

THE D₁ GGER EDGE

April 2009 Volume 2, Issue 3



EXPANDING WEST

I.A. IN THE LEAD

FERTILE TALKS IN MAHMUDIYAH

STRYKER SOLDIERS MOBILE INFANTRY



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◀ *On the cover: Soldiers with the 2nd Stryker Battalion, 112th Infantry Regiment, 2nd HBCT, patrol the Abu Ghraib area with Iraqi Security Forces Serving with the 6th Iraqi Army Division march 22. (Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Robert Whelan, attached to the 2nd HBCT PAO)*



▶ *On the back: Sgt. Herbert Adams, a native of Bryn Mawr, Pa, Personal Security Detachment, 2nd HBCT, checks out part of the Dagger Brigade's new operational environment in the vicinity of Abu Ghraib March 4. (Photo by Sgt. Dustin Roberts, 2nd HBCT PAO)*

The Dagger Edge
Informing the Dagger Community on the
issues and events throughout the brigade.

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DAGGER SIX

2HBCT COMMANDER
COLONEL JOSEPH M. MARTIN



Daggers Set Standard Others Can Follow



▲ Col. Joseph Martin, commander, 2nd HBCT, inspects the road in the vicinity of Abu Ghraib March 4. (Photo by Sgt. Dustin Roberts, 2nd HBCT PAO)

On October 20th, 2008, I stepped off a CH47 and into the fight here in Northwest Baghdad. We were covering 52 square miles inhabited by 1.9 million people in Iraq's biggest city, which included most of the new Government's ministries and the homes of their national-level leadership. The Strike Brigade, 2-101 ABN (AA), had set impossibly high standards for execution as the division's main effort, and I wondered, "Would the Dagger Brigade be up to the task?"

Almost six months later, the answer to that question is simple: "Absolutely!" I circulate the battlefield weekly telling as many Dagger Soldiers and Leaders how tremendously proud that CSM Battle and I are of this magnificent combat team. The Multi-National Division

does the same thing, and what I hear now over and over is how this Brigade Combat Team is setting high standards in all we do. It's inspiring and humbling at the same time.

You are capturing more criminals and terrorists with warrants than any other brigade. You're partnering in more missions each day than some units accomplish in one week. We are responsible for over 322 square miles and 2.9 million inhabitants from the Tigris River to the outskirts of Fallujah. I can drive in one day to see the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers and it's ALL in our battlespace! We are managing the largest portfolio of CERP-funded projects in the division, and we're seeing neighborhoods and districts providing real, tangible public services to their citizens. We've almost eradicated negligent discharges, we've had no Soldiers killed or seriously injured to accidents, and finally, we're continuing to out-pace our reenlistment goals each month! It's all due to the phenomenal work of the Non-commissioned Officers of this great brigade, the Officers that guide them, and the Soldiers that follow them.

Join me this month in formally welcoming 2-8th Cavalry (CAB) out of 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, commanded by LTC Mark Solomons and CSM Rick Stuckey. They will secure the population of our western flank and deny insurgent movement into the greater Baghdad area from the western deserts. They will station out at JSS Nasir Wa Salaam, and I have full faith and confidence in their abilities and their commands. Welcome Stallions and we're glad to have you in the Dagger Brigade Combat Team.

Continue to maintain your high standards, Daggers! Everyone is watching you perform with the greatest admiration! 

COL. JOSEPH MARTIN

Dagger 6
"Ready Now!"



DAGGER SEVEN

2HBCT COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR
DONALD L. BATTLE



Willing, Ready & Able

Willing, Fellow Dagger warriors, April is here. This means you are half-way through the mission in helping to secure the citizens of Iraq. You have been working with your Iraqi Security Force counterparts to become self-sufficient in security operations. Since October you have made successful strides in operating in accordance with the security agreement with the Government of Iraq. We will continue to do great things for a free and more prosperous Iraq.

Although the first half of the deployment has moved quickly, it is not the time for complacency. Failure is a result of complacency and failure is not an option. As you continue to execute all of the difficult and crucial tasks assigned to you, remember this is for a cause bigger than you.

It is in your character as American Soldiers to continue to remain focused, ready and undoubtedly able to finish the second half strong. This is all about teamwork and everyone is a starter on this team. Don't think for one minute what you do, doesn't contribute to the overall success of this Brigade's accomplishments.

With the exit of 4-42 FA and the addition of 2nd Battalion, 112 Infantry Regiment and 2nd Battalion, 8th (US) Cavalry Regiment, the Dagger Brigade is fortunate to receive two more combat proven organizations that bring so much to the fight. Both battalions have so much storied history and have leaders that are indeed up for the challenge. What a great day to be a Dagger Brigade Soldier!!!!!!!

NCOs as you know the secretary of the Army has established 2009 as the Year of the NCO. Think about this, the NCO Corps goes back to over 200 years of service. I want you to



▲ *Command Sgt. Maj. Donald Battle, senior enlisted leader, 2nd HBCT, hands a gift-box to a 2nd HBCT Soldier at Camp Liberty March 12. (Photo by Sgt. Dustin Roberts, 2nd HBCT PAO)*

ask yourself what you did to contribute to the accomplishments of our great NCO Corps. Your actions speak for themselves on a daily basis. Are you that type of NCO, who would rather take the short cut and put Soldier's lives at risk for the sake of saving some time or are your that NCO who enforce the standards daily and take the time to explain why things are the way they are and have to be. Are you that NCO who tells your young Soldiers to do it but just don't get caught?

We have accomplished a number of tasks and still have plenty to do. Dagers starting the second half, so on your march, get set, ready let's go. 🇺🇸

COMMAND SGT. MAJ. DONALD BATTLE

***Dagger 7
"Nothing Further"***



◀ *Chaplain (Maj.) Peter Johnson*

college and a lot more. Don't confuse this program with "balance your check book 101" or another "get rich scheme." The program is taught by a well respected and proven financial teacher via a DVD. He is very entertaining and gifted at teaching complex financial subjects in very easy to understand lessons.

This program is more than just managing your finances – its about setting building blocks for success – both now and for your future. It does come from a Christian perspective, but by no means is it overbearing. If you come from a faith background you will tie in very well with what Dave Ramsey says. If you don't come from a faith background you will find no distractions. The overall program is designed for a general audience so don't worry - there isn't an altar call on the last DVD.

I am not exaggerating when I say that every time I have presented this program at least several people would come up to me and tell me it has radically changed their life. For the first time they actually feel a sense of hope and personal ownership in not only their finances but their life. Once you start building and growing in the right direction it becomes self motivating and the last thing one wants to do is to compromise what they started.

We are currently presenting a program now and we will present more in the future. So look for it in your AO and ask your battalion chaplain about it. Take on the challenge to redeploy more confident about your finances and your life.

An Investment You Won't Regret

By Chaplain (Maj.) Peter Johnson, 2nd HBCT

Are you tired of being in debt and living from pay check to pay check? How many more years do you have before you retire or ETS? Are you ready financially? If you're feeling somewhat hopeless by these questions you need to do something about it. Every expert in the field of personal investments will tell you its never too late to start. Yes, its better to start early, but don't belly up if you feel its too late to make changes now.

In one of my previous articles I challenged each of us to redeploy as both a better Soldier and person. Its truly on us if we don't use our time here in Iraq wisely. It is in this same vein that I want to tell you about Financial Peace University. This is a 13 week comprehensive program that shows in practical ways how to: get out of debt, stay out of debt, build wealth, what insurance you need and don't need, how and when to buy and sell real estate, how to plan for retirement and



Stitches:

Preventative medicine advice

Last month we talked about several different *micronutrients* and supplements available over-the-counter. The conclusion is that fitness doesn't come in a bottle, but what about all that stuff on the PX shelves? Isn't any of it worth using? Yes. That aisle does have one product in it that's worth your careful use: Protein.

Whenever you eat a meal, your body swings from a state of *"catabolism"* (breaking things down,) to a state of *"anabolism"* (building things up). Your body takes that food and stores it for later use. All food can eventually be converted into fat for storage, but the foods that stick to your gut the fastest are sugars and carbohydrates.

You see, we're faced with a genetic dilemma here. Our ancestors didn't have access to the raw, unadulterated energy source of sugar. Only in modern times have we found the technology to rip the sugars out of plants and purify them into bleached flour and high-fructose corn syrup. Soda pop sells because your brain is hard wired to crave sugary, starchy foods. Pancakes. Pizza. Bagels. Ice Cream. Breads. Pasta. Candy. All are made from refined carbohydrates, and all are going straight into storage as fat.

