

EXPEDITIONARY TIMES

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Vol. 2 Issue 39

Taking charge



287th Sustainment Brigade hands reins over to 36th

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Working condition



699th Maintenance Company keeps Soldiers in the fight

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Bedtime story



Reading program brings families together

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Cavalry Guardsmen provide convoy security

By SPC. MICHAEL V. CAMACHO
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION SPEICHER, Iraq – Logistic convoys move supplies throughout northern Iraq, under the careful protection of Mississippi Cavalry Guardsmen.

The 1st Squadron, 98th Cavalry, provides convoy security escorts to military and civilian logistics convoys in northern Iraq, said Lt. Col. John Nipp, the 1/98th Cav. commander. The 1/98th was a scout unit, but it has adapted to its new mission in support of sustainers and their convoys, he said.

Nipp, a Saltillo, Miss., native, said the 1/98th Soldiers began training for the convoy security mission prior to their deployment. Their knowledge and experience aids the mission, he said.

SEE CONVOY ON PAGE 2



Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicles convoy down a road in Iraq.

Courtesy photo

Medical clinic dedicated to fallen Soldier

STORY AND PHOTO BY SPC. JOHN STIMAC
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq – The Troop Medical Clinic at Q-West was dedicated and re-named the Cpl. Christopher J. West TMC, in a ceremony Sept. 17 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

West, or C.J. to his friends and family, was a medic assigned to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division. He died Feb. 4, 2008, of wounds suffered during combat operations in Muqdadiyah, Iraq.

Lt. Col. Noel Cardenas, commander of the 421st Multifunctional Battalion, said he wanted to highlight the collaborative effort it took to get the TMC where it is today.

"The clinic went through a \$1 million renovation just a few months ago," said Cardenas. "The clinic increased from zero fixed-treatment rooms to six and increased the emergency response and medical evacuation capacity by 100 percent."

Cardenas said staffing is a mutual effort between Soldiers from the 16th Sustainment Brigade and Task Force 1st Medical Brigade.

"The mutual efforts between our units increased the capability of this clinic," said Cardenas.

Lt. Col. Christopher Chun, the commander of the 16th Special Troops Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Com-

mand (Expeditionary), said the 16th Sust. Bde. completed renovations in six months.

"Overall, the project was a great success due to the efforts of all involved," he said.

Capt. Avery Carney, commander of the 601st Area Support Medical Company, and an Orland Hills, Ill., native, said the process to rename the clinic started in July.

"We submitted a point paper, which is a justification on who he was, and then it had to go up the chain to Multi-National Corps-Iraq and was approved in a month," said Carney. "We also had to contact his family for their blessing."

Carney said the West family gathered the same day as the dedication in honor of their son.

"We are proud that this facility is named after him," said Carney. "We are putting together a care package with a DVD of the ceremony to send to his family."

Chun said the ceremony was done well and had a positive affect on the morale of the clinic staff, especially when it was named after a medic they knew.

"It provides a sense of permanence to the clinic and reminds us all of the importance of remembering the sacrifices that our fellow Soldiers make every day," said Chun. "It was also important to the Soldier's family that they were made a part of the process."

SEE HONOR ON PAGE 3

Balad Blotter

September 18 - September 22

COUNTERFEIT US CURRENCY:

A complainant called the law enforcement desk and said the witness had approached him and asked to exchange a one hundred dollar bill, which was counterfeit. The patrol arrived on scene and made contact with the complainant and the witness. The patrol seized the counterfeit currency. The witness then said he was given the money by a subject at the Iraqi Bazaar, and he then asked to exchange it.

AGGRAVATED ASSAULT:

A complainant called the law enforcement desk and reported that subject #1 stabbed subject #2 in the head with a broken broom handle. The patrol arrived at the location and made contact with the witness. Subject #1 was apprehended and transported to the LED for further processing. Subject #2 was transported to Air Force Theater Hospital with wounds to the head and both arms by medical personnel. Subject #2 was treated and released from AFTH.

COMMUNICATING A THREAT:

A complainant called the law enforcement desk and said a subject was making verbal threats towards him and their company commander. The patrols were briefed and dispatched to the location. The complainant said he overheard the subject making threats towards him in the latrine. The complainant said when he asked the subject about it, the subject replied he was also having thoughts of harming himself and their company commander. The patrol advised the subject of his Article 31 rights, which he acknowledged. The subject requested legal counsel, and declined to make a written statement.

LARCENY OF GOVERNMENT PROPERTY:

A complainant entered the law enforcement desk and stated his helmet had been stolen. The complainant said Sept. 20 at approximately 10 a.m., he placed his interceptor vest and helmet on a table in a classroom. He left the classroom to accomplish his computer based training and when he returned at 11:40 a.m., he noticed the property was missing. The complainant said he looked through the building but could not locate the property.

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Chaplain's corner...

BY MAJ. SAUL CARDONA
13TH ESC CHAPLAIN



Before the deployment started, I heard many people saying, "I can't wait to be deployed." The pressures of an upcoming deployment were considered by many to be much greater than the pressures of the deployment itself. Indeed, this comment suggests many service members would gladly prefer to leave their lives and families behind to embark on a deployment.

Two months into our deployment, I hear people saying, "I cannot wait to be back at home." The pressures of the real deployment are many and make most of us long for the day when we will return home. For most of us, this deployment is not our first one. Obviously, deployments are an essential part of our military life and career. One

SECURITY: Mississippi Guard supplies protection

CONVOY FROM PAGE 1

"Traditionally, we are a cav. squadron," said Nipp. "Our mission is to observe and report. We find the enemy, maintain contact with the enemy and report back on the enemy. We use those skills in this mission also."

The 1/98th provides security for sustainer convoys leaving Contingency Operating Location Speicher, as well as Kellogg, Brown and Root, Inc. and third-country national convoys traveling to neighboring military installations, said Maj. Michael Dykes, the 1/98th operations officer, and a Waynesboro, Miss., native.

The unit has been in Iraq for roughly two months, and in that time has conducted more than 170 escort missions and driven an excess of 2,500 miles, said Dykes.

The often lengthy missions require extensive preparation and coordination by the Soldiers, said 1st Lt. Roger Pate, 1/98th support plans officer.

"Most missions last anywhere from 10 to 12 hours, but it takes just as much time for the guys to prep for them," said Pate. "It takes a lot out of our Soldiers, but they're doing a great job."

The mission-essential preparation includes several thorough inspections, said Sgt. Brian Nugent, 1/98th vehicle maintenance supervisor.

Soldiers perform preventive maintenance checks

and services on the vehicles, going through all the system functions and ensuring vehicles work properly before missions, said Nugent.

thought I find in common among many Soldiers is the number of deployments behind us does not make it any easier. In working with military families, I have observed an interesting fact; as Soldiers in the Army, we cannot wait to deploy and conduct our mission. Yet once we are there, we cannot wait to be back at home with our loved ones. It sounds like a contradiction and is indeed a paradox we have learned to live with.

Once again, we are challenge with the basic question: What are you looking forward to doing? The answer becomes even clearer as time passes. We are looking forward accomplishing our mission in the best possible way. We are looking forward to being back home with our love ones, with those who have sacrificed plenty. We are looking forward to going home on leave to see them for two weeks. We are looking forward to preparing and being ready to deploy again, when our nation call us to serve.

The maintenance personnel then re-inspect the vehicles to further mitigate risks, he said.

Another mission transition for the unit was learning to use Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicles, said Nugent.

The 1/98th received MRAP training prior to the deployment and gained additional technical training from the unit they replaced – making maintenance and repairs routine, said Nugent.

Once on the road, if the Soldiers spot improvised explosive devices, they take action to ensure the safety of the convoy, said Staff Sgt. Fairrah Shumpert, the 1/98th assistant convoy commander and a Tishomingo, Miss., native.

"My guys do the right thing while scanning the terrain," said Shumpert. "You are less likely to be hit if you're doing all the techniques you should be doing," he said.

Performing equipment checks and avoiding complacency while on the road is vital, said Spc. Justin Atkins, 1/98th lead-vehicle gunner.

"It's situational awareness," said Atkins. "You've got to keep your head up at all times, and try to not get your battle buddy hurt in any way."

EXPEDITIONARY TIMES

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

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155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team
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194th 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

Open door policy

By SGT. 1ST CLASS JAVIER CRUZ
13TH ESC ASSISTANT INSPECTOR GENERAL

Army Regulation 600-20 (Army Command Policy) states that commanders will establish an open door policy within their commands. The policy is a tool designed to help accomplish problem solving within the unit. The commander is responsible for ensuring Soldiers are aware of the policy. The timing, conduct, and specific procedures of the open door policy are determined by the commander. The policy allows members of the command to present facts, concerns, and problems of a personal or professional nature that they have been unable to resolve at a lower level.

We (the IG office) find that most problems confronting the Soldier can be best handled through open dialogue and communication using the existing chain of command. It is not necessary to receive approval from the first line supervisor before seeing the commander on open door matters, but Soldiers should advise their COC of their intent to do so. Be aware

that commanders above the company level are going to ask if you have seen the subordinate commander first. It is not an attempt to avoid you but rather a way to keep problem solving at the lowest level. Give the COC a chance to help solve your problem though use of the open door policy before coming to the IG.

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Adder/Tallil (287th SB/ 41 BCT):
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LTC Melanie Meier/ MAJ Jeffrey Copek
Al Asad (321st SB): DSN 440-7049
SFC Tamera Wynn

Sexual Assault Response Coordinator

Do you know your reporting options? An unrestricted report is made when a victim wants to participate in the military justice process, or when the chain of command or law enforcement becomes involved. A victim advocate is assigned, command and law enforcement are notified, and medical care is provided. Active duty victims have the option of making a restricted report. Restricted reports are kept confidential – command and law enforcement are not notified. The victim can access care and services without participating in the military justice system. Call the Joint Base Balad Sexual Assault Response Coordinator at 443-7272 or contact via pager 443-9001, 159 for help. Army members should seek assistance with their Unit Victim Advocate or Deployed SARC; Soldiers may also call 433-7272 or 443-9001, pager 122/135 for assistance.

Correction

In issue 38 of the Expeditionary Times, the "Shout Out" on page 14 should have read "To: Pvt. Bruce Cornish." The Expeditionary Times regrets this error.

Regulations you might not know...

A lesson in music etiquette

By STAFF SGT. ROBERT E. FAFOGLIA
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES EDITOR



As the editor, I rarely get the time or opportunity to write anything for the paper. Then I encountered a situation that made me think, "I'll bet I'm not the only one

who didn't know this. Someone should send out an email, or write an announcement or something." Sadly, it took way

too long for me to remember that I edit a newspaper but, when I did, I was inspired.

Recently, I was stopped in the chow hall and asked why I was out of uniform. When I told the individual that I didn't think I was, they informed me of a uniform policy I think other service members may be unaware of.

Don't worry, I'm here to help you avoid this type of situation. Because really, let's face it; no one likes getting called out in the chow hall.

I had just come from the gym and had my iPod strapped to my arm. How would I rock the P90X without blasting a little REO Speedwagon?

Nobody? Just me? "Keep on Loving You?"

Well anyway, I thought – as do a lot of other people I have since talked to – as long as I wasn't wearing my earphones, I was fine. Turns out, I was incorrect.

According to the Multi-National Force-Iraq Uniform, Wear, Appearance and Standards, under the section entitled

entertainment devices, "Earpieces/headphones/iPods/MP3 players will not be worn enroute to or from the gym."

So, there you have it. Just because your earbuds aren't in, doesn't mean you are OK. Stick it in your pocket, if you are lucky enough to have one, and save yourself the embarrassment of trying to take it off while juggling a tray full of food. I can tell you from experience, it's not fun.

Oh, and go listen to an REO Speedwagon CD.

Seriously, it's a classic.

DEDICATION: Remembering sacrifices of fellow Soldiers

HONOR FROM PAGE 1

Sgt. Patrick Lucas, team chief of the command post node, A Company, 72nd Expeditionary Signal Battalion, who is assigned to Contingency Operating Location Bernstein, Iraq, and West's best friend, attended the ceremony.

Lucas, an Arlington, Texas, native, said C.J. would have been proud of the ceremony and renaming.

"His family wanted me to be here today and I'm glad it was able to happen," said Lucas. "C.J. was a great guy. Everybody wanted to be around him and I know he is looking down and would be proud of this day."

Sgt. Jerry Jacob, a medic with the 601st Area Support Medical Company, said he and West went through basic training, advanced individual training, and Airborne school together. He suggested West's name for the facility.

"Our mission here is to serve others and help them feel better; that is exactly what kind of person C.J. was," said Jacob. "During the deployment, his picture will be right here looking over me, reminding me why I am here. It's more than just a name. It is an inspiration to do your best every day."



