 percent of the terrain.

Fallout 3 defines eye candy, the lighting effects are stunning and nothing ever seems out of place.

The storyline is engrossing. I probably would have reviewed a different game, but Fallout 3 hasn't made

it out of my PlayStation 3 in a month.

Side quests are really the meat of the game. Of course you can breeze through the main storyline in 15-20 hours, but where's the fun in that?

Fallout 3 is meant to be enjoyed. With this game it is definitely all about the journey and not the destination. Having finished the main storyline, I have to say the ending leaves a lot to be desired. Despite the most careful planning, you are forced into a two-choice situation, and clearly one of those choices is the "correct" one.

I won't write about downloadable content because for one, the average gamer in Iraq isn't in a position to download, and I find after-the-fact, purchasable, downloadable content moderately reprehensible. It's a software company's admission that they didn't sell you a complete game, but for \$20 more they will.

I loved the game. I give it a 9.5, and I'm excessively critical in most things. Keep in mind I've never given out a 10, so that's extremely high praise.

If you like RPGs, buy Fallout 3.

## “A Thousand Splendid Suns” moves mountains

BY SPC. NAVEED ALI SHAH  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



Afghanistan's history is full of conflict, from Alexander the Great in 323 BC to the Taliban coup in 2000, one foreign entity after another has attempted to exert control over the people of the country.

Khaled Hosseini seamlessly weaves Afghanistan's modern history through the lives of the people it affects and his story-telling makes his latest novel, “A Thousand Splendid Suns,” impossible to put down.

Set against an ever-changing political and social climate, Hosseini, who was born in Kabul, Afghanistan, but

lived in the U.S. most of his life, focuses on the lives and relationships of two women, Mariam and Laila.

An illegitimate daughter of a wealthy businessman her mother worked for, Mariam is born in 1959. After living 15 years in exile due to her disgrace, Mariam's mother commits suicide and Mariam is forced to marry a cobbler, the callous and insensitive Rasheed. Coincidentally, this is around the same time as the Communist coup in 1978 and the birth of the Mujahideen resistance.

In the same neighborhood, born in 1978, Laila, on the other hand, is raised in a loving home. Her father, an educated man, encourages her to pursue her dreams. She falls in love with her childhood friend, Tariq. Around 1992,

As Tariq's family flees the Mujahideen and Communist fighting in Kabul, the two make love in an emotional farewell.

Mariam's and Laila's worlds collide when Laila's parents are killed in an accidental rocket attack on their home as they pack up to leave the city. Laila is pulled from the rubble by Rasheed and Mariam.

As Laila is nursed back to health, she realizes she is pregnant with Tariq's child. She is told Tariq was killed on the way to a Pakistani refugee camp. To avoid dishonor, she arranges to marry Rasheed, who doesn't know she is already pregnant. Fearing that she'll be replaced, Mariam is jealous immediately.

Mariam and Laila put their troubles

aside to raise Laila's children and soon become close friends. After a decade of abuse at Rasheed's hand, a visitor arrives and the two women are faced with a choice that will end one's life, but allow the other to be borne again and start anew.

Afghans, like their country, are a people of blemished beauty. Scarred by centuries of war and wrought by decades of neglect, their beauty nevertheless peeks through in Hosseini's novel.

The title of the book comes from the poem “Kabul,” by the 17th-century Persian poet Saib-e-Tabrizi. One cannot begin to grip the intricacies of Afghan history, but like “the thousand splendid suns that hide behind her walls,” Hosseini offers an intimate glimpse into the life of the people who live it.