The second mode is *"catabolism"* which is the "unfed" state. Your body is forced to rely upon its internal stores of energy to operate. This is when your body starts breaking down fat. Unfortunately, in this mode, your body is breaking down muscle and using it for energy as well.

So, you may ask, how do we *"catabolize"* fat and *"anabolize"* muscle at the same time? We do it by avoiding carbohydrates and increasing the percentage of our diet that comes from protein. Small frequent meals that are higher in protein while avoiding refined carbohydrates and fat will keep you burning the pudge while protecting your guns.

But a diet like that is hard to maintain. It takes careful planning of your meals, and it can be quite expensive (carbs are cheap!). Protein shakes and bars are an easy alternative to roasting a chicken or baking a fish. They slip right into your pocket or backpack and they give you an option when everyone else wants to grab a honey bun, or push another Otis Spunkmyer® down their gullet.

Bottom-line? Throw down on some protein, save the Honey Buns for the Air Force, and stay sharp.

THE 5 W'S OF PROTEIN

Who: athletes interested in protecting their precious muscle gains while shedding fat pounds.

What: Whey Protein

When: Best used as a low-carbohydrate meal replacement, or alternatively, just before or after a workout to protect your muscles from being used as a fuel source.

Why: Whey protein has the highest bioavailability when compared to other dietary proteins, which means it gets to your muscles faster.

Where: Whey protein is found in that watery stuff left over from the cheese making process.

How: The official USDA Recommended Daily Allowance for protein is 56mg for men and 46mg for women, but exercise nutritionists largely agree that this is insufficient for athletic individuals, and they recommend around 1.5mg/kg (about three times the RDA)

OTHER GOOD SOURCES

- Tuna foil packets
- Chicken Foil Packets
- Boiled eggs (*eat the protein-rich whites, avoid the fatty yolks*)
- Nuts (*a great source of protein, but be careful, a cup of mixed nuts has 1150 calories in it!*)
- Cottage Cheese (*lowfat please*)
- Beans (*particularly soy beans*)



Lt. Col. Robert Kirby &
CSM Michael Williams

EXPANDING BATTLE SPACE

Story and Photos by Sgt. Dustin Roberts, 2nd HBCT PAO



In a transfer of authority ceremony, the 1st Combined Arms "Vanguard" Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad replaced the 4th "Straight Arrow" Battalion, 42nd Field Artillery Regt., attached to the 2nd HBCT at Forward Operating Base Prosperity March 4.

The ceremony marked the end of a more than one-year tour for the Soldiers of the Straight Arrow Battalion, who worked with Iraqi Security Forces in the Karkh and Mansour districts of northwest Baghdad securing the population.

When Coalition Forces and the Government of Iraq (GOI) signed the most recent Status of Forces Agreement in January, they agreed to remove U.S. troops from the city and onto control bases operated by Coalition Forces.

The transfer was conducted in accordance with the agreement because instead of being replaced

by a unit deploying from the U.S. to provide support to the same area, the hand-off was carried out with the Vanguard Battalion, which has been in country since October 2008 and will continue to also assist the ISF in providing security for the population of the Khadamiyah, Hurriyah, and Shulla districts.

The Vanguards have moved components to cover down in Karkh in order to work joint operations with the ISF there.

The Vanguard troops work hand-in-hand with their ISF counterparts in the northern most portions of Baghdad in much the same way as the Straight Arrow Soldiers did in Karkh and Mansour.

"The Straight Arrow Soldiers made a difference by helping secure 1.7 million Iraqi people through a distinct and clear partnership with Iraqi Security Forces and all those who serve the Iraqi people here," said Col. Joseph Martin, a native of Dearborn, Mich., commander, 2nd HBCT.

"We celebrate yet another grand chapter in the history of the 4th Battalion, 42nd Field Artillery Regiment for their service to the people of Iraq, the community in Karkh and service to our nation."

The battalion helped capture over 45 known insurgents, confiscated about 450 weapons and conducted over 5,000 patrols during the deployment, which helped keep violence in their area of operations to a minimum.

To help the ISF take the lead in the security mission, the Straight Arrows held "train the trainer" programs, which trained the ISF in basic patrol tactics, first aid, police work and Soldiering skills.

The ISF then took the knowledge they learned and brought it to their units to train their comrades.

"You deployed away from your families and friends to serve a cause that is larger than yourselves," Kirby said to the Straight Arrow Soldiers. "You never quit and you never failed. Despite the efforts of a cunning and deadly enemy, you worked with our partners to bring security to the area."

The Straight Arrow Battalion not only helped with security and stability for the Iraqi people by working with the ISF, but also assisted district and neighborhood advisor councils with improving the local infrastructure through a series of projects.

Among the projects were 150 micro-grants to stimulate small businesses in the local economy and over \$4 million to help improve schools, hospitals, sewage removal, electricity, and provide road and security improvements for the people in the area.

They also helped provide oversight to the Disarmament, Demobilization, and

Reintegration program through generator and heavy equipment training, which is geared towards helping the GOI-backed Sons of Iraq and recently released detainees with learning a skill.

In a variety of humanitarian missions, Kirby considered their deployment a success and said he was confident that the elements of the Vanguard Battalion and ISF in Karkh will continue the momentum of progress.

"It has truly been an honor to serve side by side with our partners in the Iraqi Army and Iraq Police, said Kirby. "I admire their courage and their devotion to serve their country and their determination to create a better future for their fellow citizens."



◀ (From left to right) A police officer who reports to Maj. Abdul Nuby of the Najda Police, Mr. Moohie Ahmad, vice chairman of Karkh District Council, Abd al- Sattar al-Robay, chairman, Karkh District Advisor Council, Mr. Rasheed, a member of the Karkh District Advisor Council, Mr. Kareem al-Jaff, chairman, Sal Hayah Neighborhood Advisor Council, Col. Fallah, police chief, Sheik Marouf Police Station, a key leader in the Karkh District Advisor Council, Sheik Abu Majed, tribal leader of Karkh, Command Sgt. Maj. Donald Battle, senior enlisted leader, 2nd HBCT, Dr. Katherine Carroll, embedded Provisional Reconstruction Team, 2nd HBCT and Ambassador John Bennett, leader of the ePRT, 2nd HBCT, applaud at the end of the Transfer of Authority Ceremony between the 4th Battalion 42nd Field Artillery Regiment and the 1st Combined Arms Bn., 18th Inf. Regt., at Forward Operating Base Prosperity March 4.



▲ *Soldiers serving with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team ‘Dagger,’ 1st Infantry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad unload care-packages from a storage container at Camp Liberty March 12. A group of Americans in Wash. donated about 7,000 packages, which contained candy, snacks and support letters to the Dagger Soldiers.*