Sgt. Jerry Jacob, a medic with the 601st Area Support Medical Company, and Sgt. Patrick Lucas, a team chief with the command post node, A Company, 72nd Expeditionary Signal Battalion, stand in front of a mural outside the newly dedicated Cpl. Christopher J. West Troop Medical Clinic Sept. 17 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

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Mississippi Guardsmen earn thunderbolt

STORY AND PHOTO BY
CAPT. MURRAY SHUGARS
2/198TH CAB

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq — Soldiers from the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, 155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, Mississippi National Guard, received their combat patch in a ceremony at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq, Sept. 13.

“It has been a proud Army tradition since World War I to award the Soldier with this emblem of participation in combat operations,” said Lt. Col. Kerry W. Goodman, commander, 2/198th CAB, and a Meridian, Miss., native. “I am proud to present this symbol of service personally to these great Americans and to shake each hand.”

Command Sgt. Maj. Perry T. Campbell, also with the 2/198th CAB, conducted the ceremony for the Senatobia, Miss., based unit.

“Last time the 155th Brigade Combat Team deployed to Iraq in 2005, some Soldiers never formally received the combat patch,” said Campbell, a Senatobia, Miss. native. “Soldiers just started wearing it without ceremony. The patch is important and deserves an occasion, for it represents a milestone in a military career. More than that, it instills pride



Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Kerry W. Goodman, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, 155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, Mississippi Army National Guard out of Senatobia, Miss., awards a combat patch to Pfc. Charles Gabbard, of Batesville, Miss., during a ceremony at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq, Sept. 13.

and tightens the bond between Soldiers. It's a symbol of selfless service.”

The combat patch signifies wartime service, but means more to some Soldiers. To one, with less than a year in service, the patch represented a rite of passage.

“When I was in basic training and (advanced individual training), all my NCOs had combat patches,” said Pvt.

Chadwick S. Davis, an electronic warfare crew specialist, and a Grenada, Miss., native. “I wanted one since then, and I'm proud to wear the thunderbolt patch of 155th.”

For other Soldiers, the combat patch was a symbol of personal sacrifice.

“My little sister, Miracle, cries when I talk to her on the phone and keeps asking me when I'm coming home,” said

Spc. Daktaryaie D. Fox, a radio operator with the base defense operations center, and a Kosciusko, Miss., native. “She's going in 4th grade, and I always helped her with her homework. When I go home, I'm going to show her this patch on my right shoulder and explain that it shows my service. I'm going to tell her that I'm wearing it for her and my family and my friends. I'm wearing it for my country.”

287th Sustainment Brigade hands over reins to 36th

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

CAMP ADDER, Iraq — The 287th Sustainment Brigade passed control of all logistics and support operations in southern Iraq to the 36th Sustainment Brigade, in a transfer of authority ceremony Sept. 19 at Camp Adder, Iraq.

The ceremony marked the end of a year-long deployment for the 287th, a Kansas National Guard unit, and a beginning for the 36th of the Texas National Guard.

Soldiers from the two brigades, as well as members of the Iraqi Army and neighbors from local tribes surrounding Camp Adder, were in attendance as Col. Robert Schmitt, commander of the 287th, praised his Warfighters for their hard work and dedication to the mission.

“The Soldiers that have worked for us have done an awesome job,” said Schmitt.

Schmitt said the 287th played a key role in logistics and support operations in Iraq. Roughly 80 percent of the fuel that moved through Iraq during the course of their deployment came through hubs run by the 287th, and his convoys traveled more than 3 million miles, he said.

Schmitt also said his units worked closely with the Iraqi Army and the local Iraqi population, developing a working relationship the 36th could continue.

“Every Soldier in our brigade and brigade headquarters has a right to be proud,” he said.

After casing their colors and officially ending their tour, Schmitt handed off the mission to the 36th.



Command Sgt. Maj. Timothy Newton and Col. Robert Schmitt, command sergeant major and commander of the 287th Sustainment Brigade, respectively, case the colors of the 287th, signifying the end of their deployment, in a transfer of authority ceremony Sept. 19 at Camp Adder, Iraq.

“Colonel Ryan and Sergeant Major Shockley,” he said, “it's now in your hands and your fine Soldiers.”

Col. Sean Ryan, commander of the 36th Sustainment Brigade, thanked Schmitt and the 287th for their hard work. He said his Soldiers were ready to take over the mission.

“We are prepared and motivated to ‘Head ‘em up and move ‘em out,’” said Ryan, referencing the motto

of the 36th, who will work under the name Task Force Rawhide.

Brigadier Gen. Paul L. Wentz, commander of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), attended the ceremony and spoke on behalf of the 36th's readiness.

“It's a mission I know they have prepared for and are ready to assume,” said Wentz.

US forces, Iraqi leaders to repair canal system

STORY AND PHOTO BY
1ST LT. MEGHAN E. KEEFE
37TH ENG. BN.

PALIWODA, Iraq – U.S. Forces and Iraqi district canal managers are scheduled to begin assessments of the neglected canal system that nourishes the Salah Al Din province of Iraq, Sept. 18.

Commanders Lt. Col. Paul Huszar, with the 37th Engineer Battalion, Joint Task Force Eagle, based out of Fort Bragg, N.C., and Lt. Col. David Hodne, with the 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry, out of Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, are partnering with provisional reconstruction team subject matter experts and Iraqi district canal managers to begin the canal campaign. This is intended to refurbish southern Salah Al Din's preexisting canal system, which fails to adequately supply water to its people and vast agricultural land.

"The canal campaign is more than a Commander's Emergency Response Program project," said Capt. John Garcia, the 3/4 Cav. CERP project manager, and a Corpus Christi, Texas, native. "It's a plan to reinforce the Government of Iraq's priorities and laws, and to assist the farming community."

Agricultural expert Franklin Johnson, an agriculture adviser for the PRT, and a Morristown, N.J., native, advises U.S. forces, Ministry of Agriculture directors and Farmer Union representatives on programs geared toward enhancing production while improving irrigation procedures.

Johnson said he will support U.S. forces during the canal campaign by "interacting with the local direc-



One of the many canals in the Diyala province in need of repair.

tors of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministries of Water and Sewage, as well as the city councils."

Bicultural-bilingual adviser, Basil Sawa, an Iraq-born civil engineer, will advise both Iraqi and U.S. engineers throughout the canal campaign.

In the early 1970s, Sawa worked on the Is-haki project that improved the preexisting canal system throughout the Salah Al Din province.

Sawa said the project's completion was the solution to irrigation and water-flow problems.

Since then, the canal system has become less efficient. Blockages and taps along the canals, weed growth and poor maintenance were major contributors to the problem. Bomb damage sustained by improvised explosive devices also added to this complicated issue.

Hodne said he believes rebuilding the canal system will have a significant impact on civil capacity.

In his brief, Hodne outlined the overall effects of the campaign, which include growing the Iraqi partnership with U.S. forces and the PRT, as well as introducing new cost-effective technologies to Iraqi engineers.

The country's economy will also feel the change once crops begin to flourish and local labor is used to make the improvements. Once the campaign is complete, local laborers will continue to maintain the canals.

"The canal campaign is a huge step in building civil capacity in Salah Al Din," said Capt. Matthew Wagoner, commander of A Company, 37th Engineer Battalion, Joint Task Force Eagle, and a Clarksville, Tenn., native. "If we can help Iraq take a solid step in the right direction, then we have accomplished the mission."

Engineers meet to celebrate partnership bridge

STORY AND PHOTO BY
1ST LT. MEGHAN E. KEEFE
37TH ENG. BN.

TAJI, Iraq – Spirits were high and colors were bright during the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Mabey Johnson Float Bridge Sept. 21 in Taji, Iraq.

Lt. Col. Paul Huszar, commander of the 37th Engineer Battalion, Joint Task Force Eagle, out of Fort Bragg, N.C., and Iraqi Chief of Engineers Gen. Merza, joined fellow engineer officers, including Huszar's counterpart, Col. Ra'ad, commander of the 5th Iraqi Army Field Engineer Regiment, to honor and celebrate the opening of the MJFB, built through a partnership between U.S. forces and Iraqi Soldiers.

Huszar, a Seabring, Fla., native, spoke to the Iraqi engineer officers during the ceremony.

"It is an honor and a privilege to be here today and to partner with you in engineering," Huszar said. "This bridge is a symbol of the progress of our transition and the responsible drawdown of U.S. Forces."

The MJFB was built by the 50th Multi-Role Bridge Company, based out of Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., and Soldiers from the 4th, 5th and Headquarters, Iraqi Army FER. The bridge,

which crosses the Tigris River just north of Baghdad, allows freedom of mobility for both U.S. forces and Iraqi Security Forces, without them having to travel through built-up areas.

The MJFB is a non-assault logistic support bridge built to sustain movement of supplies and re-open communications. The MJFB allows for upgrades to routes that support heavy traffic and is intended for military engineering units, said Huszar.

Bridges with the same low-cost manufacturing can be found around the world in places such as Iraq, the United States, Asia and Latin America, he said.

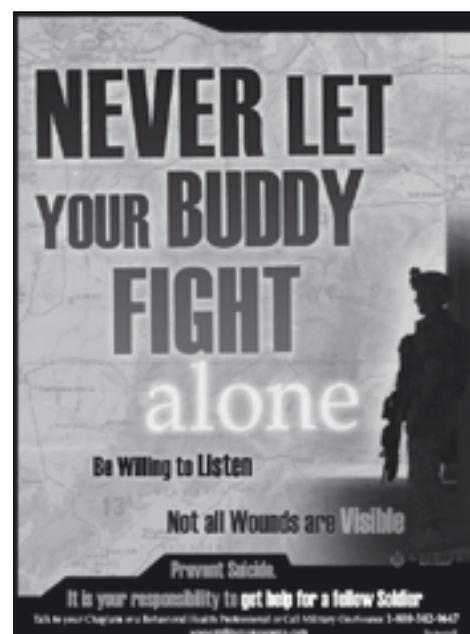
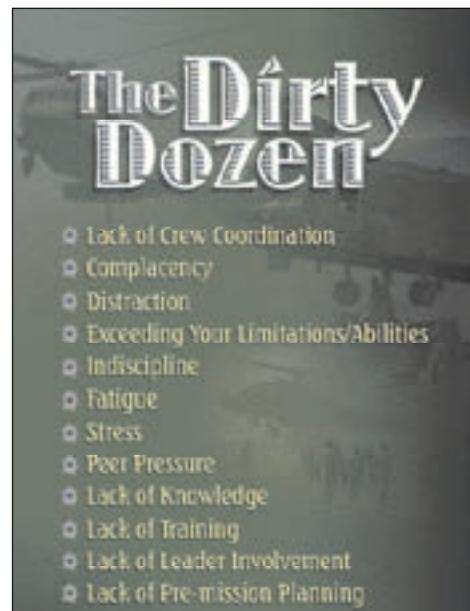
"I have been all over the world and United States Army Engineers show great promise in their ability to continue emplacing this type of bridge in future operations," said retired British Army Sgt. Maj. Alan Peterson, a field support representative who travels in-



Lt. Col. Paul Huszar prays with Iraqi Army officers, including Chief of Engineers Gen. Merza, during the ribbon cutting ceremony for the Mabey Johnson Float Bridge in Taji, Iraq, Sept. 21. Joint Task Force Eagle and Iraqi Army engineers partner in engineering operations during the transition of authority between U.S. forces and the government of Iraq.

ternationally to provide technical guidance on bridge emplacement, during a Leadership Development session for JTF Eagle engineer officers.

Once the ribbon was cut, the engineers walked from one end to the other as water from the Tigris rushed underneath them. After reviewing the bridge, Soldiers from the IA FER sang a celebratory song, praising the success of the bridge building and expressing hope for the future of U.S. forces and their Iraqi counterparts.



Senior warrant officers 'Pay It Forward'

BY SGT. RYAN TWIST
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Task Force Double Eagle's warrant officers "Pay It Forward," to the unit's junior warrant officers – adhering to the 2000 movie's concept of doing good deeds for others so they will do the same.

The Task Force Double Eagle Warrant Officer Professional Development meetings are scheduled for Sept. 24, Oct. 22 and Nov. 19 at the new Dining Facility 2 conference room from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. here at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

"(The) Warrant Officer Mentorship Association is the proactive development of each subordinate through observing, assessing, coaching, teaching, development counseling and evaluating the results in people being treated with fairness and equal opportunity," said Chief Warrant Officer 5 Arthur M. Lawler, the unit's standardization instruction pilot with the 244th Aviation Brigade (Forward), out of Fort Dix, N.J.

Lawler, a San Diego native, said the association provides tools for senior warrant officers as they mentor junior warrant officers.

"It is a group dedicated to giving both senior and junior warrant officers an opportunity to network together," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Joseph R. Aldous, Army communications and information manager with the 72nd Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), out of Mannheim, Germany.

Aldous, a Richmond, Va., native, said the program helps ensure the Army Warrant Officer Corps stays on track providing expert technical and tactical advice to leaders and their subordinates.