## OFFICER SPACE



### Sustainer Reel Time Theater

#### Wednesday, Sept. 9

5 p.m. The Collector  
8 p.m. G-Force

#### Thursday, Sept. 10

5 p.m. G-Force  
8 p.m. Final Destination

#### Friday, Sept. 11

2 p.m. The Ugly Truth  
5 p.m. Orphan  
8:30 p.m. All About Steve

#### Saturday, Sept. 12

2 p.m. Orphan  
5 p.m. All About Steve  
8 p.m. The Ugly Truth

#### Sunday, Sept. 13

2 p.m. All About Steve  
5 p.m. The Ugly Truth  
8 p.m. Orphan

#### Monday, Sept. 14

5 p.m. Orphan  
8 p.m. All About Steve

#### Tuesday, Sept. 15

9:30 a.m. Sex Signals  
1:30 p.m. Sex Signals  
7:00 p.m. Sex Signals

#### Wednesday, Sept. 16

5 p.m. All About Steve  
8 p.m. The Ugly Truth

# PHOTOS AROUND IRAQ

U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Luke P. Thelen



Salah ad Din Provincial Councilman Muhammad Hassan Atyyah (left) and David Stewart (center), Salah ad Din Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Lead, wait to greet invited guests prior to an Iftar Dinner hosted by the PRT on Contingency Operating Location Speicher, in northern Iraq, Aug. 23. The Iftar dinner is the traditional evening meal when Muslims break their daily fast during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan.



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

An Iraqi contractor updates U.S. Army Capt. Francisco Mendoza (left) of Dallas, assigned to E Company, 3rd Brigade, 8th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division, and his interpreter, on the status of the road they are paving near the village of Tal Abatha, south of Mosul, Iraq, Aug. 25.



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

An Iraqi construction worker shovels asphalt during the construction of a road that connects a series of desert villages to the main highway that leads to Mosul, Iraq, Aug. 25.



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

U.S. Soldiers assigned to the 84th Engineering Battalion, 523rd Engineering Company, operate heavy construction equipment during the construction of a ramp that will lead to a floating bridge across the Tigris River near the village of Minurah, south of Mosul, Iraq, Aug. 27.



U.S. Army 1st Sgt. Steven DeWeese of the 1-150th Armored Reconnaissance Squadron, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, from Bluefield, W.Va., out of Joint Security Station Yusifiyah, and an Iraqi soldier, hand a small child a toy, during a humanitarian-aid mission in the village of Yusifiyah, Iraq, Aug. 28.

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

# NEWS AROUND IRAQ

## Al Araby Youth Center opens in Baghdad

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Mahatma Gandhi said, “If we wish to create a lasting peace we must begin with the children.”

The conflict in Iraq has had a dramatic effect on Iraqi children, but the children of Al Shaab now have a safer place to play with the opening of the Al Araby Youth Center.

The center is a result of the efforts of the Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq, and its partnership with the local Iraqi government.

Local dignitaries, including the Iraqi Minister of Youth Sports, formally opened the youth center during a ribbon-cutting ceremony on August 30. The \$2.5 million youth center, funded through the Iraqi Economic Support Fund, is the first of its kind built by the Gulf Region District's Loyalty Resident Office. The year-long project included the construction of martial arts training rooms, a 25-meter swimming pool, a weight room, game rooms for billiards and ping pong, a cafeteria with kitchen and a computer center for Internet access and video games. For added security, the 10,000 square-meter site is surrounded by security walls.

“The Al Araby Youth Center reflects the immense pride and a genuine sense of accomplishment by everyone who worked on this project,” said Inez Bergerson, the Loyalty Resident Office project engineer. “The goal of all members of the project team, from the workers who cleared the site to the skilled craftsmen and engineers, was to build a facility for the enjoyment of the young Iraqis in this neighborhood. It is through the construction of facilities like these that Iraqi communities can join together and find hope for the future.”