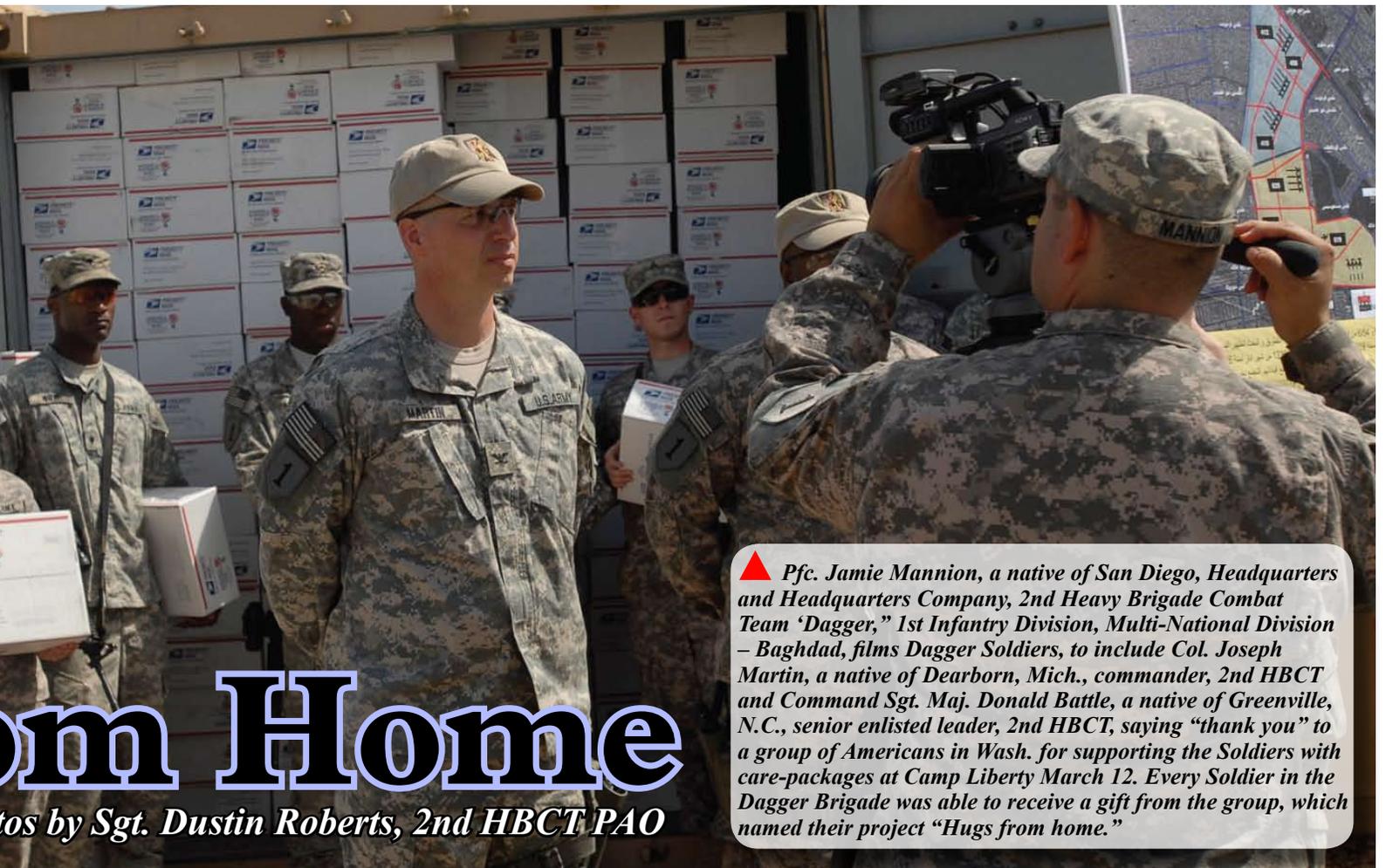


Hugs From Home

Story and Photos



▲ *Col. Joseph Martin (right), a native of Dearborn, Mich., commander, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team ‘Dagger,’ 1st Infantry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, hands a care-package to Pfc. Joseph Jacques III, a native of Beaufort, S.C., supply specialist, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd HBCT at Camp Liberty March 12. About 7,000 packages were sent to Dagger Soldiers in a project named ‘Hugs from Home’ from various Americans in Wash.*



Home

Photos by Sgt. Dustin Roberts, 2nd HBCT PAO

▲ Pfc. Jamie Mannion, a native of San Diego, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team 'Dagger,' 1st Infantry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, films *Dagger Soldiers*, to include Col. Joseph Martin, a native of Dearborn, Mich., commander, 2nd HBCT and Command Sgt. Maj. Donald Battle, a native of Greenville, N.C., senior enlisted leader, 2nd HBCT, saying "thank you" to a group of Americans in Wash. for supporting the Soldiers with care-packages at Camp Liberty March 12. Every Soldier in the Dagger Brigade was able to receive a gift from the group, which named their project "Hugs from home."

Thanks to a project back home in the states, Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldiers recently accepted a huge show of support and appreciation in the form of thousands of care packages.

A group of volunteers in Washington state, taking part in the "Hugs from Home" project, sent 7,000 gift boxes to Soldiers serving with the 2nd Heavy "Dagger" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, MND-B, which the troops received, March 12, at Camp Liberty.

"This is an example of people taking time out of their schedule. You are talking about 7,000 boxes that people took time to pack and made sure every Dagger Soldier got a box," said Greenville, S.C. native Command Sgt. Maj. Donald Battle, senior enlisted leader, 2nd HBCT. "When you look at things like that, you know there are people who are absolutely all about supporting our Soldiers."

The Washington state participants in the project included ministers, university

students and other regular everyday citizens, who took the time to label the boxes and fill them with candy, snacks, books, children's drawings and support letters.

"This was great because we are about half-way through our deployment and I feel that this boosts Soldiers' morale," said Pfc. Joseph Jacques III, a supply specialist working with the logistics section of the brigade who hails from Beaufort, S.C. "Not all Soldiers get packages or mail, so I know these packages are well appreciated. The boxes didn't just have candy or snacks, but also letters or notes that can really give a piece of home to each Soldier."

He added that the idea of the project showed just how much the American people care for the men and women in uniform.

"For every Soldier to have a care package from a group of people is amazing to me," he said. "Just the thought of 7,000 Soldiers knowing that they are supported means so much to me."

Because the boxes were shipped from Washington to Fort Riley, Kan., which is the home station of the Dagger Brigade, the shipping was funded by a variety of groups in Kansas.

The groups included the Junction City, Kansas Police Department, the veterans of foreign wars (Department of Kansas and National Headquarters) and the Kansas American Legion. The packages were then shipped from Fort Riley to Camp Liberty, Iraq.

"I appreciate the support from them and all of the American people; this shows that they are really looking after us," said Jacques. "They dedicated time to us because they feel we dedicate our time to them."

Battle also showed much appreciation due to the fact that he represents every warrior in the brigade.

"This truly made a difference in our Soldiers' lives here," he said. "You couldn't ask for anything better to boost the morale."



HIGHLIGHTING SECURITY IMPROVEMENTS

Story and photos by Sgt. Dustin Roberts, 2HBCT PAO

As per a recently signed security agreement, Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers and Iraqi Security Forces made another necessary step toward total Iraqi control in securing northwest Baghdad. In a transfer ceremony, Soldiers from the 1st Combined Arms Battalion “Vanguard,” 18th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, handed over the keys to Joint Security Station Shulla to the 2nd Battalion, 22nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division March 2 at the Shulla Neighborhood Advisor Council Hall.

The “Vanguard” Soldiers invited Iraqi and western media to witness the transfer ceremony, as well as walk the streets in order to highlight recent security and infrastructure improvements in Shulla.

During the visit, reporters from outlets such as al-Hurra Television, Agency French Press, Reuters, the Associated Press and the British Broadcasting Company, witnessed the transition of Joint Security Station Shulla and had

lunch at a newly rebuilt chicken restaurant; destroyed by a vehicle-borne explosive device in December 2008.

“The event was a testimony to the astonishing progress we see on a daily basis in northwest Baghdad,” said Lt. Col. John Vermeesch, a native of Marshall, Mich., commander of the “Vanguard” battalion. “The security situation in Shulla has not been this good in a long time. Because of that, the citizens of Shulla are experiencing a better standard of living and infrastructure improvement that they have not seen in years.”

During the walk the visitors saw kids waving Iraqi flags, busy sidewalks and flourishing shops.

“They were excited to see how secure the area is; it was very natural and normal,” said Mona Joesif, an Arabic media coordinator for 2nd HBCT, from San Diego. “Women and children were walking around and everything seemed to be okay.”

Joesif also said why it was important for the residents of Shulla to be informed of news in their neighborhood.



▲ *Mike Sergeant (blue vest), of the British Broadcasting Company, speaks into his voice recorder during the Sulla Media Day March 2.*

◀ *Kim Gamel (left foreground), of the Associated Press, interviews Lt. Col. John Vermeesch, a native of Marshall, Mich., commander, 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment March 2*

“For me, as an Iraqi person, it’s important to know what’s going on with the security agreement between Coalition Forces and the Iraqi Government,” she said. “When it’s time for the Americans to leave, it’s important to know if the Iraq Security Forces will be standing on their feet.”

Vermeesch said the transfer of JSS Shulla to the 2nd Battalion, 22nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division confirmed that the ISF are not only standing on their feet, but gaining confidence daily while taking the required steps toward permanent success.

“As part as our endeavor to support the ISF and in accordance with the security agreement between our two countries, we continue to turn the security of Iraq back over to the Iraqis,” said Vermeesch. “The transition of JSS Shulla from American control to Iraqi control is just one more step in this process.”

“This is an historic time for Shulla, for Baghdad and for all of Iraq. The “Vanguard” battalion is proud to be a part of Baghdad’s future.”



Lt. Col. John Vermeesch

The Vikings continue to excel as we provide security for the people of Northwest Baghdad. Along with our Iraqi partners, we continue to see amazing changes in our area of operations that are creating a standard of living for the Iraqi people that they have not experienced in years. Due to some of our recent accomplishments, the Vikings have been in the news a lot lately. All you have to do to see some of the excellent coverage of our Soldiers in action is google 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 18th Infantry, and many of the recent stories will pop up. This is an historic time for Baghdad and Iraq, and the Vikings are proud to be part of its future.