"This will help others by putting them in contact with other warrant officers to share knowledge, give advice and assist if needed," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Archie A. Clarke, the human resource technician with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), out of Fort Hood, Texas.

Clarke, a Cookeville, Tenn., native, said the program has helped him meet fellow warrant officers who he can go to for assistance. He said he wants to

learn as much as he can, to grow and become a better warrant officer.

Lawler said his commander offered him the opportunity to provide the mentorship program and he started it because many warrant officers are often alone in their unit. He said the association provides these officers with a common link and assistance in unfamiliar areas.

"Aviation warrants can come from high school to flight school and have little or no knowledge of the Army and the way business needs to be conducted," said Lawler. "Here is where the mentorship program comes in and provides the necessary coaching, teaching and developmental counseling for junior warrant officers' success."

Lawler said he wants the program to create a generation of warrant officers who understand how to pay it forward. He said when he joined the military 38 years ago, people older and wiser than him shared advice, just as he does now. The most important advice he received was to give back to those who follow him, to pay a good deed forward to the younger generation, he said.

"My hope, however, is that one of the younger warrants pays it forward in a bigger way by donating their time to a greater cause," said Lawler. "If this happens, then I have been successful in my military career."

Lawler said he also wants these junior warrants to mentor each other, providing knowledge, support, encouragement and guidance for individuals making the transition as warrant officers.

"It is my greatest wish that the program helps junior warrants to learn to ask other technicians and leaders for assistance and opens the lines of communication," said Aldous. "You never know who is going to be the one who has dealt with the situation you need help with."

Clarke said he also sees the benefits of the program and hopes it continues on JBB.

Lawler said the first meeting he hosted was here in August, but the mentorship program has been around for decades.

"We, as warrants, are all here together, crossing the bridges that our mentors have built for us," said Lawler. "It is now our time to venture out into the world and build our own bridges for the next generation."

13th ESC graduates equal opportunity leaders

BY SPC. NAVEED ALI SHAH
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) Equal Opportunity office held a graduation ceremony for its newest crop of EO leaders September 25 at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation east here at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

During the weeklong equal opportunity leaders course, students learned the basic knowledge necessary to provide their respective units with equal opportunity support.

In the first phase of the course, students were given an overview of the Army's EO program, said Sgt. 1st Class Johnnie Mitchell, the equal opportunity adviser for the 13th ESC and the lead instructor for the course.

"In phase two students were provided lesson plans on how to deal with individual and group values, behaviors,

attitudes, and group conflict," said Mitchell.

The third phase of the course covered aspects of discrimination in society and the military, said Mitchell.

The fourth and final phase taught students myriad topics including types of complaints, timelines, and the procedures for resolving EO issues within the unit, said Mitchell.

After graduation, EO leaders must carry out their mission within their respective units.

"Make sure everyone in the 13th ESC knows that EO violations will not be tolerated within our ranks," said Command Sgt. Maj. Mark D. Joseph, senior enlisted adviser for the Fort Hood based 13th ESC.

Mitchell said, "I challenge each of our students to be proactive in performing their duties as EO leaders."

The EO office routinely conducts EO training, as well as unit victim advocate training. For more information contact Sgt. 1st Class Johnnie Mitchell at 433-2695 or johnnie.mitchell@iraq.centcom.mil.

90th Sust. Bde., contractors keep logisticians in the fight

BY STAFF SGT. JOEL F. GIBSON
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Soldiers and civilians of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) repair and maintain several hundred of the computer systems logisticians use around Iraq and Afghanistan every month at the Combat Service Support Automation Office at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

A force of 14 personnel, split equally into civilian contractors and Soldiers from the 90th Sustainment Brigade, 13th ESC, work on Standard Army Management Information Systems used throughout theater, said Bob McDonald, a project manager with CSSAMO.

McDonald said the computers used by the military can be separated into two broad categories – those maintained by communications sections and the Department of Information Management, and STAMIS computers, used for logistics operations and maintained by CSSAMO.

"We support logistics automation, and with the responsible drawdown of forces, our workload has increased," said McDonald. "We're supporting logisticians in their mission, helping them to make the drawdown happen."

Staff Sgt. Eric Brown, the noncommissioned officer in charge of CSSAMO, said they make it possible for everyone to do their jobs.

STAMIS computer systems are used in every aspect of the supply system, from the mechanics who order parts to keep vehicles on the road, to movement control teams who track those vehicles, said Brown.

"The biggest thing to understand is that we support everybody, not just the Soldiers of the 90th," he said.

McDonald said CSSAMO clients range from the 13th ESC and subordinate units down the street, to units supporting Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

Roel Anders, an information systems analyst with the CSSAMO, and a retired noncommissioned officer from the 13th ESC, said the facility's location next to the airfield helps them complete their mission.

"People get off their plane, walk over here, get their systems worked on, and are able to get right back to wherever they came from with a fully functioning STAMIS system," said Anders.

Spc. Brian Hilliard, an information systems analyst with the CSSAMO, said communication across these computer networks must be a top priority for commanders.



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Service members volunteer to help local children

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – In October 2007, during her second deployment to Joint Base Balad, Iraq, one woman was inspired by a 7-year-old boy named Saddam who had been injured by an improvised explosive device and was brought to the Air Force Theater Hospital.

“The hospital staff took him in as one of their own,” Air Force Capt. Marci Hoffman said. “No one could find his family since he just moved from a different city, so he was in the hospital for about a month.”

“Every time I volunteered, we would play games, color or watch TV. He was such a cute kid,” said Hoffman, a Harrisburg, Pa., native.

When Saddam left the hospital, he was allowed to take with him one pillowcase full of donations, she said.

“I asked where the donations came from and how I could help,” she said.

In 2008, Hoffman founded Kids of Iraq, a nonprofit organization designed to improve the lives of Iraqi children, by fulfilling their basic needs and providing them with the means to a brighter future. The organization serves as a way to organize and store the dona-

tions that were already being made, she said.

To date, Kids of Iraq has organized more than 30 humanitarian drops and distributed more than 30,000 pounds of donations, she said.

“A lot of our drops start by U.S. troops picking up the donations, then they hand over the boxes to the Iraqi officials,” said Hoffman. “Those Iraqis then give the donations out to their own people to help establish a trusting relationship.”

Air Force Tech. Sgt. Christopher J. Burgess, an electrical systems craftsman for the 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, and the director of operations for Kids of Iraq on Joint Base Balad, organizes meetings for the program every Wednesday at 8 a.m., at the connex-



Capt. Darren P. Bemis, commander of the 521st Air Mobility Operations Group Detachment 5, helps sort out donations at the Kids of Iraq meeting Sept. 23 on Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

used to store donations near Troy's Place, behind the Maj. Troy L. Gilbert Memorial Chapel.

At the meetings, volunteers bring

donated items and sort them for distribution by units that can go to the villages, said Burgess, a Dracut, Mass., native.

Although the program has many service members who donate their time, physical items and monetary donations are lagging, said Burgess.

“The winter season is coming up, so we have been pushing for winter clothes,” he said.

The program accepts donations of clothing, school supplies, blankets, hygiene items, toys or any other useful item, said Burgess.

“Soccer balls are the big thing in Iraq,” he said. “Every kid wants a soccer ball.”

Spc. Amanda Maynard, an ammunition specialist for the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), said she plans on volunteering some of her time to the program while stationed on JBB.

Maynard, a Warren, Mich., native, said she plans to organize donations from friends and family members at home to help support the program.

Maynard said she hopes the program will make a difference in the quality of life of the local nationals.

Service members or units that want more information or to get involved with the program can visit the organization's Web site: <http://www.kidsofiraq.org> or contact Burgess at: christopher.burgess@blab.afcent.af.mil

Catchpenny supports military with concert

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. RYAN TWIST
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – For a moment, service members put their jobs on hold and enjoyed a free Catchpenny rock concert Sept. 23 at Morale, Welfare and Recreation east on Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Catchpenny was the 2009 Armed Forces Entertainer of the Year – the highest honor associated with touring for Armed Forces Entertainment.

“My hope is always that people have fun for a couple (of) hours and I don't know if we're going to change their week, but if we can change their day, that is pretty good,” said Christian Schauf, Catchpenny's lead singer. “We have always wanted to

make an impact with our music and do something positive with it.”

Christian Schauf, a Minneapolis native, said he can see a difference in the service members after the band's concerts.

“You see the looks on their faces, and for that minute they forget they were in the middle of the desert and it's 110 degrees,” said Zachary Schauf, Catchpenny's singer and keyboard musician, and Christian Schauf's brother.

Sgt. Michael Carruth, the battalion maintenance office clerk with E Company, 2nd Detachment, 106th Support Battalion, out of Collins, Miss., attached to Task Force 1st Battalion, 155th Infantry Regiment, said he was one of those Soldiers.

“The Catchpenny concert took my mind off missing my family for a couple of hours,” said Carruth. “I am thankful. It was a perfect way to take my

mind off matters here as well.”

Carruth said anything that can help service members ease their everyday stress is great.

“I loved the concert,” said Carruth. “I love music, so having a rock band perform for the troops is totally awesome. I was surprised at the fact they brought Soldiers

on stage to play music with them. They seemed to love what they were doing as well.”

Zachary Schauf, a Minneapolis native, said his grandfather served in Korea and his older brother served in Iraq in 2003. He said the military has always been a big part of his life, and



Spc. Stephen L. Bray, administrator with the 248th Area Support Medical Company out of Marietta, Ga., and Catchpenny's lead singer Christian Schauf, sing together during a free rock concert Sept. 23 at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation east at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

performing offers him a rare chance to give back.

“We feel really honored to have this opportunity to give back,” said Zachary Schauf. “It's such a sacrifice for you guys to be over here. We've got to see firsthand that it's not an easy job. We're just thankful for the

opportunity to hopefully help out for a minute, to give back a little bit.”

Christian Schauf said he has one life to live and he wants to do something entertaining and worthwhile with it.

“I always say we're the rodeo clowns,” said Christian Schauf. “We are over here, but you guys are doing all the hard work and it's really humbling to be over here and to see what people do for a year. We're appreciative of that and we support what's going on and try to do everything to do our part.”

The band has released two CDs and is working on their third.

“It was great to see a talented band perform for us here at Balad, and to speak with the members of the band before the show,” said Carruth. “I got the sense that they really believed in what they were doing for the troops. Catchpenny has gained at least one new fan.”

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699th Maintenance Company keeps Soldiers in the fight

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. KEITH S.
VANKLOMPENBERG
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Soldiers of the 699th Maintenance Company’s armament shop work around the clock to keep the weapons of the Warfighters at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, in fighting condition.

The 699th, out of Ft. Irwin, Calif., opened its armament shop two months ago to meet the needs of the units at JBB. Since then, the shop has serviced more than 3,000 weapons, said Pfc. Carl Smith, an armament repairer and a Los Angeles native.

“We work on a wide array of weapons, from the M-9 pistol to the M-107 sniper rifle,” said Smith.

He said the shop can accommodate work orders ranging from 10 or 15 weapons to an entire division’s stock.

“We’re a maintenance company, so we’re flexible Soldiers,” said Smith.

Smith said the shop provides technical inspections, gauging, depot-level repairs and modification reversal on individual and crew-served weapons, either at the shop or on location.

“If units contact us, we will

come to them,” he said. “It all depends on the customer.”

Smith said he takes great pride in repairing weapons in a combat zone.

“These weapons are coming from the battlefield, so you know you’re helping out your battle buddy,” he said.

Weapons that come back from extended missions in combat situations are often in dire need of service, said Spc. Adamel Vilaro, a fire-control repairer with the 699th, and a Waterbury, Conn., native.

“We deadline a lot of weapons because they aren’t maintained,” said Vilaro.

He said the Soldiers in the armament shop try to show the weapon users what they are doing when they service weapons, and explain the need for proper care while instructing them on basic maintenance.

“It’s your weapon to take

care of,” said Vilaro.

The 699th armament shop is located on Marne Road, west of the post office and fuel point.

For service questions or to set up an appointment, Vilaro said units should contact the 699th Maint. Co. at 318-483-1985.



Soldiers from the 699th Maintenance Company’s armament shop perform weapons inspections Sept. 23, at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Communications Soldiers clean up headquarters

BY SGT. MAJ. JOHN ROSARIO
13TH ESC

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Six years of units transitioning in and out of what is now the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) compound left it with computer, telephone and radio wires running amok.

A team of communications Soldiers – led by Maj. Lawrence Gill, the G6 information services division officer in charge with the 13th ESC, and Sgt. 1st Class Michael Tiberi, the G6 tactical communications noncommissioned officer in charge, began cleaning up the mess after the unit’s transfer of authority in August.

Gill, a Lubbock, Texas, native, laid out a plan to ensure excess wires were removed, new wires were installed, and existing wires were protected from damage. He said he developed a detailed timeline and relied on Tiberi’s leadership.