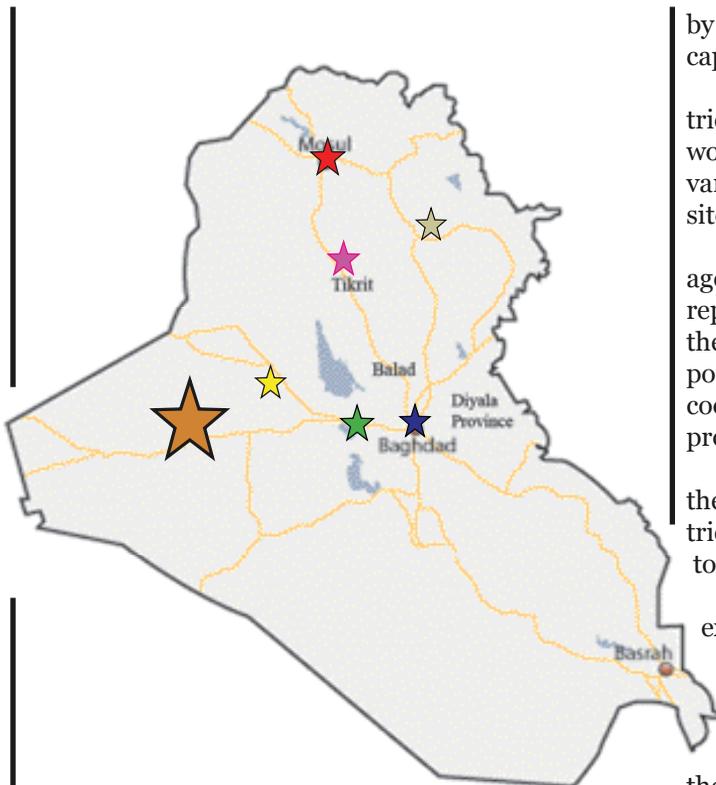
The Iraqi-owned Silver Moons Company was the general contractor for the project. All of the sub-contractors were also Iraqi-owned companies, according to Bergerson. More than 65 local Iraqis worked on the project, providing a much-needed economic boost to the local community. The facility will have a full time staff of 30 employees.

The Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq has completed thousands of reconstruction projects in partnership with the U.S. government and the government of Iraq. Since 2004, GRD has completed 4,626 projects throughout Iraq valued at more than \$7.2 billion, and has 287 projects ongoing.

## Largest Iraqi Correctional Officer class begins at Contingency Operating Location Future

CAMP CROPPER, Iraq – About 560 Iraqi Correctional Officer cadets began training Aug. 27 at Contingency Operating Location Future.

As part of the largest class yet, the cadets are training to eventually take the reins



when detainee operations transition to the Government of Iraq.

“We are trying to build up at Taji in time for us to turn it over,” said 2nd Lt. Chris Cahak, A Company, 1-128 Infantry Battalion, training officer in charge. “We have one more iteration to complete and then (the training center) will be turned over to the Iraqi Correctional System.”

After the cadets graduate, they go back to the ICS and are sent out to their assignments, Cahak said. The 340 cadets that recently graduated were sent to Taji.

ICS is looking forward to more advanced training classes for the ICOs.

“I am directing today that the academy shall prepare immediately for Mid-Level Management Training and Executive Management Training on an on-going basis,” said Sharrif Al-Murtdha Al-Bakka, Director General of the ICS, at a meeting Task Force 134 conducted with members of the International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program.

“The academy shall also commence training in the development of post descriptions, post orders and the operational procedures on how to perform post orders,” he said.

The current class is slated to graduate from pre-service and advanced individual training in the beginning of October.

## Vital Fallujah electricity project nears completion

FALLUJAH, Iraq – A 132-kilovolt substation in Fallujah, projected for completion in October, will result in more consistent and stable electricity for Fallujah residents.

The \$14.8 million project is being managed by the Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq, and funded by the Iraqi Relief and Reconstruction Fund.

The substation was damaged in a fire caused by circuit breaker failure in Jan. 2005, and was identified

by the Division's Gulf Region District as a significant capacity-building project for Fallujah.

Maj. Joseph Geary, the officer in charge of the District's resident office in Fallujah, praised the team for working steadfastly on the project and overcoming various issues, including getting the equipment on site in good condition.