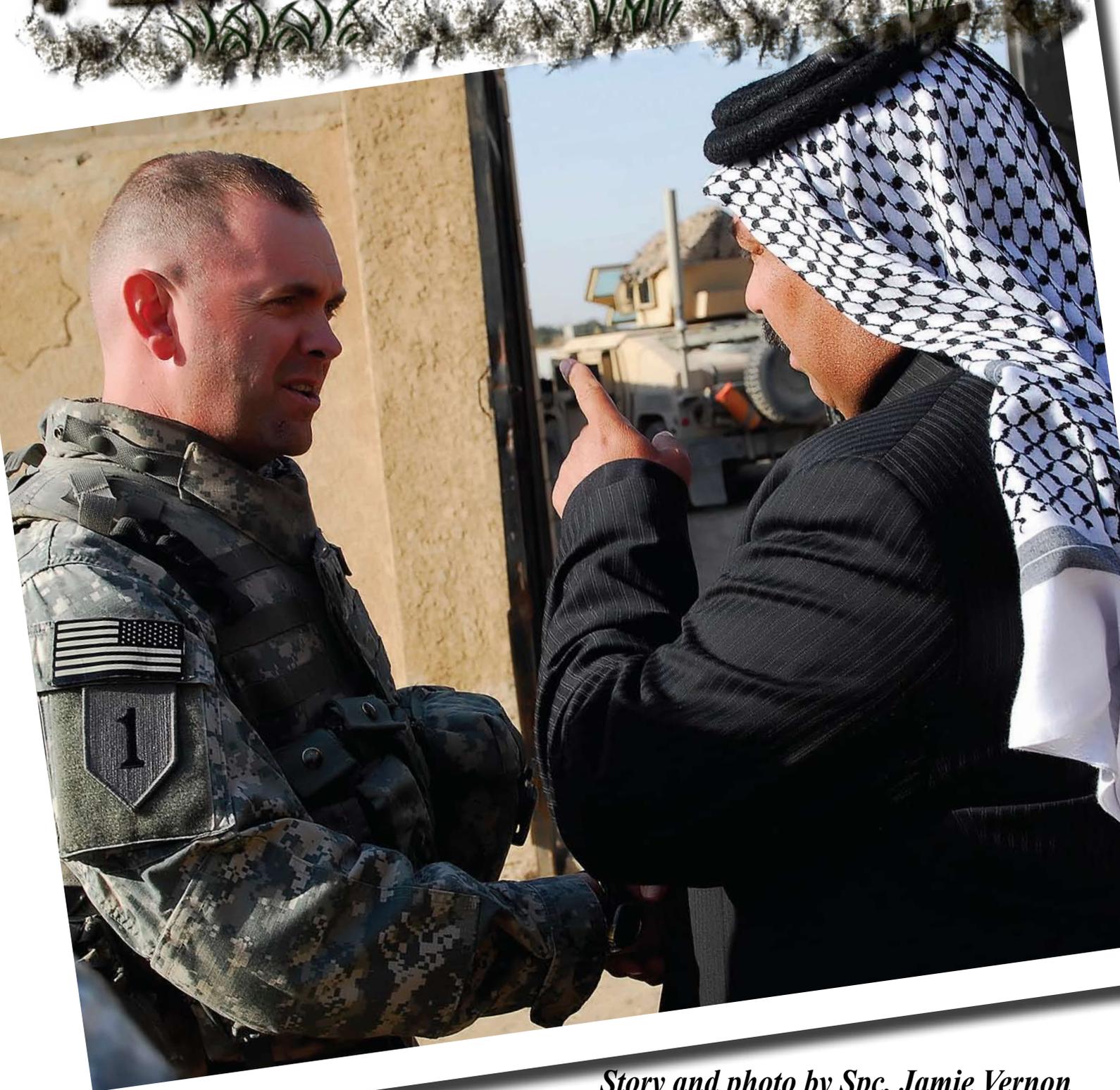
As we near the half way point of this deployment I want you to know that each of us remains focused on the mission at hand but also may be missing home a bit more these days. I believe that is part of the natural cycle of a deployment and we appreciate your continuous support. Your support, whether by email, letters, or packages, has is extra special these days. As always, I thank our Soldiers and Families for your sacrifices and service. You all are making a difference in the lives of the people of the Kadamiya and Karkh Districts. History will hold a special place for this pivotal time in the transformation of Iraq. Thanks for what you do as we write that history together. God Bless you all, and God Bless America!

Vanguard 6

“First to Battle!”

1ST COMBINED ARMS BATTALION, 18TH INFANTRY REGIMENT

FERTILE TALKS



*Story and photo by Spc. Jamie Vernon
2nd BCT PAO, 1st Armd. Div., MND-B*

◀ *Lt. Col. Jim Bradford, 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, of Lynchburg, Tenn., shakes hands with Sheik Hassan after a meeting with local Mahmudiyah sheiks in Mahmudiyah Feb. 25. During the meeting, the sheiks said in order to foster successful reconstruction efforts in their area, the current and future focus should be on irrigation, agricultural industry, financial industry and electricity to create more jobs.*

Leaders from the 2nd “Iron” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division met with nine Mahmudiyah sheiks at a residence here Feb. 25 to discuss security and infrastructure progress in the area.

With Mahmudiyah being a largely agricultural area, the sheiks and military leaders focused much of their discussion on determining methods to create more jobs for locals by developing agricultural and rural industries, as well as refining the irrigation systems in their areas.

Brigade commander, Col. Pat White and Lt. Col. Jim Bradford, commander, 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 63rd Armored Regiment, discussed what the recent Iraqi election results mean for the local community, the continued transition of Sons of Iraq security members and maintaining security while also transitioning Coalition focus to essential services, governance and economy.

“The meeting was designed to bring influential sheiks of Mahmudiyah together to discuss the future and to ultimately prioritize how we can help citizens of Mahmudiyah with the resources available to the coalition without interfering with Government of Iraq efforts,” said Bradford.

The sheiks said the current and future focus of reconstruction efforts should be on irrigation, agricultural industry, financial industry and electricity to create more jobs and to continue success with security.

“Our road is long and we are only on the first step. All our energy and focus is on the reconstruction of the Mahmudiyah area,” said Sheik Sadoon Mohsen Al Ajam Al Kalabi, chairman and organizer of the Sheik Advisory Council.

The sheiks voiced concern that even though a lot of energy and money has funded projects to develop the Mahmudiyah area, some of the projects focus only on the urban centers, with more needing to be done for rural areas.

In addition, the sheiks discussed their plan to form an advisory council for the Mahmudiyah area to assist Coalition Forces on what future projects are needed and where.

DRAGON 6



Lt. Col. Jim Bradford

This battalion continues to do great things and honor those that have come before us. I know your supporters are very proud of you and your accomplishments and so am I. We’ve had a very busy month and as we look toward the future your efforts and hard-work do not go unnoticed. I would like to welcome our new teammates to the fight. Over the last couple of weeks many of you have seen the arrival of our security force friends from the U.S. Air Force and the departure of the 65th MP Company. I have no doubt that the Rough Riders will make an excellent addition to the security efforts here in Mahmudiyah and we wish you all the best.

Like the Provincial Election, your efforts supporting the IA and IP for Arba’een deserve special mention. During Arba’een we witnessed an estimated million-plus pilgrims walk through Rashid, Mahmudiyah, and Lutifiyah without incident. Because of your security efforts and determination we saw Sunni and Shia interacting and supporting one another, which had not occurred in a very long time. You have accomplished a lot in a very short period of time and the people of Mahmudiyah thank you.

Our biggest threat is not IEDs but lack of jobs and essential services. Look for opportunities to improve the proficiency of the Iraqi Army and Police. Look for areas that need better schools and businesses that with a little help could increase the number of people they could employ.

We could do any of this without support from back home. I appreciate all of the help from our FRG, Rear Detachment, and our supporters. You are simply the best!

Dragon 6.

“Dragons!”

1ST COMBINED ARMS BATTALION, 63RD ARMOR REGIMENT



A MLOW



MIEN T IN LIMIE



AMERICAN SERVICEMEMBER

*Story by 1st Lt. Tobin Rader,
1st Bn., 7th FA Regt.*

A Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldier, after emigrating from Haiti, decided to put on the Army Combat Uniform for a living, recently earned his U.S. citizenship.