In a three week period, Tiberi coordinated two shifts of communications Soldiers, third country nationals and contractors to complete the

work, said Master Sgt. Yolanda Cook, the G6 noncommissioned officer in charge and a State Line, Miss., native.

“Sergeant 1st Class Tiberi did a great job of making the plan become a reality,” said Cook.

She said the project will continue through the beginning of next year.

“It was impressive how the mobilization training and (mission rehearsal exercise) experiences contributed to the successful planning and execution,” Cook said. “The Soldiers displayed teamwork and had the skill set necessary to complete the mission on time.”

Soldiers also had to consider, and work around, potential service interruptions, Gill said. Much of the work was completed when operations were slower, which usually meant early morning hours or during days off, he said.

Although it is difficult to distinguish between live and dead cables, the wires do not present a health hazard, Tiberi said.

Improving the compound is a priority for all the Soldiers assigned to headquarters, said Command Sgt. Maj. Mark Joseph, senior enlisted adviser with the 13th.



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Sustainers assist in the closure of Brassfield-Mora

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION BRASSFIELD-MORA, Iraq –Military installations throughout Iraq are closing and the land returned to the Iraqi government, as the drawdown of U.S. military forces and equipment continues.



Contingency Operating Location Brassfield-Mora, Iraq now in the final stages of closure, served as a staging point for food, water and other basic supplies for surrounding patrol bases.

The month-long closure process at Brassfield-Mora began mid-July. Now, the previously bustling base is more like a ghost town.

Housing units and T-walls are stacked like dominoes, staged to be loaded on flat-bed trucks and moved to other bases where they can be used.

The 264th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, out of Contingency Operating Location Speicher, Iraq, provided transportation support during the closure of Brassfield-Mora, said Sgt. 1st Class Tamisha Moore, 264th CSSB chief movement supervisor.

Moore, a Westbury, N.Y., native, said the 264th CSSB provided more than 40 flat-bed trucks from the 70th Transportation Company for the closure.

“We’ve been rolling out 40 trucks, twice a day,” said Moore. “Staging the cargo, locating (the cargo), doing the load plan and getting it loaded up and pushed out.”

First Battalion, 98th Cavalry provided convoy security and helped with the coordination of asset movements to and from Brassfield-Mora.

Once the convoys were on the road, it was the 1/98th’s responsibility to protect Army and Kellogg,



Sgt. Joshoua Kapper, 70th Transportation Company, guides vehicles onto the back of a flat bed at Contingency Operating Base Brassfield-Mora Sept. 12. COL Brassfield-Mora is in the final stages of base closure due to the drawdown of U.S. military forces.

Brown and Root, Inc. vehicles and personnel, said 1st Lt. Jason Odom, a platoon leader with the 1/98th Cav.

After all housing units, barriers and other assets are cleared from Brassfield-Mora, the land will be returned to the local populace, said Staff Sgt. Jill Buchannan, Brassfield-Mora mayor, with the 25th Infantry Division.

Items that could not be redistributed to U.S. forces will be made available to local nationals, who are allowed to sort through those items with a military escort, said Odom, a Mobile, Ala., native.

“There have been locals coming onto the (COL) getting beds, mattresses and furniture,” said Odom.

The land will be transferred to the Iraqis, who will use it as a grain silo, Moore said. This will benefit the redevelopment of Iraq’s infrastructure, she said.

As bases begin to close throughout Iraq, the drawdown becomes more of a reality than a thought.

“I’ve been hearing about base closures for a couple years, but this is the first time I’ve actually felt that we really are drawing down,” Moore said. “You can see the progress happening.”

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-Staff Sgt. Robert Young, safety NCOIC



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-Sgt. Steven Nalls



“I miss coaching Friday night football games at the local high school.”

-Master Sgt. Tony Vasquez, operations NCOIC

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Reading program brings families together

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Although deployed parents cannot tuck their children in at night, they can still read them a bedtime story. The United Through Reading program on Joint Base Balad, Iraq, offered by the

United Service Organizations here, helps service members at JBB create a video recording of themselves reading a book and send the video and book home to their family.

The program is available at the USO from 10 a.m. to midnight every day. A mobile program is also available at the Catfish Air Terminal Mondays from 4 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., and at the Air Force Theater Hospital Fridays from 3 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Jennifer Faux, a duty manager at the USO, is in charge of the program at JBB. She said it usually takes roughly two to three weeks for the recording and book to reach the child.

Any service member, stationed on or passing through JBB, may record one book per child per week, which allows multiple recordings for households with more than one child, said Faux.

Service members have also made recordings to be played in classrooms, in which they read a book and explain what life is like in Iraq, she said.

In August, the USO at JBB sent out more than 1,500 books through the program. Faux said the USO is scheduled to receive a shipment of more than 2,500 books within the week and hopes to send out even more re-

cordings and books in the next month. Books are available in English or Spanish, however, accommodations can be made for service members who need a different language, said Faux.

Creativity is encouraged, she said. Many service members dance, sing, use puppets or play instruments to individualize the program.

Sgt. Maj. Charles Wells, the distribution sergeant major for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), said he used the program at JBB twice to read to his 9-year-old daughter before his unit moved to Q-West.

“I was reading to her before I left, so this is a way for me to keep it going,” said Wells, a Pompano Beach, Fla., native.

The program helps service members strengthen the bond with their family members during deployments and helps instill an appreciation for reading in children, said Faux.

United Through Reading is not just for younger children. Chapter books such as the Harry Potter series or “Charlotte’s Web,” are available for older children, said Faux.

Wells said the program helps him stress the importance of reading to his daughter and gives her a chance to see him.

“It lets her know that I’m always thinking of her, every chance I get,” said Wells.



1st. Lt. Francis E. Criss, the liaison for the 137th Field Artillery Battalion, adjusts the camera before his reading Sept. 23 at the United Service Organizations chapter on Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Criss said he read to his 2-month-old daughter so she could hear his voice and see his face at the same time.



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JBB COMMUNITY HO

BY STAFF SGT. JEFF LOWRY
TASK FORCE 38 PUBLIC AFFAIRS

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq - Spc. Michael S. Cote Jr., 20, who died in a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter crash Sept. 19, was honored Sept. 23 in a memorial ceremony at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

The cause of the crash is under investigation

More than 600 people – Soldiers, Airmen and civilians – filled Sustainer Theater to pay their respects to Cote, a Denham Springs, La., native, who was a crew chief with A Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment, out of Fort Wainwright, Alaska. Cote's unit is assigned to Task Force 38, which conducts aviation support missions in Iraq.

During the ceremony, A Co. Soldiers spoke about their friend and comrade.

"The easiest way to describe Spc. Cote would be to compare him to Cooter from the 'Dukes of Hazard,'" said Spc. James Foster, an A Co. crew chief. "He was the crazy mechanic who was always friendly and well mannered, but always seemed to be getting his cousins out of tough situations. That's exactly what Michael did on a day-to-day basis."

Foster described Cote as an affable young man, who was the embodiment of southern hospitality.

"He made friends with everyone he met and had that deep southern accent blended with a little bit of Cajun," said Foster.

Cote's friend, Spc. Jeff Miller, said Cote was an important component to the well-being of the nearly 50-person company.

"Our company is so small," said Miller, a fellow A Co. crew chief. "It's like everyone is a piece of the puzzle that keeps us going through this deployment. Cote's piece was a big piece. He was the guy that kept everyone smiling, making us forget about the hard times we were going through."

Capt. Russ Vanderlugt, the A. Co. commander, recalled a specific instance Cote did just that.

"On my last flight with Spc. Cote, things had grown quiet during a long, boring leg over the desert," said Vanderlugt. "I said, 'Cote say something,' knowing I would get a humorous response. I was not disappointed when he reacted in his usual way, with some nonsense words and noises, and soon had the entire crew laughing."

Prior to and following the ceremony, a slide show, interspersed with video clips, showed Cote smiling and joking with friends. In full combat gear, Cote

posed like a bikini model on a helicopter pad. A video clip showed Cote trying to split a table top with his head. Both garnered laughs during an otherwise somber ceremony.

Cote's contribution to the unit during the deployment was not all fun and games, however. He logged 291 flight hours, 216 of them combat. He was a UH-60 Black Hawk mechanic who earned a Bronze Star, an Air Medal, a National Defense Service Medal, a Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, a Good Conduct Medal and an Army Service Ribbon.

"When he arrived to our company, he had little knowledge or experience," said Vanderlugt. "We trained Cote and he quickly progressed and excelled as a Black Hawk crew chief, becoming an asset to our team."

In addition to the commander's comments and fellow Soldiers' tributes, the company's first sergeant performed a last roll call, a firing party fired a 21-gun salute and a bugler played "Taps."

Following the formal end of the ceremony, service members, from the rank of general to private, filed by the fallen Soldier display, which consisted of a helmet positioned atop a rifle draped with the fallen Soldier's dog tags. All these sat above a pair of boots. All but the civilians saluted, some took a knee and prayed, and some left mementos, which will be sent to Cote's family.

Cote is survived by his wife, Ashlee Cote, and daughter, Brooke Cote.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Beth Gorenc

Patches, coins, medallions and other mementos surround the fallen Soldier display of Spc. Michael Cote, following a memorial ceremony for him Sept. 23, at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Cote, who was a crew chief with A Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment, died in a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter crash Sept. 19. The unit, out of Fort Wainwright, Alaska, conducted aviation support missions in Iraq.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Beth Gorenc

Army Spc. Jeff Miller, A Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment crew chief, salutes the fallen Soldier display of Spc. Michael Cote, following a memorial ceremony for him at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, on Wednesday, Sept. 23. Cote, who was a crew chief with the unit, died in a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter crash Sept. 19, Sept. 19. The unit is headquartered at Fort Wainwright, Alaska, and conducts aviation support missions in Iraq.

HONORS FALLEN HERO



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Jeff Lowry

Army Chief Warrant Officer Robert Fenton and Sgt. Manual Garcia, Soldiers with A Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment, stand at fellow Soldier Spc. Michael Cote's fallen Soldier display, prior to a memorial ceremony for Cote Sept. 23, at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Cote, who was a crew chief with the unit, died in a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter crash Sept. 19. The unit, out of Fort Wainwright, Alaska, conducts aviation support missions in Iraq.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Beth Gorenc

Indiana Army National Guard Col. David Wood, commander of Task Force 38, and Task Force 38 Command Sgt. Maj. John Watson leave mementos at the fallen Soldier display for Spc. Michael Cote, following a memorial ceremony for him Sept. 23, at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Cote, who was a crew chief with A Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment, out of Fort Wainwright, Alaska, died in a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter crash Sept. 19. He is survived by his wife, Ashlee Cote, and daughter, Brooke Cote.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Jeff Lowry

Army Spc. Jeff Miller, a crew chief with A Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment, grieves at the fallen Soldier display of Spc. Michael Cote following a memorial ceremony for Cote Sept. 23, at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Cote, who was a crew chief with the unit, died in a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter crash Sept. 19. The unit, out of Fort Wainwright, Alaska, conducts aviation support missions in Iraq.

NCOs reflect on deployment at ceremony

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SPC. JOHN STIMAC
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-West, Iraq – The 16th Sustainment Brigade recognized more than 150 noncommissioned officers in a ceremony Sept. 19, celebrating the Year of the NCO at the post theater in Q-West, Iraq.

Command Sgt. Maj. James E. Spencer, the senior enlisted adviser with the 16th Sustainment Brigade, said the ceremony was designed to highlight the impact deployments have on NCOs and their families.

“In early January 2009, the secretary of the Army and sergeant major of the Army dedicated 2009 as the year of the NCO,” said Spencer. “This year of dedication is for everyone to take a pause and thank the NCO corps and their families for all their contributions and personal sacrifices.”

NCOs have been celebrated for their service from Valley Forge and Gettysburg, to the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The ceremony featured a representative from each rank of the NCO Corps, speaking about what being an NCO means to them and how the current de-



Col. Martin B. Pitts, commander of the 16th Sustainment Brigade, presents a certificate of appreciation to Staff Sgt. Victor M. Sotomayor, property book office team chief, 16th Sust. Bde., and a Rio Grande, Puerto Rico, native. The Year of the NCO ceremony was held Sept. 19 to recognize the NCOs of the 16th Sust. Bde.

ployment has impacted them and their family life.

Sgt. David P. Miller, a Diamond Springs, Calif., native, with the 16th Sust. Bde.'s personal security team, said being an NCO is about accomplish-

ment of the mission and the welfare of Soldiers.

“It’s about providing Soldiers outstanding leadership, being fair and placing their needs above our own, whether it is personal time or at work,” he said.

Miller said the deployment has brought a level of stress to his family life, especially with a new child.

“You deal with the stress as you go along, but that comes with the territory,” said Miller. “It helps if you and your spouse are really dedicated to the relationship.”