For example, when a transformer arrived damaged, security concerns hindered its delivery to the repair facility in another province. GRD officials and the contractor worked together to negotiate the transport and repair of the critical component. Now, in coordination with Iraqi security forces, the project is progressing along.

“It's a great story where the contractor, GRD and the Deputy General from the Iraqi Ministry of Electricity all worked together to move this project closer to the finish line,” said Geary.

The transformer is at the factory for repair and is expected to be ready in approximately 60 days. In the meantime, the contractor is continuing to work on the switching equipment and other internal components.

When the 132-kilovolt substation is complete, the Fallujah Minister of Electricity will have more latitude in managing the power grid as it relates to allocating power from area to area.

Improvements at the Fallujah substation will also provide expansion capacity with the addition of another bay and main transformer.

During its peak construction season, construction of the Fallujah substation employed 40 Iraqi workers.

The Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq has completed thousands of reconstruction projects in partnership with the U.S. government and the government of Iraq. Since 2004, GRD has completed 4,626 projects throughout Iraq valued at more than \$7.2 billion, and has 287 projects ongoing.

## Warhorse, Charger battalions break bread for Ramadan

MOSUL, Iraq – During Ramadan, families and friends celebrate together, exchange gifts and share meals after fasting the whole day. Local Sheikh Ra'ad graciously invited two U.S. forces commanders to join him for an evening meal during the holy month of Ramadan at his village that lies west of Qayarah.

Lt. Col. Phil Brooks, commander of the 3rd Combined Arms Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, and Lt. Col. Michael Fadden, commander of the 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, both with 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, attended the meal to continue to build their relations with Ra'ad.

“It was a good opportunity to be a part of their culture and religion and celebrate with them,” Brooks said.

“Physically and psychologically, Ramadan has many positive effects,” said Abdul Saleh, a Muslim from Sheikan, located southwest of Mosul. “Sometimes we have a party outside or family and friends will celebrate together and share gifts.”

Brooks and his Soldiers provided backpacks with

school supplies to the children of Ra'ad's family. Brooks gave them to Ra'ad, who passed them out to the 18 kids that had gathered for the meal.

"It's always a nice gesture. During the period of Ramadan, it's customary to exchange gifts in the evening, and that was just a gift that we presented to them," he said.

Brooks' Soldiers have participated in activities like these before, but never during the religious holiday of Ramadan.

Spc. Jamie Rainey, with the personal security detachment for 3rd Bn., 8th Cav. Regt. said that the kids were happy to get the school supplies.

"We've never passed out backpacks, but we've passed out water and [sports drinks]. The kids are always really excited to get that stuff, and today was no different. They're really appreciative," he said.

Although U.S. combat troops no longer operate within Iraq's cities, activities like these maintain stable relations between local leadership and the Soldiers that live and operate in the area.

## US mortar men train Iraqi Soldiers

 CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION SPEICHER, TIKRIT, Iraq – Iraqi Soldiers of the 4th Iraqi Army Division, 48th Brigade, Light Mortar Battery, rapidly launched more than 200 mortar rounds during a live fire exercise, finishing three weeks of basic mortar training at Al Siniyah Air Base in Bayji, Aug. 18.

The Iraqi Light Mortar Battery Soldiers joined U.S. trainers from the 4th IA Division, 48th Brigade Military Transition Team and the 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, to learn the fundamentals of indirect fire.

The Light Mortar Battery was established Nov. 6, 2008, and is comprised of three platoons with 157 Soldiers. Each platoon has four 120 mm mortars.

The Iraqi leaders of the division, along with the 48th Bde. MiTT, identified the need to train their specialized mortar unit to become proficient on basic mortar procedures.

Since the MiTT had trained mortar personnel with the team, the MiTT leaders decided to provide a basic mortar training course to ensure success for 57 of the 157 Soldiers who will operate the mortars.