Pfc. Richerson Talleyrand, a radar equipment generator mechanic, serving with the 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, became a U.S. citizen during the 13th Multi-National Corps-Iraq Naturalization Ceremony March 3 at al-Faw Palace on Victory Base Complex.

Talleyrand was born August 30, 1983 in Port-au-Prince, Haiti and immigrated to the U.S. with his parents, four brothers and two sisters.

First living in Brooklyn, N.Y., he attended Marine Park Middle School and later moved to Coconut Creek, Fla. where he met his wife, Nicktha.

“She is the one who really gives me strength to go on and do these things,” Talleyrand said.

One of the many reasons Talleyrand joined the Army was to

provide a better life for his family and to see the world as well.

Talleyrand, who was in the Army a year before he applied for citizenship, said it took about six months to complete the process through several examinations.

“I went to school in the United States and the material for becoming a citizen was stuff we learned in the 7th and 8th grade,” he said. “I had to refresh myself on some of it, but I was well prepared.”

Talleyrand also said that the Army may help him be prepared for the civilian world after his service.

“If I choose to leave the Army when my contract is up, I hope that the experience I have gained will help me possibly obtain a job with the government,” said Talleyrand. “My goal is to finish my schooling and continue to create a better life for my family.”

Several dignitaries attended the ceremony, including Gen. Raymond Ordierno, commander, Multi-National Forces – Iraq and Lt. Gen. Lloyd Austin, commander, Multi-National Corps – Iraq.

▼ More than 250 Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors and Marines from 65 countries take part in the U.S. Naturalization Ceremony at Al-Faw Palace March 3. (Photo by 1st Lt. Mark Peek, 1st Bn., 7th FA Regt.)



Talleyrand's chain of command also was on hand to witness him become a U.S. citizen to include Lt. Col. Robert Bailes, commander, 1st Bn., 7th FA Regt. and Command Sgt. Maj. Garry Hunt, the battalion's senior enlisted leader.

"I was surprised to see all of the leadership there," said Talleyrand." It was nice of them to take time out of their schedules to come."

Talleyrand's company commander said the ceremony had an impact on him.

"It amazed me to see 251 Soldiers and noncommissioned officers of every branch of the military from 65 different countries get their U.S. Citizenship," said Capt. Mark Guelich, commander, HHB, 1st Bn., 7th FA Regt. "It was quite an impressive ceremony."

Like many young immigrants, Talleyrand once struggled with what to do when he grew up and how he would earn his citizenship. However, he said the Army was the right choice for him.

"There is a steady income, good health care and many other benefits for me and my family," he said. "I believe I would make the same choice again."

April 2009

LIGHTNING 6



Lt. Col. Robert Bailes

Thanks for your continued commitment to excellence in performing our diverse and complex mission here in Iraq. Every day presents a new challenge and you are meeting those challenges head on, accomplishing your missions to standard. Along with our Cavalry partners from B Troop 1-124 Cav and B Troop 1-303 Cav we are securing vital infrastructure within Baghdad, ensuring the safety of diplomatic and political dignitaries, escorting essential assets throughout the Baghdad area, and demonstrating our core competencies by ensuring MND-B and the Dagger Brigade have 24 hour indirect fire coverage from proud and proficient Redlegs!

Equally important you are assisting the Government of Iraq to achieve sustainable security through your partnership with Iraqi Army. Your efforts in training our partner unit are setting conditions for the success of the Iraqi government and paving the way for a reduction of coalition forces in Iraq. Senior leaders of the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Government have taken time in the past month to commend us on the professional performance of our Soldiers and are grateful for the tremendous knowledge that we are imparting on their Soldiers.

As we near the mid-point of our deployment I want you to know you are making a difference! I am honored to serve with you and inspired each day by your incredible devotion to duty and professionalism. Keep up the great effort, continue to stay safe and continue to take care of one another.

First Lightning!

Lightning 6

"Never Broken by Hardship or Battle."

1ST BATTALION, 7TH FIELD ARTILLERY REGIMENT

UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

“Long Knife” Turns Over Joint Security Station Ghazaliyah IV to Iraqi Security Forces

Story by Sgt. Brian Tierce, 2nd HBCT PAO



After spending the first four months of their deployment overseeing security between the Kadhamiyah and Mansour districts of northwest Baghdad, Troopers of the 5th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment said their goodbyes to their joint security station and their Iraqi Security Forces counterparts Feb. 14.

Multi-National Division—Baghdad Soldiers returned JSS Ghazaliyah IV, located in the north of the Ghazaliyah neighborhood, over to full Iraqi control in a transfer ceremony that highlighted not only the unit’s compliance with the recently signed Security Agreement, but testifies the readiness of the ISF who continue to secure the area.

“Today is a great example of the Coalition fulfilling its obligation under the Security Agreement,” said Lt. Col. John Richardson IV, a native of Tallahassee, Fla., commander, 5th Sqdn., 4th Cav. Regt. “Each day that goes by we see the Iraqi Security Forces become more capable and it gives us the opportunity to step back and allow Iraqis to solve Iraqi problems.”

Prior it’s signing; Soldiers conducted every patrol under the Security Agreement’s conditions to ensure

the transition to combined operations would go smoothly.

The lessons learned during this period not only improved the effectiveness of the fighting force in Ghazaliyah, it also served to prepare the ISF members for their eventual assumption of responsibility for the area.

“Transferring this joint security station to full Iraqi control is another giant step in validating the work the Iraqi Police have done,” said 1st Lt. Matthew Mattingly, a native of Holland, Mich. “It not only represents the advent of a more modern Iraq, but also the strength of (our) commitment to working with the citizens of Iraq to shape with them a brighter future.”

To turn the JSS over to Iraqi control, the Coalition leadership knew it would take a senior member of the Iraqi Police; capable of leading his force to secure the region and able to improve the quality of life for its citizens.



“The leader here, Maj. Ghanim, has made great strides with his organization both in leadership and its overall capacity,” said Richardson. “As a result, the assessment was made that this leader and his organization were ready to take the lead and provide security for the population.”

With the transition complete and the squadrons Soldiers assigned to a new area, the ISF are now in the lead in north Ghazaliyah. Though Coalition Forces are not far away, the transition to Iraqi control is yet another bright moment for the ISF and the people of Iraq as they move towards a more secure future.

“This transfer of authority signifies a new chapter in the growth of the ISF,” said Mattingly. “The Iraqi Police are committed to protecting the population and maintaining the people’s faith in their government.”

April 2009

LONG KNIFE 6



Lt. Col. John B. Richardson IV

To the Troopers of the Long Knife Squadron, they are calling this the “Year of Transitions” here in Iraq and no one knows that better than the Troopers in 5-4 Cavalry. In support of the Security Agreement, the Squadron Headquarters moved “out of the city” where it was located in one of the neighborhoods at a JSS and has re-located to Camp Liberty on the Victory Base Complex. While the Squadron moved back to Liberty, the AO expanded by four times our original battle space, meaning each of you had to move your living and working area from one JSS to a new JSS, you had to develop new partnerships, and learn new terrain. You did that without missing a beat. A unit could have pulled off such a feat unless it was highly trained, disciplined, and well led.

Not only have you prevented the enemy from taking the initiative, you did it so well that the transition has actually put the enemy on its heels.

We are approaching the mid-way point to this combat tour. It has been a very successful deployment and your accomplishments have been staggering. The enemy fears you and rightfully so. The population respects you because you have earned it through your professional behavior, your ability to discriminate and only target the enemy, and your genuine support of the people and the ISF. Let’s finish the way we started and finish strong. Fight complacency and take care of each other.

Lastly, if the enemy has the guts to try and close with you, take the fight to him, close with him and destroy him. Be the Hunter, not the hunted.

LongKnife 6.

“Prepared and Loyal!”

5TH SQUADRON, 4TH CAVALRY REGIMENT



◀ Staff Sgt. Randy Maurer (right), Company C, 299th Brigade Support “Lifeline” Battalion, shows the inside of a Heavy Armored Ground Ambulance to Command Sgt. Maj. Althea Dixon,

“Lifeline” Medics Get A Checkup

Story and photos by Sgt. Dustin Roberts, 2HBCT PAO

With top leaders in the U.S. Army naming 2009 as the “Year of the Noncommissioned Officer,” the Army’s senior medic flew from Fort Sam Houston, Texas to Camp Liberty to meet with Multi-National Division—Baghdad’s Army Medical Corps enlisted leaders and Soldiers.