Miller said just achieving the rank does not make one an NCO.

“It is a mindset,” said Miller. “If you’re an NCO, you need to succeed not only professionally but in life as well.”

Every NCO in the 16th Sust. Bde. was presented a certificate of appreciation at the ceremony.

Spencer said looking back at his deployment, he could clearly see where the brigade has left a permanent mark in the sand that will serve as a guide to its successors.

“Our NCOs have performed exceptionally well in providing world-class support to the combat forces across the corps,” he said.

While their accomplishments have been many, everyone needs to stay vigilant and finish strong, Spencer said.

“As your brigade CSM, I could not have asked for a more competent and professional group of NCOs,” said Spencer. “I am proud of our accomplishments and ask that you all stay focused so we get home safe and sound to our families.”



80th ORD BN and 102nd QM CO
Present : 10 October 2009

**The 7th 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 1ST, 2ND AND 3RD 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

Night golf event raises awareness of suicide prevention

By CAPT. MURRAY SHUGARS
2/198TH CAB

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq –

More than 40 participants and spectators gathered in the darkness at the Lone Star Golf Course to raise awareness of suicide and suicide prevention, Sept. 20 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

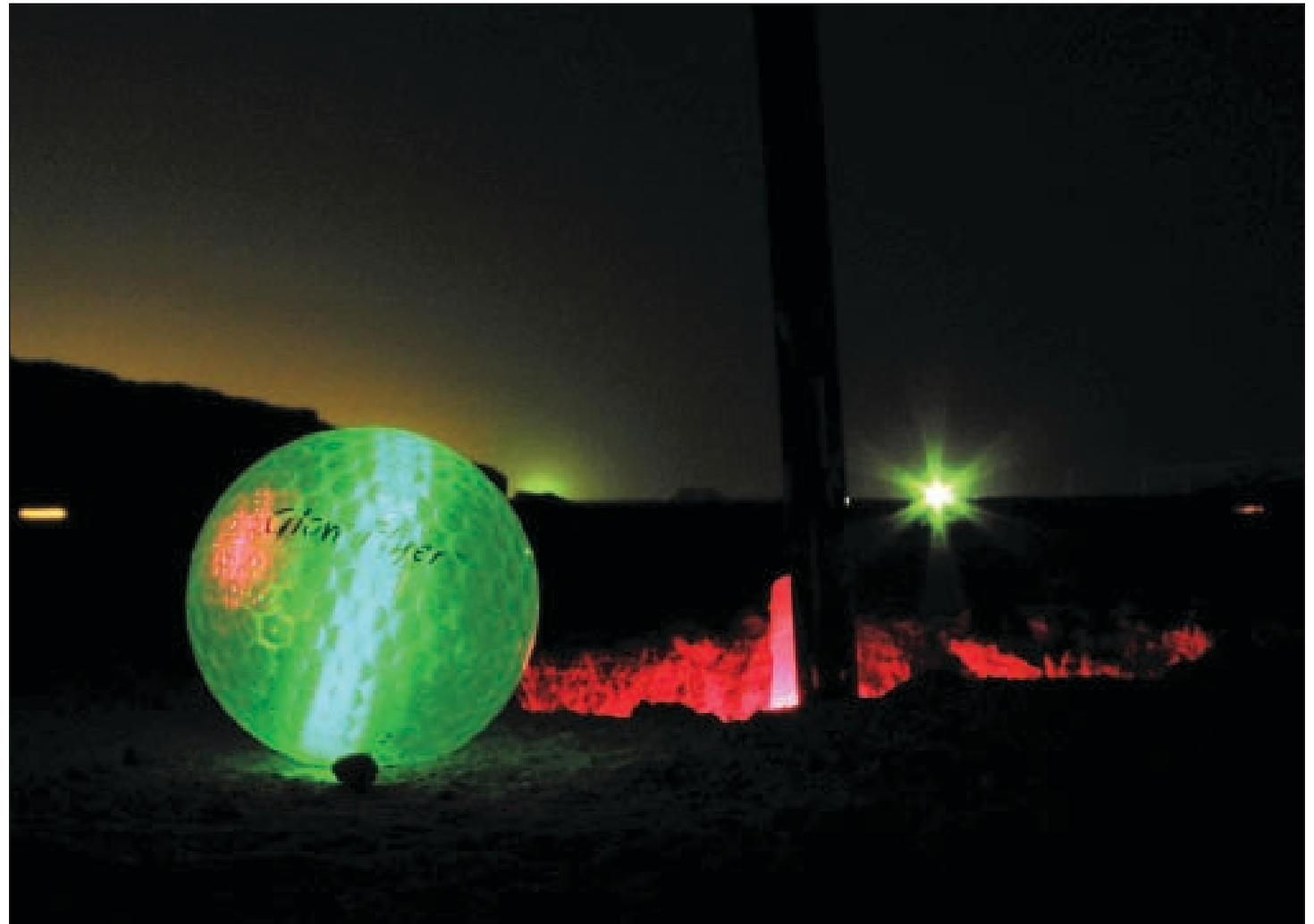
The event, a two-man, best-ball game, dubbed the Q-West Dodge Invitational Golf Tournament, was sponsored by Post Exchange New Car Sales and included glow-in-the-dark golf balls, a course lit by chemical light sticks and prizes.

This was the third in a campaign of suicide awareness and prevention events, said Maj. John B. Herd, director of Morale, Welfare and Recreation. The previous events included another golf tournament and a video game competition at the outdoor theater.

First place winners, Lt. Col. Kerry W. Goodman, commander of the 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, and Sgt. 1st Class Patrick Carr, communications noncommissioned officer in charge, also with the 2/198th CAB, and a Senatobia, Miss., native, defended the championship title they won during the previous golf tournament. For their efforts, they received trophies and Q-West Harley Davidson T-shirts.

The participants said they found the game challenging but rewarding.

"This game is tough enough when you can see the ball and where you are trying to hit it," said Capt. Dirk Waldrop, a logistics officer with the 2/198th CAB, and a Cleveland, Miss., native. "Try to hit a glowing golf ball at night wearing (night vision goggles).



U.S. Army photo by Maj. John B. Herd

A glow-in-the-dark golf ball awaits the final putt at the Lone Star Golf Course, during a night golf tournament aimed at raising awareness of suicide and suicide prevention, Sept. 20 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

That was very difficult, but a lot of fun."

Capt. Allen Legere, officer in charge of the Mayor Cell's Iraqi Business Zone, 2/198th CAB, and a Gulfport, Miss., native, said the glowing golf ball presented a challenge.

"It tested my observation skill and concentration, and I was glad just keeping the golf ball on the course and headed in the right direction," said Legere. "Still, it was a lot of fun, and I

can't wait for the next glow golf tournament."

Goodman, a Meridian, Miss., native, praised the event for its true purpose – raising suicide prevention awareness.

"We are trying to make a positive difference in the often stressful deployment experience, by using this forum to bring attention to the problem of elevated suicide rates among troops in Iraq," said Goodman. "Events like

this allow us to demonstrate new ways to build camaraderie, raise morale and reduce the conditions that can lead to stress problems."

Herd, of Florence, Miss., said the event was a success.

"People joined for good-natured competition while bringing attention to an important issue," Herd said.

The Q-West MWR team is slated to host several more golf tournaments in the coming months.

ON THE WEB

13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)

"Phantom Support"



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

Military working dogs 'out of the doghouse' at JBB

BY SENIOR AIRMAN ANDRIA J. ALLMOND
332ND AIR EXPEDITIONARY WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq — On a deployment, a multitude of distractions can make sleep challenging for service members — F-16 Fighting Falcon engines roar on the flight line and helicopter blades thunder through the air.

Seventy-pound Labrador retrievers take up half the bed.

For Air Force and Army military working dog handlers at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, the deployed environment requires not only working, but living with a canine comrade.

"Military working dogs normally stay in a kennel when not training or working," said Air Force Staff Sgt. Melinda Miller, 732nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron dog handler. "But not all deployed bases have the hardened facilities to accommodate that. So, the dogs stay in field tents or in (contained housing units). Here, the dogs stay with their handlers in their CHUs."

These German shepherds, Belgian Malinois and Labrador retrievers spend at least four hours a day working outside with their handlers. Their mission includes performing explosives and narcotics detection as well

as patrol, both in and outside the wire. They can also attack on command to protect themselves or their handlers.

The handlers said the doggie down-time also aids the joint mission.

"The time we spend with our dogs playing and relaxing really helps to build rapport," said Spc. Chris Belleville, 25th Infantry Division, specialized search dog handler. "That makes the dogs trust us

even more; therefore, they work harder for us. While we look at these dogs as Soldiers, it's important to under-



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Christopher Hubenthal
U.S. Army Spc. Chris Belleville, 25th Infantry Division dog handler, spends time with his canine, Cookie, in his living quarters at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, Aug. 28.

stand they are still dogs. They look for that attention and affection. When you have the chance to relax after work and give them that, they fall in love with you."

Belleville said certain breeds of these tail-wagging warriors lend themselves to be more skilled as MWDs.

For example, German and Dutch shepherds and Belgian Malinois are chosen for their combination of aggression, intelligence, loyalty and athleticism. Labrador retrievers are often chosen as "off-leash," specialized search dogs for their acute sense of smell and temperament.

"These dogs, especially the detection dogs' sense of smell, provide us a capability that nothing can replicate," said Tech. Sgt. Jerome Vahalik, 732nd ESFS, military working dog program manager. "They are also a means of providing a psychological deterrent like no other, stopping harm from being done to the Warfighter."

These dogs, which deploy with their handlers, also help in ways not associated with conflict.

"It's a great feeling every day," said Miller, whose MWD is a nine-year old German shepherd. "Max wakes me up every morning. It's great to always have a companion. You go out and meet friends while you're here, but nothing compares to the loyalty of your dog. They're always there for you no matter what and are great to have around — despite the chewed-up sneakers."

Aeromedical staging facility provides injured patient transport

BY SENIOR AIRMAN
ANDRIA J. ALLMOND
332ND AIR EXPEDITIONARY WING
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq — The Air Force Theater Hospital here is one of a kind, with a staff that can treat a wide variety of conditions.

But when patients need care beyond what the AFTH provides, the contingency aeromedical staging facility steps in and ships them out — fast — usually to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany.

"Our main mission is to bring patients in (from locations throughout Iraq and Afghanistan) and ensure they are stabilized, their medication is correct for flight, and their pain is under control so we can get them on planes and out to their next location," said Maj. Julianna Olson, the 332nd Expeditionary Aeromedical Squadron clinical nurse at the CASF. "It can be as quick as 'tail to tail' for some of our critically wounded — where a plane comes in from a (forward operating base), we unload them into an ambulance and move them to another plane on the runway to take off to Germany.

"The average time is 48 hours or less for our more stable patients."

Patients, both military and civilian, are brought to Joint Base Balad from contingency operating locations by one of two methods: They may come via an Air Force aircraft — if the patient can be transported to a location with a usable

runway — or by Army helicopter — which can pick up patients directly at the point of injury.

"We get contacted by nine-line (medical evacuation request) and are told where to go and pick up our guy," said Chief Warrant Officer Scott Anderson, the C Company, 7th Battalion, 158th Aviation pilot in command. "Depending on their immediate needs, we may take them to the nearest hospital for care. If they are stable enough for the flight, we bring them back (to the AFTH)."

Depending on the urgency of treatment, hospital staff ushers the patients to either the CASF or the AFTH emergency room.

At the CASF, medical professionals assess and stabilize the patients, then make them comfortable and prepare them for transfer to their next echelon of treatment. Part of the preparation includes deciding whether patients are able to withstand the altitude of flying based on their injuries.

After being cleared to fly, the CASF ensures any patient discomfort, both physical and emotional, is eased for the upcoming flight.

"An area of concern for us is patient



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Christopher Hubenthal
Medical technicians of the 332nd Expeditionary Aeromedical Squadron hand-carry a patient aboard a C-17 Globemaster to position him for takeoff Sept. 10 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. The 332nd CASF provides patient reception services, supportive care, limited contingency interventions and administrative support to patients taking aeromedical evacuation flights.

comfort," said Olson, whose home station is St. Paul Air Reserve Station in Minneapolis, Minn. "Pain can increase two to threefold on ascent and descent, so it's very important that we address pain management while we have our patients here. We also talk to the patient about this so there are no surprises when they're in the air. We explain to them the stressors to expect during the flight as well as what to expect when they get to Germany or wherever they are going."

She said the medical equipment used must also be prepared for flight as well,

since the change in pressure plays a role in the effectiveness.

When they are ready to go, CASF staff loads the patients and their gear onto their next transport vehicle. That is when they turn patient care over to the aircraft's aeromedical evacuation crew.

"We have some pretty rock star teams (here at the CASF)," said Olson. "It's like watching kind of a chaotic ballet. But, everyone knows exactly where to be, when and what to do in order to keep the patient safe, keep them comfortable and get them loaded and unloaded."