"The MiTT is here to advise our Iraqi counterparts, but we have taken one extra step in the relationship to train them to be above their peers," said Sgt. 1st Class Paul de Lemos, 32, noncommissioned officer in charge, 48th Bde. MiTT.

"We took on a training role on our own during this deployment to help enhance the Iraqi fighting force by providing commando, mortar, tactical security and combat life saving training courses," he continued.

Throughout the training, Iraqi Soldiers learned how to read maps to identify their own location and potential targets. In addition they learned how to load, handle and fire the 30 lb. rounds by first practicing with water bottles before graduating to the live rounds. On the final day, each Soldier was able to fire four rounds each during the live fire exercise to pass the final portion of the training.

The Iraqi Division's mortar unit is the first in all of Iraq to actually live fire the 120 mm mortars, de Lemos said.

"This is very advanced training that we are participating in and it is making us stand out from our peers in our Army," said Iraqi Sgt. Mohammed Saleh Rabeaa, one of the Iraqi Soldiers who participated in the training.

"It is our job to protect our country by supporting

any battalion from our brigade. With this training we will be able to do just that," he continued.

"With the Iraqi Soldiers receiving training on these weapon systems, it will enable them to defend their comrades and their country better," said Sgt. Steven Tremper, an instructor of the mortar training.

Tremper also explained that having mortar systems are a valuable asset to any army due to the fire power the systems provide. Each mortar system is used to give indirect fire support and can create blast radius of 75 meters each, which can greatly affect the outcome of any battle.

The brigade will have an opportunity to practice their skills later at training centers in Kirkuk and Baghdad, but took advantage of U.S. expertise to train now.

"The Iraqi mortar unit received the mortar equipment before the training started, but we didn't want the Soldiers not to know how to properly operate the weapon systems," said de Lemos.

"It is really important for the Soldiers to understand the weapons they now possess. Now with the base of knowledge to start with, they are able to train themselves until their additional training is available," he said.

## Weather observation device assists Iraqi Air Force to plan missions

 CAMP VICTORY, Iraq – Seven Iraqi Air Force weather lieutenants received on-the-job training here Aug. 16 designed to enhance their knowledge and abilities with weather observation equipment.

The training's focus involved set-up, up-keep and function of a tactical meteorological observation system. The TMOS is a portable device which allows its user to obtain weather data used in taking several different weather observations, including wind speed and direction, cloud height, rain, temperature and humidity. It is designed for quick set-up in a tactical environment. In turn, accurate weather data allows for safe travel of troops, special operations missions, medical evacuation, cargo and any transportation needed.

According to Col Salman, the Iraqi air force director of the Meteorological Department, his airmen spent time reading about the equipment in preparation. He said this training is very important for Iraqi weather airmen and, in addition, that this the first time they were able to work on this kind of machine.

He said he and his team plan to put this device on every base in Iraq – army and air force – sometime in the future.

"It was important to Colonel Salman that each one of them had a hands-on experience setting up the TMOS, so I believe they all learned quite a bit from the experience," said U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Marvin Treu, Multi-National Force-Iraq Joint Meteorological and Oceanographic officer. "The lieutenants are hard working and motivated. They are already providing weather briefings for exercise and operational Iraqi air force missions, as well as learning how to set up and operate the latest tactical weather observing equipment."

"I am confident the Iraqi Air Force weather officers are going to develop the skills to be able to confidently and successfully support all the future missions of the Iraqi air force," he said.

Iraqi air force weather advisor Maj. Barry Hunte, said the on-the-job training that the Iraqi weather airmen received is not the only lesson they have learned.

"The training is very important in not just helping

the Iraqi weather department become better at their jobs," Hunte said. It also shows that working together and learning about each other is very important so that we can be viable partners, he said.

"I'm looking forward to the next eight months of advising Colonel Salman and working with the Iraqi weather lieutenants and watching them grow."

## Ministry of Defense partner school opens to multiple Iraqi ministries

 BAGHDAD – The Ministry of Defense Partner School completed its fourth iteration at the Ministerial Training and Development Center here Aug. 17-20.