Command Sgt. Maj. Althea Dixon, senior enlisted advisor to the Army Surgeon General, U.S. Army Medical Command, paid a visit to medical Soldiers serving with the 299th Brigade Support “Lifeline” Battalion, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, at the Riva Ridge Troop Medical Clinic on Camp Liberty March 5.

“One of the [reasons for] my visit

was to see our medical people and to take a look at the services they are providing. Everybody knows the great medical support the Soldier’s get when they are deployed,” said Dixon, who was also there to update the troops on what’s going on in the Army medical department. “As the senior medic in the Army, I try my best to meet and talk with each and every medical Soldier, or as much of them as I can, and hear their concerns and ideas.”

To better understand their own rolls as medical NCOs, Dixon informed the Lifeline leaders about the recently released Army Medicine Strategic Map, which shows the key tactics and objectives for the medical corps in terms of leading, guiding and developing Soldiers.

“I want them to know where they fit in that strategy,” said Dixon. “Our mission is to train, develop and equip a medical force that supports full spectrum operations.”

Dixon also detailed the various aspects of being a leader in a Warrior Transition Unit (WTU), where many Soldiers in the Army’s medical field may find themselves working.

WTU’s were created in 2007 to provide critical support to Soldiers wounded in combat and are expected to require at least six months of rehabilitation care and mental health management for themselves and their families.

“Working in a WTU is one of the toughest leadership jobs there is. In addition to taking care of injuries and

▼ *Command Sgt. Maj. Althea Dixon (right), senior enlisted advisor to the Army Surgeon General, U.S. Army Medical Command, speaks with Spc. Melanie Harris (left), from Corpus Christi, Texas, a medical Soldier serving with Company C, 299th Brigade Support "Lifeline" Battalion, at the Riva Ridge Troop Medical Clinic on Camp Liberty March 5.*



medical problems they are taking care of emotional and family issues," said Dixon. "There are many challenges to being a leader in a WTU; it's not a 'take a knee' kind of job."

Also a stressful but rewarding job, said Dixon, is being a medical Soldier working in combat operations because of the long hours of medical service to Soldiers.

"I am so proud of what these folks are doing out here. They are well trained, they are highly motivated and they are all about service, so I am really pleased at what I have seen so far."

In a deployed environment, Soldiers have to constantly make

sure they are "combat-ready" and Dixon said the Soldier-medics are one of the reasons why missions outside of the wire are successful.

Dixon added that sometimes the American people wonder why young people are not afraid to volunteer to serve knowing that they could possibly be deployed in harm's way.

"I think one of the reasons why Soldiers don't hesitate to serve is because if they are deployed and should they become ill or injured, there are great medics out there to make sure that they are taken care of," she said. "Army medicine helps keep the Army Strong."



As we have recently completed five months of this deployment in Baghdad; the accomplishments that have been achieved is truly a credit to all associated with this Battalion. Everyday the Soldiers of this outstanding Battalion are working hard and ensuring the Brigade is able to accomplish its mission.

In the early stages of this deployment the Soldiers and Junior Officers quickly validated the convoy procedures and training that the Battalion had established for Deliberate Combat Logistics Patrols (DCLP) and Deliberate Combat Replenishment Operations (DCRO). This has resulted in over 250 missions being completed to date with no incidents.

In addition to these typical rolls of the Brigade Support Battalion we have accomplished numerous training events with our Iraqi Security Force (ISF) counterparts. We have provided medical first aid and combat life savers courses. We have taught them the ins and outs of different mechanical operations of their vehicles. We have helped them better understand their supply and requisition processes to ensure they are getting the parts and supplies needed.

These accomplishments are something to be truly proud of. None of this could have been accomplished without the hard work and dedication of each Soldier in this Battalion. I am truly proud of each and every Soldier and thankful for the support that is being shown from Families and Friends back home. I look forward to the things to come as we continue our service in Iraq.

Lifeline 6
"On Call to Serve."

299TH BRIGADE SUPPORT BATTALION

There was a large celebration March 5 at the Adl Sports Center in Mansour, where about 150 Iraqi students graduated from a heavy equipment operator course that began Dec. 4.

These students are the first to graduate from the heavy equipment operator course, said the contracting officer representative for the project, 1st Lt. Justin Casey, assigned to 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division.

“They learned to operate dump trucks, street sweepers, bulldozers and sewage trucks,” said Casey.

The project provides 18 vehicles per 48 Iraqi students then turns the vehicles over to the beladiya which is like a neighborhood, continued Casey, whose job involves ensuring that

the contracts given to the Iraqis are fulfilled.

The U.S. military supports Iraqi contractors to provide skills through classes to unemployed Iraqis. Casey said he travels to the training sites to make sure the training is in line with the contracts.

There are six training locations throughout Baghdad with two phases of the training: theoretical and practical. The first phase is classroom instruction, where students learn about basic operations and maintenance of the vehicles. The second phase consists of hands-on training with driving and operating the machinery, said Casey.

“We had students that started the class and didn’t even know how to drive,” said Ali Kurji Hassan, an instructor for the course and mechanical engineer

from Baghdad. “Now they can drive and maintain the vehicles. They are very excited!”

Most of the students were previously unemployed but were eager to work.

“It’s a big thing for students that have never had an education,” said Hassan. Not only were the students receiving an education, but they were also paid a stipend for attending classes. The stipend was \$10 a day, up to \$300 a month if they attended class every day, but the rewards were more than monetary.

“In the long-term it’s going to benefit the community,” said Casey. “Here they were given a training opportunity so they are an asset to the people of Iraq.”

The partnership between the Coalition force and Iraq has grown



IRAQ'S FUTURE WORK FORCE

Story by Staff Sgt. Mark Burrell, MND-B PAO

tremendously and the communities are reaping the rewards of these accomplishments.

“We are enthusiastic to have this partnership with the U.S.,” said Maj. Hadi Salih, the supervisor of training in Adl. “These classes provide the students with skills to be more useful to the community. The training was smooth and they were content to be doing it, so it didn’t feel like hard work.”

The students will reap the rewards of the training in the future, but at the graduation everyone was celebrating.

“The students are very excited, they’re in there dancing,” said Casey. “They’re excited to accomplish something.”

Yet, more importantly, Casey added, “They can see that Iraq is developing.” And these new graduates will help develop it.



GRIFFIN 6



Col. David Imhof

Griffins, as we end our fourth full month in Iraq, I believe many of you would say that “change” is one of the surest things during this and any other deployment. Most of us are sometimes uncomfortable with change, but there are good things brought about by change. For individuals changing positions, change is often a sign of more responsibility and new challenges. For small units that change missions, change brings about the opportunity to learn, and also to develop new and better ways of accomplishing missions. Finally, at another level, change demonstrates progress as we continue to build upon the successes of the ratified Security Agreement and January provincial elections.

You might be wondering why this discussion of change. Well, let me highlight a couple of the changes that occurred in February. First, 4-10 Cavalry redeployed to Fort Carson, but another battalion, 2-112 IN (Stryker) soon arrived and was attached to the brigade. Second, the brigade’s higher headquarters changed from the 4th Infantry Division to the 1st Cavalry Division. The AO got larger, and many brigade units were and are now operating in new areas.

No doubt, Griffin Soldiers continue to maintain the pride and honor associated with wearing the Big Red One patch. I know every Family is making tremendous sacrifices in support of their Soldier. To every Griffin Soldier and Family Member, Thank You for your support and sacrifice you provide every day—every member of the Griffin team is truly making this battalion a great unit.

Griffin 6

“Griffins! point of the Dagger!”

2-1 BRIGADE SPECIAL TROOPS BATTALION

No sooner than the troopers of the 4th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment said goodbye to the 2nd Heavy “Dagger” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, did Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 112th Infantry Regiment arrive and begin combat operations as an attached unit to the Dagger Brigade.

With the addition of the Stryker Soldiers, the Dagger Brigade has expanded its operational area, to include a vast portion of western Baghdad.

Soldiers of the 2nd Bn., 112th Inf. Regt., said the opportunity to serve not only with active duty Soldiers, but Soldiers of the U.S. Army’s longest serving infantry division is not just an honor, but also a chance to prove they belong on the battlefield with their active-component partners.

“We’re excited to be working under the 1st Infantry Division,” said 1st Sgt. Michael Swartz, a native of Duncansville, Pa., senior enlisted member, Company C, 2nd Bn., 112th Inf. Regt. “It gives us a chance to work under an active duty brigade and to show the active duty what we bring to the table.”