Mechanics increase convoy safety

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SPC. CORY GROGAN
41ST IBCT

AL ASAD, Iraq – Sgt. 1st Class Dennis Jewell from Banks, Ore., sat in his office at AlAsad, Iraq, Sept. 20 holding an old U joint that could

have caused a breakdown resulting in too much time with Soldiers on the road as targets.

Jewell said he is thankful the Soldiers in his motor pool are detail-oriented. Broken-down convoys four or five miles long are sitting ducks for insurgents, he said.

“There are other convoys coming behind them and you will have major traffic jams,” said Jewell. “I want to be able to bring everybody home that we came over here with.”

Soldiers from the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team in Iraq rely heavily on support elements from the brigade. Keeping vehicles in shape is critical for their convoy security missions in support of logistic movement.

Jewell is the battalion motor sergeant, in charge of operations at three motor pools.

“If we don’t get the parts in, handle the bolts, and track it all, everything will fall apart,” he said.



Spc. Erik Vandervelden, a mechanic with A Battery, 2nd Regiment, 218th Field Artillery, works on a Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle prior to changing the rear differential Sept. 20, at a motor pool in Al Asad, Iraq.

The majority of the vehicles the brigade uses are Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicles.

Sgt. George Loza, tent chief with the 41st and a Forest Grove, Ore., native, said the Soldiers who are mechanics on the civilian side have helped the unit succeed under difficult circumstances.

Loza said he is amazed at the ingenuity of the Soldiers as they stepped up to the challenge of maintaining and working on vehicles that were unfamiliar to them before the deployment.

“These new vehicles required us to do a lot of on-the-job training, but most of us are mechanically inclined so it’s

not as difficult to work with them as we anticipated,” he said.

Jewell said the mechanics’ job is about more than just vehicles.

“I tell my Soldiers that they’re not just working on vehicles, they’re protecting Soldiers,” said Jewell. “This equipment is here to save lives.”

He said the roads are rough and dusty, and with heat and extensive travel, these vehicles are working four or five times harder than the average Army vehicles. This makes their job twice as hard and twice as important.

“I couldn’t ask for a better crew,” he said. “They work hard.”

41st Soldiers receive combat patches

STORY AND PHOTO BY SPC. CORY GROGAN
41ST IBCT

AL ASAD, Iraq – Soldiers from the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, had patching ceremonies at various locations throughout Iraq this month.

They were given sunset patches that symbolize the 41st, for their service in a combat zone. They will wear the patch on the right shoulder of their uniform to distinguish them as combat veterans.

The combat patch is a tradition dating back to World

War II, for Soldiers who actively participate in, or support ground combat operations against hostile forces.

Capt. Matthew Vanderzanden, Commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 141st Brigade Support Battalion, said his company had the sunset patch ceremony at sunset to make it a memorable and proud moment for the Soldiers who carry on the brigade’s honored history.

Task Force Atlas Commander Lt. Col. Brian James, and Task Force Atlas Command Sgt. Maj. Shane Lake, put combat patches on members of the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 141st Brigade Support Battalion, at a ceremony this month in Al Asad, Iraq.



SHOUT OUT!!!

Contact the Expeditionary Times for more information.

E-mail: expeditionarytimes@iraq.centcom.mil

JBB firefighters, security forces, Airmen honor 9/11 emergency responders

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Firefighters and security forces Airmen here held a Last Alarm ceremony at the JBB Fire Station Sept. 11, honoring the first responders who died in the wreckage of the World Trade Center after the terrorist attacks Sept. 11, 2001.

"We wanted to take the opportunity to remember the firefighters and the police officers who had fallen during 9/11," said Chief Master Sgt. Todd Katz, the JBB fire chief. "Additionally, we found out that we had folks who are part of (the New York City Police Department) and (the New York City Fire Department) (deployed) here."

Two Reservists assigned to the 332nd Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron each accepted an American flag on behalf of the FDNY and the NYPD.

Both of the Airmen – Staff Sgt. Robert Roach and Tech. Sgt. Nadine Pinto – are deployed here from McGuire Air Force Base, N.J. When they are not wearing their U.S. military uniforms, Roach serves as an FDNY firefighter in Brooklyn, and Pinto serves as an evidence con-

trol officer for the NYPD.

"The Last Alarm ceremony is used to recognize fallen firefighters," said Master Sgt. Timothy Rickard, the deputy fire chief who helped organize the event. "In every fire department, the alarm, ringing of a bell or a tone starts off the alarm. When we have a fallen firefighter, we do the last alarm to signify that they aren't able to respond anymore and it was their last call."

On this day, the firefighters' respectful ritual extended to their fellow first responders.

"Firemen, police, medics – any kind of first responder – there's a connection between us all," said Senior Airman Brian Gunkel, a JBB firefighter. "And with that comes respect. We can rely on each other. It's a brotherhood."

After a chaplain's prayer, Soldiers and Airmen lowered the flag together in a retreat ceremony and then folded it while the national anthem played. Five tones then rang out, signifying the last alarm.

While Roach and Pinto stood at attention in front of the formation, Katz for-



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Nicole Enos

Staff. Sgt Robert Roach, the 332nd Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron ramp team chief, shakes hands with Chief Master Sgt. Lawrence Rettele, the 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Group superintendent, Sept. 11 during a Last Alarm ceremony at the fire station here. Roach, a Reservist deployed here from the 88th Aerial Port Squadron at McGuire Air Force Base, N.J., also serves as a firefighter for the New York City Fire Department. He was one of the first responders to the World Trade Centers after the terrorist attacks Sept. 11, 2001.

mally presented each of them with a flag, both of which had been raised and flown that day on the fire department's pole.

"It's really an honor to be here today and to accept this flag on behalf of all the innocent lives lost that day," said Pinto. "They're never forgotten – not one day goes by. We need to stay strong, stay in contact with all of those families, and never give up the fight."

**Do you
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idea?**

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'Financial readiness is mission readiness'

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION SPEICHER, Iraq – Soldiers with the 264th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, at Contingency Operating Location Speicher, Iraq, attend personal financial management classes held by the unit's chaplain here three times a week.

The comprehensive program is geared toward Soldiers both stateside and overseas, said Capt. Myron Johnson, the 264th CSSB chaplain. These classes use financial adviser David Ramsey's "Financial Peace: Military Edition."

"By the end of the course, you learn about mutual funds, mortgages and all the major financial burdens," said Johnson, a Springfield, Mo., native. Finances are an important factor for Soldiers, in both their careers and their personal lives, he said.

The 13-lesson course breaks

down personal financial management into a discipline, said Capt. Patrick Henrichs, 70th Transportation Company commander, and a Seattle native. Soldiers learn to manage money more efficiently and not waste their earnings, he said.

"It teaches them they can make it on what they get paid, that they can survive without making mountains of dough," said Henrichs.

In addition to the classes, students do homework and reading assignments to help them understand and apply what they learn in class, Johnson said. The course lessons are also on MP3s Soldiers can listen to while they are on missions, he said.

An important step learned early in the program is making a reserve fund, said Johnson. This is money set aside for emergencies, so Soldiers will always be able to pay their bills. This alone can take major stress off the Soldier and their loved ones, he said.

The course is presented in an easy to understand and practical way, said Johnson. Soldiers pick up on it quickly

and appreciate the value of the training, he said.

Henrichs said the Soldiers in the course wished they had this kind of training earlier in their military careers.

"I've seen Soldiers who finish a deployment with \$10,000 and spend it in a month, which does not benefit anybody in the long run," said Henrichs.

These classes help Soldiers manage their money, get out of debt and avoid monetary stressors. Developing proper financial management skills takes time and understanding, but offers a priceless lesson, said Johnson.

"Financial readiness is mission readiness," he said.



Capt. Myron Johnson, the 264th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion chaplain, holds "Financial Peace: Military Edition" by David Ramsey. The workbook is used by Soldiers attending the personal financial management class Johnson teaches each Monday, Wednesday and Friday at Contingency Operation Location Speicher, Iraq.

Sudoku

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

Level: Hard

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

Last week's answers

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

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. What pitcher has the most World Series victories?
2. Who is the only pitcher to win the Rookie of the Year, Cy Young and MVP?
3. Who is the only pitcher to win six Cy Young Awards?
4. What was Babe Ruth's lifetime batting average?
5. Who has allowed the most walks in their career?

1. Whitey Ford with 10 2. Don Newcombe 3. Roger Clemens 4. .342 5. Nolan Ryan with 2,795

JOINT BASE BALAD WORSHIP SERVICES

TRADITIONAL - Sunday

0200 Air Force Hospital Chapel 0930 Provider Chapel
 1030 Freedom Chapel (West side) 1100 Castle Heights (Bldg. 7562)
 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)

CONTEMPORARY - Sunday

0900 Chapel- Next Iraq/MWR East
 1030 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)
 1400 Castle Heights (Bldg. 7562) 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. 7562)

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)
 1100 Provider Chapel 1100 Air Force Hospital

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)

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

INDOOR POOL 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 Combative 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., 6 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.
EAST FIT-NESS CENTER Open Court Volleyball: Sunday- 6 p.m. Aerobics: Mon., Wed., Fri., - 5:30-6:30 a.m. Yoga Class: Mon., Fri., - 6-7 a.m. Step Aerobics: Mon., Wed., Fri., - 5:30 p.m. Conditioning Training Class: Mon., Wed., Fri., - 7:15-8 p.m. Brazilian Jui-Jitsu: Mon., Wed., Fri., - 8-9 p.m. Abs-Aerobics: Tue., Thu., 6-7	EAST RECREATION CENTER 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., 9 p.m. Tue., Thu., - 5:45 a.m., 9 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Club: Wednesday 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.	H6 FITNESS CENTER 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. 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.	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. 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.	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. 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.	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. 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.	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. 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.

UPCOMING SPORTS ON AFN



Wednesday 9/30/09

Minnesota Twins @ Detroit Tigers, Live 2 a.m. AFN/xtra
 Milwaukee Brewers @ Colorado Rockies, Live 3:30 a.m. AFN/sports
 Los Angeles Dodgers @ San Diego Padres, Live 5 a.m. AFN/xtra

Thursday 10/01/09

Wednesday Night Baseball: Teams TBD, Live 2 a.m. AFN/sports
 MLB TBD, Live 2 a.m. AFN/xtra
 MLB TBD, Live 5 a.m. AFN/xtra
 College Football Primetime: Hawaii @ Louisiana Tech, Tape Delayed 10 a.m. AFN/sports
 Minnesota Twins @ Detroit Tigers, Live 8 p.m. AFN/sports

Friday 10/02/09

NHL Opening Night on Versus: Washington Capitals @ Boston Bruins, Live 2 a.m. AFN/xtra
 ESPN College Football: Colorado @ West Virginia, Live 2:30 a.m. AFN/sports
 NHL Opening Night on Versus: San Jose Sharks @ Colorado Avalanche, Live 5 a.m. AFN/xtra

Saturday 10/03/09

ESPN2 College Football Primetime: Pittsburgh @ Louisville, Live 3 a.m. AFN/prime pacific
 MWC Football: Utah State @ BYU, Live 2 p.m. AFN/sports
 College Football TBD, Live 7 p.m. AFN/xtra
 College Football TBD, Live 7 p.m. AFN/sports
 College Football TBD, Live 7 p.m. AFN/prime atlantic

Sunday 10/04/09

College Football TBD, Live 2 p.m. AFN/xtra
 College Football TBD, Live 2:45 p.m. AFN/prime atlantic
 College Football TBD, Live 3 p.m. AFN/sports
 NASCAR Nationwide Series: Kansas 300 (Kansas Speedway, Kansas City, KS), Tape Delayed 1 p.m. AFN/xtra
 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series: TBD (Kansas Speedway, Kansas City, KS) Live 9 p.m. AFN/xtra

Monday 10/05/09

NHRA Full Throttle Drag Racing Series: O'Reilly NHRA Mid-South Nationals (Memphis, TN), Live 2 a.m. AFN/xtra
 Sunday Night Football: San Diego Chargers @ Pittsburgh Steelers, Live 3:15 a.m. AFN/sports
 2009 WNBA Finals - Game 3: Teams TBD, Tape Delayed 10:30 a.m. AFN/sports

Tuesday 10/06/09

NHL on VERSUS: New York Rangers @ New Jersey Devils, Live 2 a.m. AFN/xtra
 Monday Night Football: Green Bay Packers @ Minnesota Vikings, Live 3:30 a.m. AFN/sports

Arts & Entertainment

'Sunshine Cleaning' finds joy in dire circumstances

BY SGT. JAYSON A. HOFFMAN
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



"Sunshine Cleaning" is a film full of tragic circumstances that always feels like it's on the verge of triumphant joy. The film is a little short for all the drama involved but, in the end, the pieces click and the cheerful ending makes this dramedy worthwhile.