This iteration was noteworthy since attendees from ministries other than the MoD graduated for the first time as well as the school's first female student.

Besides the MoD, ministries and departments represented included the Ministry of Interior, the Counter Terrorism Bureau, and the Prime Minister National Operations Center.

The comprehensive four-day training session encourages long-lasting relationships between senior Iraqi officials and their western counterparts.

U.S. Army Lt. Col. Greg Stuart, chief, Training and Development Branch of Iraq Training and Advisory Mission-Ministry of Defense, said he thought it was great to see representatives from the different ministries at this course.

"By opening up this course to other ministries we open up understanding and cooperation across ministerial organizations," Stuart said. "We also enhance the benefits that can be derived from working with a coalition advisor."

The Partner School is a course that aims to help senior Iraqi officials partner more effectively with officials and organizations from western nations and to provide an overview on western culture, beliefs and values. Additionally, attendees gain perspectives on military planning, best business practices, organizational training and development needs and insights into how to work more effectively with their Coalition Advisors.

One student commented that, "The course is very important for us to know more about western culture and it really discusses the differences between life in the west and life in the east, especially in Iraq."

Another student said, "The lectures given were great and the instructors seem to truly be subject matter experts."

The instructors comprised senior military and civilian coalition advisors from the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq.

The Partner School is open to senior Iraqi civilian officials with ranks from four to director general and military officers with ranks from colonel to lieutenant general.

Topics discussed include The Nature of Governance; Government and the Rule of Law; Western Thinking and Values; The Role of Religion in the West; Western Managerial Norms, Ethics and Professionalism; How Westerners Think about Strategy; Capability Planning and Resource Allocation; Automation of Processes and Systems; and Understanding Advisors.

U.S. Army Brig. Gen. James McDonald, deputy commanding general, MNSTC-I, gave closing remarks and presided over the certificate ceremony for the 18 graduates.

More than 75 Iraqi MoD officials have attended the Partner School this year. The next Partner School is scheduled at the MTDC for Oct. 12-15.

# Phantom Support



U.S. Army Photo by Pfc. Michael Syner

The Color Guard of the 321st Sustainment Brigade escorts the American flag and the brigade colors during a casing ceremony held at Al Asad, Iraq, Aug. 15. The ceremony signifies the end of its mission at Al Asad, and their preparations to redeploy. The 10th Sust. Bde. will help to support Multi-National Forces-West with its logistics needs with the 321st's redeployment.



U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Michael Syner

Command Sgt. Maj. Allen G. Fritzsching, the 10th Sustainment Brigade's senior enlisted adviser, speaks to fellow "Muleskinners," recently moved to Camp Korean Village from Camp Taji. The troops were moved to meet the needs of the newly-acquired mission to support Multi-National Forces-West following the departure of the 321st Sustainment Brigade in Al Asad. The 10th Sust. Bde. will provide logistics support to MNF-W during the remainder of the brigade's deployment.



U.S. Army Photo by Pfc. Michael Syner

Col. Samuel R. Bethel (left), the commander of the redeploying 321st Sustainment Brigade, walks with Brig. Gen. Paul Wentz (center), the commander of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and Lt. Col. Jody Dew (right), the commander of the 751st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sust. Bde. following the casing ceremony for the 321st Sust. Bde. The 10th will be taking over the 321st's responsibilities following their departure.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Joel F. Gibson

Staff Sgt. Fernando Flores, the operations noncommissioned officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), stands in front of the T-walls he designed for the HHC building Aug. 27, at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.



U.S. Army photo by Capt. Murray Shugars

Q-West residents line up to purchase newly available merchandise at the grand opening of the expanded Post Exchange at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq, Aug. 25. The Q-West PX doubled in size from 3,000 to 6,000 square feet and increased its shelf stock, especially in electronics and entertainment systems.