Swartz explained some of the advantages of leading an Army National Guard unit into a combat environment where counterinsurgency tactics are a large part of the fight.

“My unit is largely corrections officers, which is a benefit to us because they are used to dealing with security—watching crowds—those types of things that we are going to be doing here. So that helps,” said Swartz.

Another critical factor to the unit’s success is being able to adjust to life in western Baghdad. The unit spent the majority of the past six months training to prepare for their deployment to Iraq.

During that time the Soldiers were forced to share close quarters with their comrades and came to Iraq with the expectation of continuing that trend, but to their surprise the condition on their joint security station allowed room to spread out.

“It’s the best living conditions I’ve seen since this whole thing kicked off,” said Staff Sgt. James Larson, a native of Bellwood, Pa. “We’ve been living within a foot of each other for the last six months; finally I can set up a little place and move in a little bit.”

The area the Soldiers are moving into is Joint Security Station Nassir Wa Salam, which is located west of Baghdad. The JSS is shared with their Iraqi counterparts and the Soldiers are already using this new environment to their advantage when it comes to working with the Iraqis.

“So far we have had a good relationship with the Iraqi Army and the Iraqi Police,” said Swartz. “We’ve been able to get them together and get them talking about joint operations and so far that is probably the biggest thing that has been good for us.”

As the Soldiers settle in to their new environment and learn the finer points of operating in accordance with the recently signed security agreement one thing remains the same; the mission comes first.

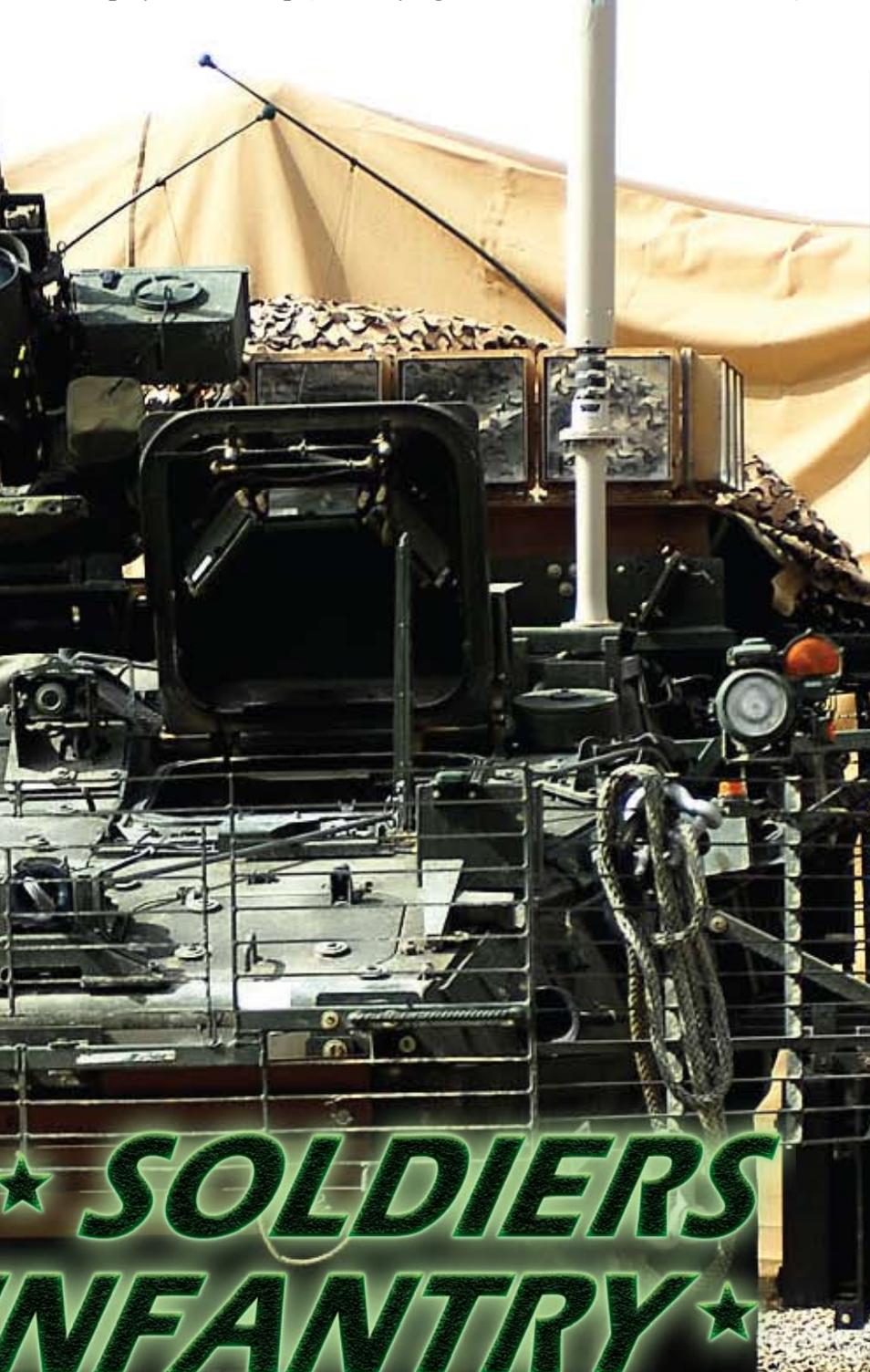
“It’s a busy area here because of how the highway system flows through this area,” said Swartz. “But the Iraqis are motivated to patrol with us and get out there on the streets.”



STRYKER ★ MOBILE INFANTRY

Story by Sgt. [Name]

▼ *A Stryker Combat Vehicle from the 2nd Battalion, 112 Infantry Regiment, attached to the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Multi-National Division—Baghdad prepares to roll out on a mission from Joint Security Station Nassir Wa Salam in western Baghdad Feb. 26. The Soldiers of the Stryker Battalion replaced Soldiers from the 2nd Stryker Brigade, 25th Infantry Division and will serve as part of the Dagger Brigade during their deployment to Iraq. (Photo by Sgt. Brian Tierce, 2nd HBCT PAO)*



★ **SOLDIERS**
INFANTRY ★

Brian Tierce, 2nd HBCT PAO

PAXTON 6



Lt. Col. Samuel Hayes

The transfer of authority of Abu Ghraib opens a new chapter in the history of the battalion as well as the history of Abu Ghraib. Our mission is clear....secure the population and disintegrate the insurgent networks operating in Abu G. I am proud to be serving with you and working daily to make life in Western Baghdad safer every day. Our transformation to a Stryker Battalion, post-mobilization training at Camp Shelby, MS and the extended Joint Readiness Training Center rotation has prepared us well for this task. Our operations and actions must be decisive, working with our Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police counterparts to establish a lasting security in the Abu Ghraib qadaa. We recently joined a great team in the Dagger Brigade of 1 ID. They have a long and proud history, are focused on the mission, and share the same drive for excellence.

Each day you leave the wire to conduct combat operations, you are doing something significant for the people of Iraq. Whether it is clearing weapons and explosive caches, conducting maintenance on our Strykers, evaluating the water supply, conducting raids and detaining insurgents, or attending a council meeting, we are helping the Iraqi people take one more step toward being self-sufficient and letting their democratic government flourish. These are historic times for the people of Iraq, and we will do everything we can to give them the confidence to succeed.

We will continue to work with our Iraqi partners, and help them take the lead in ensuring a secure future for the people of Abu Ghraib, Nassir Wa Salam, and Agur Quf among other areas in our large and diverse area of operations.

Paxton 6

“Quick, Silent, Deadly.”

2ND BATTALION, 112TH INFANTRY REGIMENT



Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers serving with the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team ‘Dagger’, 1st Infantry Division can work on their golf swing and relieve some stress for the remainder of their scheduled year-long deployment.

In a small ceremony at the Dagger Brigade’s Headquarters Feb. 8, 2HBCT leaders hit a few golf balls into the back of a sand-colored net, which indicated the means for practicing the long-shot in Iraq were open.

The range was named the “Ridgefield Country Club Driving Range in Iraq,” after a group of golfing veterans in Ridgefield, Conn., who donated the equipment used at the range.

“The men are friends of mine through my parents and in-laws and they are great supporters of the military,” said Lt. Col. Christopher Beckert, a native of Madison, Conn., deputy commander, 2nd HBCT. “When they heard that our brigade was deploying, they felt that one thing they could do to contribute to the morale of the Soldiers is send used golf clubs and used golf balls, along with some mats, so that we could set up a little area where Soldiers can relax and pass the time when they have free-time.”