Rose Lorkowski (Amy Adams) is a single mom who works as a maid, and is having an affair with her married high-school sweetheart. She wants a better life for her and her son, and with the help of her slacker, sarcastic sister Norah (Emily Blunt), and her optimistically dopey, salesman father (Alan Arkin), she attempts to start a business as a criminal investigation clean-up crew. They clean houses where homicides and suicides have occurred, a job made all the more

macabre once the audience finds out Rose and Norah discovered their mother's dead body when they were children. Through all this, the family learns to bond and risk everything for one another.

This film was a lot heavier than audiences may expect from the producers of "Little Miss Sunshine," but they do share similar themes. The film touches on topics such as struggling single mothers, lower-class issues, suicide and murder and adulterous affairs, but it does so with a real-life sense of humor. Its subtle humor makes the dire situations feel all the more real.

The story is solid, but filmmakers should have stretched it out a little more. There was a lot to this film, yet it only runs 91 minutes, making the story feel rushed in the end.

Adams, Blunt and Arkin are the high note in this film. They make you feel their everyday conflicts. Adams makes the audience sympathize with a woman who longs for a life with love instead of an adulterous

affair. She struggles everyday to be a confident, successful mother.

Blunt is truly the most scarred from the death of their mother. Cleaning up after grisly deaths takes its toll on her and she begins to care deeply about the families of the victims they clean up after. Adam's and Blunt's characters thrive off each other's strengths.

Arkin keeps the wheels turning on this film as a run-of-the-mill salesman who sells cans of popcorn and shrimp fresh off the truck. He gives the movie its lighthearted touch, but the audience sees that he's also vulnerable in a scene with Adams. In the end, he makes his biggest sales pitch in order to save Rose's dreams.

The movie, like the name of Rose's company, Sunshine Cleaning, is made to show audiences the lighter side of life, even when times are rough. If you like "Little Miss Sunshine" then you'll probably like this dark film about finding the joys in life.

Arctic Monkeys: 'Humbug.' That's what I said ... at first

BY SGT. KEITH S. VAN KLOMPENBERG
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



I sat down fully intent on writing a bland review about a bland album, but I decided to give "Humbug" one last listen while I typed, and now I'm not so sure. I'm very frustrated.

Let me preface this review by saying I am not a diehard Arctic Monkeys fan. I own both previous releases and while I like them, I don't listen to them often, save for a couple of great songs.

If you aren't familiar with the band, you probably should be. They are a

British alternative rock band whose debut album, "Whatever People Say I Am, That's What I'm Not," became the fastest selling debut album in British history, beating out The Beatles and Oasis. That's a pretty big deal.

The first album was fantastic and left people wondering what to expect from the second. I personally wasn't expecting anything great, but then again I'm a skeptic. To my surprise, "Favourite Worst Nightmare" was pretty good, and contained one of the catchiest songs I have ever heard: "Fluorescent Adolescent." That song alone was reason for me to give "Humbug" a chance when I spotted it at the post exchange two weeks ago.

After the first listen, I regretted the purchase. The songs are pretty boring. There's nothing fast or exciting like on past albums. It just isn't fun. It's much darker than I expected and I was almost immediately annoyed by the amount of effects stacked on the vocals. It's a bit overboard.

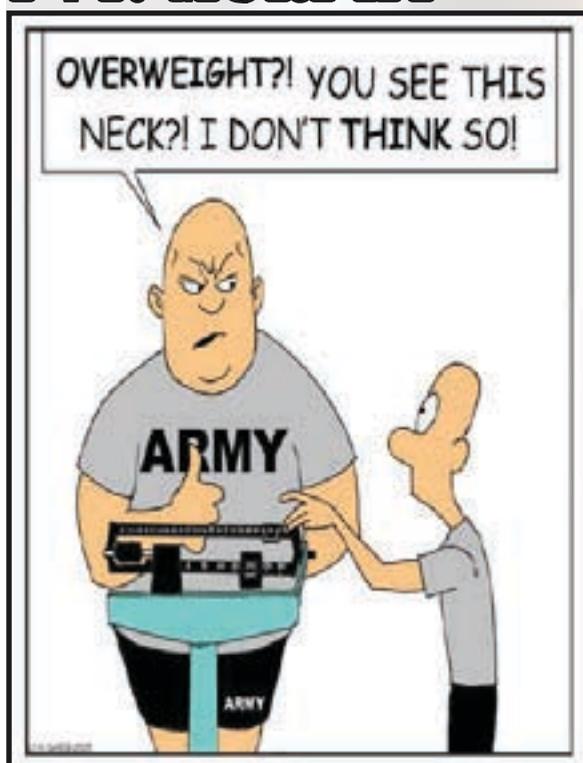
Now, after several listens, the album is growing on me. I really like Alex Turner's voice, and he's a great songwriter, though my favorite lyrics from songs on "Humbug" can't be printed here. I have found myself on more than one occasion singing "D-A-N-G-E-R-O-U-S" from the song "Dangerous Animals." It isn't that the songs aren't good or catchy, I wanted something more fun and faster.

Track nine, "Pretty Visitors," comes the closest to the sound I was looking for.

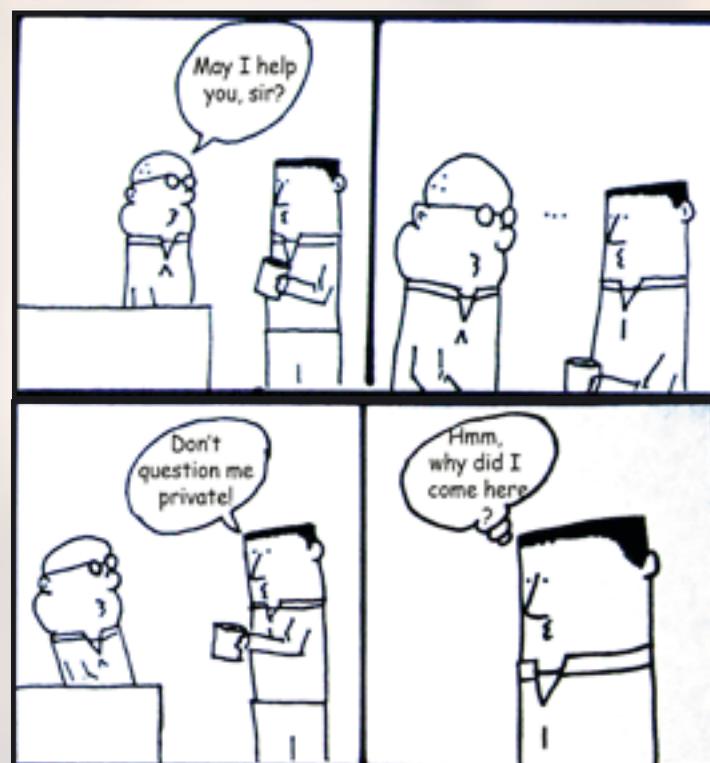
Standout tracks are "Crying Lightning," "Dangerous Animals" and "Pretty Visitors." I can't pick out a single bad song, and that's what frustrates me the most. It's not bad at all, it's just not what I wanted.

Pick up the album if you like Oasis or The Smiths. If this is your first foray into Arctic Monkeys territory, I suggest you give the first two albums a try, specifically the songs "I Bet You Look Good On the Dance Floor" and "Fluorescent Adolescent." Those two songs are nothing like this album, but, in my opinion, they are the best examples of the band's strengths.

PVT. MURPHY



OFFICER SPACE



Sustainer Reel Time Theater

Wednesday, Sept. 30

5 p.m. G.I. Joe
8 p.m. The Hurt Locker

Thursday, Oct. 1

5 p.m. The Hurt Locker
8 p.m. A Perfect Getaway

Friday, Oct. 2

2 p.m. The Time Traveler's Wife
5 p.m. Jennifer's Body
8:30 p.m. Jennifer's Body

Saturday, Oct. 3

2 p.m. The Goods
5 p.m. Jennifer's Body
8 p.m. Post Grad

Sunday, Oct. 4

2 p.m. Jennifer's Body
5 p.m. The Time Traveler's Wife
8 p.m. The Goods

Monday, Oct. 5

5 p.m. Post Grad
7 p.m. Jennifer's Body

Tuesday, Oct. 6

5 p.m. Jennifer's Body
8 p.m. The Time Traveler's Wife

Wednesday, Oct. 7

5 p.m. The Goods
8 p.m. Post Grad



PHOTOS AROUND IRAQ



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

U.S. Army Col. David Crudo, Chief of the Ambulatory Care Clinic, 47th Combat Support Hospital, 1st Medical Brigade, Multi-National Corps - Iraq, listens to the heart of an Iraqi boy before he is seen by a pediatric cardiologist in an effort to diagnose a suspected congenital heart problem, in order to determine candidacy for surgery, on Contingency Operating Location Speicher, Iraq, Sept. 17.



U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Ali Hargis

An Iraqi family receives a water purifier from an Iraqi soldier in Sheik Hamad Village, near Tarmiyah, Iraq, Sept. 16. The operation, with U.S. Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, included providing hundreds of water purifiers to people in the community.



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Kamaile Chan

U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class James Halterman, from Beaverdam, Va., assigned to the Ninewa Provincial Police Transition Team (NP-PTT), 3rd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, discusses target training with an Iraqi Policeman at a compound in the Wadi Hajar neighborhood of Mosul, Iraq, Sept. 9.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Samantha R. Ciaramitaro

U.S. Army 1st Lt. Christian McGinnis from Des Moines, Iowa, attached to the 1314th Civil Affairs Company, 17th Fires Brigade, talks with local residents about the threats to their town in North Hyyaniyah, Iraq, Sept. 8. Combined patrols with Iraqi Police to the district are part of an ongoing operation to secure Basra.



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Kim Smith

Iraqi construction men apply cement to the wall as members of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers check the progress of a 12-room primary school being built near Al Basri, Iraq, Sept. 8. More than 360 children will attend the new school.

NEWS AROUND IRAQ

Baghdad River Patrol Training Center holds joint graduation

BAGHDAD – The Baghdad River Patrol Training Center conducted a joint graduation for 18 waterborne operations and nine search-and-recovery dive students here Sept. 16.

Demonstrations by the instructors and students at the graduation included a waterborne boat stop and apprehension of a fleeing suspect, a lift-bag recovery of a sunken boat, and a swift water rescue of a drowning victim.

Students from Babil, Baghdad, Diyala, Najaf, Dhi Qar, and Ninawa provinces were represented in this joint graduation. Each student will return to his respective province better trained and equipped to assist with the security of Iraq's waterways.

The Waterborne Operations Course, which began Aug. 10, emphasizes river patrol skills, beginning with basic theories on police boat operations and progressing to students demonstrating capabilities to perform multiple complex job functions associated with river patrol operations. These job functions include everything from manning of weapons platforms, observer functions, and boat operator skills. The course culminated with each student demonstrating his proficiency at operating a police patrol boat, performing various maneuvers, and demonstrating mastery of watercraft techniques.

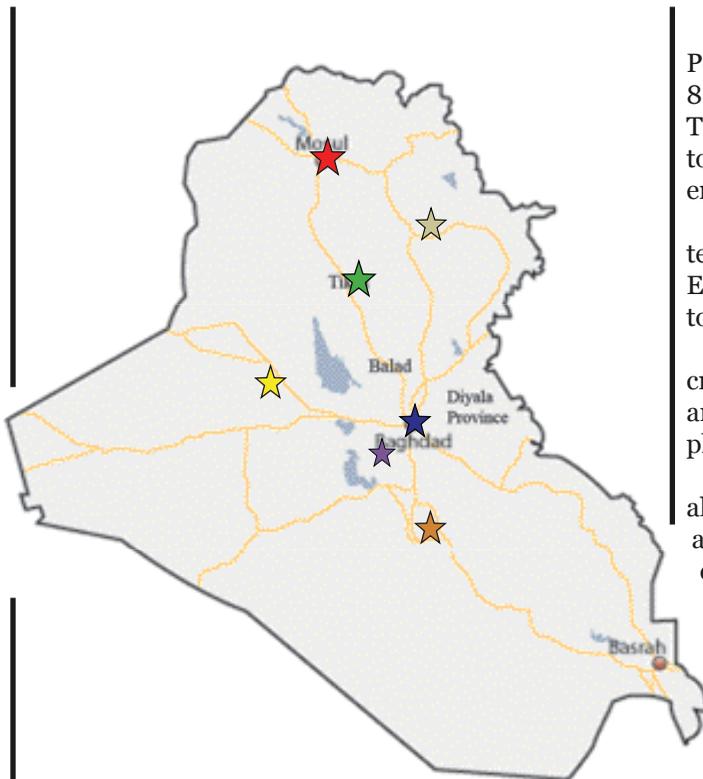
The Search and Recovery Diver Course started June 22. It begins with basic level SCUBA training, and progresses to advanced level search and recovery training, based upon an internationally recognized training curriculum. Basic skills are taught in a pool environment; students progress to a lake environment, and conduct their final search pattern training in the Tigris River. The aggressive course plan enables students with minimal experience to dive in conditions that would challenge even the most experienced divers – extremely limited underwater visibility and swift currents.