Beckert added that the group of golfers in his home state all know what Soldiers experience during deployments because they all have been in similar situations while deployed.

“They are all veterans themselves so they know what Soldiers go through and they understand that it is hard sometimes to be away for a long time without things to do,” he said. “They knew that Soldiers need to pass the time in a combat zone; they thought one constructive way was to practice golf swings.”

Beckert also said there are many Americans who are firmly behind the efforts of Soldiers.



◀ *Sgt. Ryan Greve, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team ‘Dagger,’ 1st Infantry Division, Multi-National Division -- Baghdad, shows off his golf swing at the new ‘Dagger Driving Range’*

“Everybody wants to do their part and have a role in supporting Soldiers and their Families,” he said. “This is one way they could do that.”

After the equipment arrived it took about 8 Soldiers to construct the range in a two-week period.

“The Materials came from all around the compound from inside the tactical operations center,” said Staff Sgt. Justin Takach, a native of Woodbine, N.J., operations, Headquarters and Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd HBCT. “I scrounged up foam and other things to use like packing material for a base to stand on when hitting a few balls.”

Takach, who said he always looks for improvement in his projects, said he would like to paint a back-drop and place it at the back of the netting for target practice.

Although practicing a golf-swing is ideal for Soldiers’ golf score upon redeployment, Takach said it was a great method to drive out stress.

“It’s a relief; a chance to escape for a bit from the ongoing of day-to-day life out here,” he said. “It gives the Soldiers a chance to come out during the day, whenever they get a minute, to get a little taste of home.”



HEADQUARTERS

MULTI-NATIONAL CORPS IRAQ
BAGHDAD, IRAQ
APO AE 09342

PROPERLY DISCARDING UNSERVICEABLE UNIFORMS

PURPOSE: To direct all service members and civilians in possession of armed forces or security uniforms to properly dispose of uniforms. To keep US armed forces and coalition security officer uniforms out of the hands of the adversary.



BACKGROUND: An OPSEC Officer reported large numbers of uniform items discarded in open trash receptacles during unit redeployments. Subsequently, several TCN employees collected serviceable discards, including US Army uniforms. The observer collected the uniforms from the TCNs and informed the unit's leadership accordingly. The adversary can easily obtain and don a uniform and forge a badge to gain access to a military base. This successful practice remains a threat by insurgents who frequently revert to proven TTPs.

APPLICABILITY: All uniformed personnel in theater.

DISCUSSION: MNC-I C4 Policy states that uniforms must be turned in to the Central Issue Facility (CIF) when ordering new items or discarding old items. Personnel will contact their unit supply personnel to coordinate uniform turn-in. DoD and contractors authorized to wear uniforms of the armed forces will return all OCIE and TA 50 back to the CONUS CRC or DMOB stations.

RECOMMENDATION: Unit Supply officers proactively plan for service members' turn-in of uniforms in conjunction with redeployment preparations. CIF personnel at VBC and Balad are standing by to support. Major Subordinate Command OPSEC Officers will increase awareness of the uniform turn-in policy and procedures and adhere to TrashINT practices to assess OPSEC readiness. Leaders at all levels will ensure compliance.

DANIEL B. ALLYN
Brigadier General, USA
Chief of Staff

ENSURE WIDEST DISSEMINATION AND POST ON BULLETIN BOARDS
OPSEC HASH 09-01

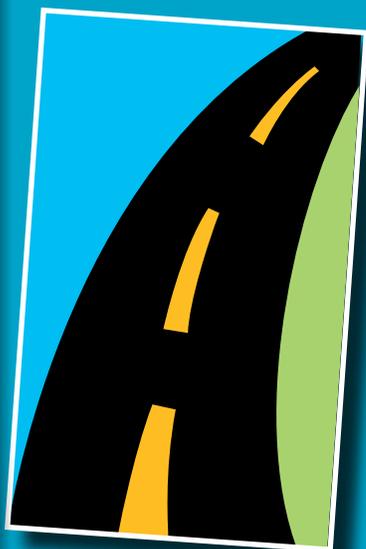
RTR / Leave Safety



The time has come when more and more Soldiers will be taking a well deserved rest and relaxation period or leave to spend time with friends and loved ones. As you prepare to kick back and enjoy your stress free leisure, please keep a couple things in mind:



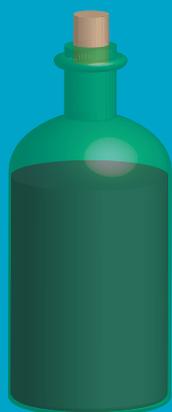
- If you leave the FOB frequently, you may find that you do not enjoy being in crowds or busy places.
- If you spent a lot of time alone during the deployment, you may want to be around people.
- Enjoy your leave and relax, take things in slowly
- Allow time to readjust and to develop a new battle rhythm.



Automobile/ Motorcycle accidents are the **#1** killer of Soldiers while at home. The ROE/EOF have changed

- Obey the laws and speed limits.
- Stop at red lights and stop signs
- Drive courteously - you are sharing the road with your countrymen
- Relax, there are no IED's along the roadways
- Don't tailgate - the crew systems are not needed
- Keep your situational awareness up
- You are no longer in charge of the road - but you ARE in charge of your destiny

Be aware of the possibility of emotional issues such as anger, fear, resentment, blame, anxiety and conflicting expectations. Listen to your spouse and communicate.



Just relax and enjoy your time away from the area. Don't try to do everything on your first day back, especially consumption of alcohol. Believe it or not, you have a low tolerance to alcohol, so don't try to pick up where you left off.



OPTIONS DECREASE IN THE ARMY B.E.A.R. PROGRAM BONUS EXTENSION AND RETRAINING

A force alignment incentive that encourages soldiers in overstrength specialties to retrain and re-enlist in priority specialties has been scaled back by the Army.

Reductions to the Bonus Extension and Retraining program took effect Feb. 20 and are similar to changes made in the Enhanced SRB program on that date.

Among the changes affecting both programs is the elimination of the ETS (expiration term of service) option that was aimed at soldiers whose enlistments expire before Oct. 1, the end of fiscal 2009.

Before the Feb. 20 elimination of this option, the ETS category featured bonuses of \$2,000 to \$18,500 for soldiers who retrained and reclassified in 10 critical skills from the field artillery, air defense, aviation, signal, public affairs, transportation and quartermaster career management fields.

These bonus levels were introduced in January and have not changed. However, there have been adjustments to the specialties and eligibility zones.

The Army normally opens a fiscal year with a strong menu of incentives for soldiers who are nearing the end of their enlistments in the hope that

many of them will stay in service.

That approach worked well this year, with nearly 36,000 soldiers re-enlisting between October and January.

“We’ve done very well this year, so now we’re focusing on specific requirements,” said Master Sgt. Michael Beaupre of the military personnel management directorate of the Office of the G-1 at the Pentagon.

Bonuses under the newly revised BEAR program range from \$2,000 to \$16,000 for certain categories of privates, specialists and sergeants who reclassify to a critical skill and who extend their service from 12 months to five years or more.

The revised program also has an option for soldiers who reclassify to special critical skills, which primarily are specialties in the special operations, military intelligence, signal, medical and ordnance career management fields.

Lump-sum bonus payments remain at \$3,000 to \$27,000 for special critical skill soldiers who successfully complete reclassification training.

Soldiers who participate in the BEAR program can have up to 24 months of previously obligated, extended service forgiven provided they re-enlist for the Regular Army

(or needs of the Army) re-enlistment option within 90 days of completing reclassification training.

To qualify for the BEAR program, soldiers must have at least 17 months of service.

There are three eligibility categories: Zone A for soldiers with 17 months to six years of service, Zone B for those with six to 10 years, and Zone C for soldiers with 10 to 14 years of service.

Army policy restricts soldiers to one re-enlistment bonus per zone.

Soldiers in the ranks of private first class through staff sergeant must show an “N/N” or “N/Y” in their current rank and MOS on the in/out chart issued Jan. 30 by the Army.

There are two major exceptions to the eligibility rules:

- Sergeants first class may request entry into any Special Forces specialty, regardless of the in/out calls for their current MOS.

- Soldiers in other ranks may request entry into the Special Force career field (CMF 18), MOS 21P (prime power production specialist), 35L (counterintelligence agent), 37F (psychological operations specialist), 38B (civil affairs specialist) and 89D (explosive ordnance disposal specialist).

Courtesy of Army Times

end frame...



THE DAGGER EDGE