Camp Bucca detention facility shuts down

CAMP VICTORY, Iraq – As the last detainee boarded a plane destined for another theater internment facility on Sept. 17, the detainee operations mission at Camp Bucca officially ended.

An Air Force C-17 carrying the last group of 180 detainees lifted off from the Basra airport headed to Camp Cropper at 3:22 a.m.

“As a result of the great working relationship between the Government of Iraq and Task Force 134, I'm pleased to say the Camp Bucca detention facility is now closed,” said Brig. Gen. David Quantock, Joint Task Force 134's commanding general. “We've been working hand in hand with the Government of Iraq



to coordinate our detainee releases and transfers in accordance with the Security Agreement, and that teamwork has allowed us to close the Bucca TIF.”

Task Force 134 has been focused on safe and orderly releases and transfers in accordance with the Security Agreement, which took effect on Jan. 1. The agreement, signed in November 2008, states that detainee transfers between Coalition Forces and the Government of Iraq must be conducted with arrest warrants or detention orders. If detainees do not have arrest warrants or detention orders, they must be released.

The Camp Bucca TIF closure leaves only two U.S.-run detention facilities in Iraq – Camp Taji, which is 16 miles north of Baghdad, and Camp Cropper near the Baghdad International Airport. Detainees held at Camp Bucca, but not yet released or transferred to the Government of Iraq, have been moved to one of the two remaining facilities.

Since February, Task Force 134 has released an average of about 750 detainees from its detention facilities each month. In addition, an average of nearly 200 transfers to the Government of Iraq were completed per month.

As of the Camp Bucca TIF closure, there are a total of 8,305 detainees remaining in Coalition custody. This year, 1,360 detainees have been transferred to the Government of Iraq with a valid warrant, detention order, or conviction of a terrorist act by the Central Criminal Court of Iraq. Since the Security Agreement went into effect Jan. 1, 5,703 detainees have been released.

Iraqi Security Forces, U.S. Soldiers conduct clearing operation

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION, WARRIOR KIRKUK, Iraq – Iraqi Security Forces assisted by U.S. Soldiers detained 54 suspects during a combined clearing operation in Kirkuk, Iraq, Sept. 6.

The Kirkuk Emergency Services Unit and Iraqi Police with assistance from Soldiers of 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, set out just before sunrise to conduct a cordon and search operation in the Nasser neighborhood of the Aruba district in Kirkuk City.

According to Capt. Gene Palka, commander of Battery A, 3rd Bn., 82nd FA, the mission involved 400 ESU members, IP from the Aruba district, and a platoon of his Soldiers.

“The mission was intended to look for terrorist or criminal suspects, weapons caches, illegal vehicles, and any other targets of opportunity,” Palka explained.

Palka also said these large-scale search operations allow security forces to locate not just illegal weapons and criminals, but also vehicles which may be used as car bombs.

“The [Iraqi] ESU are keeping the pressure on [terrorists and criminals] and are only one of the units in Iraq conducting large-scale clearing operations after June 30 withdrawal of U.S. troops from major Iraqi cities,” Palka said.

The 54 suspects were detained for various infractions.

Brig. Gen. Khataub, the Kirkuk ESU commander, and Col. Sherzad, the Aruba District IP chief, were also involved during the mission.

“The 54 individuals taken into custody for further questioning for suspicion of improper identification, illegally residing on government land, stealing electricity from the city, and illegally taking water from the city,” said Sherzad.

The suspects were transported to the Aruba IP station, where they were questioned further and their information checked against a database to see if they had prior convictions.

“The mission was a tremendous success as the ESU were able to display their competence as the premier security force in Kirkuk and highlight the continued partnership with the Kirkuk IP, and U.S. forces,” said Palka.

This was the third combined cordon and search operation by the ESU and U.S. forces in the past two weeks; and according to Palka, it shows the ESU and other Iraqi Security Forces have the ability and authority to make periodic searches anywhere in the city to maintain civil order and security.

Celebrating partnership: Army hosts Ramadan dinner

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq – In celebration of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, hosted a special dinner at Forward Operating Base Warrior, Kirkuk, Iraq, Sept. 15, breaking the fast for the day and allowing U.S. and Iraqi partners to talk and enjoy a meal together.

“This dinner took away tension and helped people feel comfortable with each other,” said Maj. Gen. Abdul Al-Ameer, the commander of the 12th Iraqi Army

Division, which operates in Kirkuk province.

The Iftar dinner -- which translates to "breaking the fast" -- is celebrated during the month of Ramadan after participating Muslims refrain from eating, drinking, smoking, and various other activities from sunrise to sunset. Ramadan begins during the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, starting the day after the sighting of a new moon and ending the day after the next month's sighting of the new moon.

"I was surprised to see the [U.S.] Army hosting this event," said 1st Lt. Ahmed Ismail, a Northern Oil policeman working as a liaison officer with 2nd BCT. "It was very nice."

Members of the Iraqi Security Forces attended with government, political and tribal leaders, according to Ahmed.

Guests included Maj. Gen. Jamal Bakr, the Kirkuk provincial police chief, Maj. Gen. Abdul Al-Ameer, Brig. Gen. Sami Amin Othman, the Northern Oil Police commander, members of the Kurdish intelligence organization, and several provincial council members representing Kurds, Turkomen and Arabs.

"It was a very good opportunity to meet everyone," said Ameer.

The majority of the guests were seated at a large, round table in the center of the room, offering them the opportunity to talk to those around them. The food was purchased from the local community, allowing the Iraqis and Soldiers to enjoy a more traditional meal.

"We wanted to show our appreciation for our partners," said Lt. Col. Hugh McNeely, the deputy commanding officer of 2nd BCT. "Show [them] that we recognize the season of Ramadan in a way that is acceptable in their faith."

Following the meal, guests were given a chance to talk and exchange contact information.

"The significance of Iftar meals are that they allow people to get to know one another as people and not just as someone with a different viewpoint," said McNeely.

"Arab tribal leaders were hugging Kurdish leaders, and people really seemed to be getting along," Ahmed said.

"Ramadan or not, I wish we were always able to meet with each other," said Ameer.

"Hopefully anytime a new unit comes, we can all sit down like this and talk together like one family, one Iraq," said Ahmed. "If we work altogether, there will be no place for terrorists."

Iraqi Emergency Response Units vital to inner-city security

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION WAR-
RIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq – In an effort to curtail complacency and encourage community policing, Iraqi Emergency Response Units, assisted by U.S. Soldiers, conducted checkpoint inspections Sept. 9 throughout the city of Kirkuk, Iraq.

Capt. Bradley Hardy, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, whose unit participated in the inspections, said the ERU are intended to be first responders to any crisis in Kirkuk.

"These checkpoints are called upon regularly to assist in significant activities ranging from regular street crime to a cordon around a car bomb," Hardy said. "Maintaining vigilant checkpoints is critical to the security the Iraqis can provide for themselves."

With at least 37 identified ERU checkpoints throughout Kirkuk along important roads and in populated ar-

eas, the inspections take time.

"I will direct a set number, usually around eight [checkpoints] each mission for the tasked platoon to inspect," Hardy said.

The evening's mission involved inspections of seven ERU checkpoints around the city.

"Our main responsibility [during inspections] is to ensure the Iraqi Police were alert, and at all the checkpoints," said 2nd Lt. Jaciel Guillermo, a platoon leader with the 3rd Bn., 82nd FA, who was on the mission.

Guillermo also said another purpose of the inspections was to ensure the Iraqi Police understood checkpoint procedures.

"We check to see if the IPs are practicing their standard operating procedures for allowing vehicles to pass," Guillermo said.

Hardy has produced a DVD training video starring ERU personnel in an effort to leave a sustainable source of training that will outlast his unit's deployment.

"My battery works daily to train and advise ERU in skills such as vehicle maintenance, first aid, checkpoint duties, and improvised-explosive device recognition and defeat," Hardy said. "Our philosophy is to teach these guys to fish instead of giving them just enough fish to last until our replacing unit gets here."

Federal police continue refining tactics and procedures

MOSUL, Iraq – Iraqi Federal Police have continued to refine and improve their tactical procedures months after the withdrawal of U.S. combat forces from Mosul. In operations throughout west Mosul, the Mosul Brigade of the 3rd Federal Police Division has been incorporating and refining new tactics into their operations.

In an operation Sept. 17, the Mosul Bde. conducted a cordon-and-search operation in the Al Rissala neighborhood of west Mosul. During this operation, the Mosul Bde. established a tactical command post to assist in command and control of the operation.

"This is the best I have seen," said Maj. Darren King, operations officer for the Mosul Bde. Transition Team, about the level of sophistication that the Mosul Bde. had put into their tactical command post.

Brig. Gen. Jawad, operations officer for Mosul Bde., walked King through the layout of their tactical command post set up earlier that morning. Jawad showed him the maps and communications equipment and how they were using them to help conduct their mission.

With its team of U.S. advisors, the Mosul Bde. realized the value in operating tactical command posts like the one used in the cordon-and-search operation of the 17th.

This operation ran much smoother than previous operations because of the assets and training implemented in the tactical command posts, said Jawad.

With a tactical command post, the Mosul Bde. has a central site to brief incoming commanders on the current situation, a place to house insurgents detained in the operation, and a command and control node from which they can allocate units for the operations.

Improving the Federal Police tactical command post operation is something the transition team has been working on since April, stated King. He added the Mosul Bde. is making marked improvements in every aspect of their operations.

According to King, Mosul Bde. is increasingly using maps and radio communications to coordinate with subordinate units across the city, and sharing valuable intelligence with other Federal Police units. Communication and intelligence are areas the Mosul Bde. has emphasized since U.S. forces pulled out of

the city June 30. King said these capabilities help increase the success rate of their operations.

Operations, like the cordon-and-search in Al Rissala, provide the Mosul Bde. an opportunity to continue to refine their operations in order to improve security for the citizens of Mosul.

"We will get even better in future missions," said Jawad. "We are constantly getting better."

Provincial leaders, top US leaders in MND-N discuss Ninawa's future

MOSUL, Iraq – Key U.S. and State Department leaders in northern Iraq met with Ninawa province political leadership Sept. 9, to discuss current and future reconstruction efforts and civil capacity operations in the region.

Brig. Gen. Robert Brown, deputy commanding general of support for Multi -National Division-North; Patrick Murphy, director of Ninawa Provincial Reconstruction Team; and Col. Gregory Maxton, deputy commander for 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, sat down with Ninawa provincial Governor Atheel al-Najafi, and his director generals, to discuss water, trash, sewer and economic projects that will significantly impact the population throughout the province.

Najafi's opening comments touched on topics of economics and operations on the Iraqi Syrian border.

"We have been focused on direct services to the people of Ninawa," said Najafi. "We need to start looking at economic projects that will bring trade into Ninawa."

Najafi said he would like to focus on main roadways between villages and the major cities to encourage more trade and economic reinforcement. He said he would also like to focus more on a partnered effort at the point of entry on the border between Iraq and Syria, in order to streamline and simplify the entry process for product transport businesses. He said he hopes this will also simplify trade between Iraq and its bordering neighbors.

After the governor's opening statements, Murphy began a discussion with the group about ongoing water projects. One topic that came from this discussion was the ability to distribute water to rural areas via water trucks versus funding a project to install a centralized water distribution system.

All parties agreed water studies needed to be conducted in each of the rural areas to decide which solution would best fit the communities' needs. Once complete, the provincial government would work with U.S. forces and the PRT to determine the best solution and funding for the projects.

"We will continue to conduct these studies," said Maxton. "Then we will work through the PRT and director generals to develop long-term solutions for each of these projects."

Maxton said all waste management projects are now complete and trash collection projects are no longer needed.

Murphy went on to address which projects submitted by the director generals would be approved for funding. A total of 87 projects were approved and proposed to start within the coming months.

Najafi emphasized communication and cooperation between the local government, U.S. forces and the PRT was essential to the long-term success of Iraq. He expressed his appreciation for the ability of this group to come together and work to accomplish so much for his province and his country.

Phantom Support



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Edward J. Monell

Tenth Sustainment Brigade Commander, Col. Mark Drake, from St. Paul, Minn., and Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 10th Sustainment Brigade Troops Battalion Commander, Capt. Emily Rentschler, from Durham, N.H., lead from the front and take aim down Mulhair Range Sept. 5.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Rex Tran

Sgt. Franklin, a Vancouver, Wash., native, and with the 1161st Transportation Co., 419th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, completes the run portion of the triathlon. Although the event was based on competition, the triathlon brought all the Soldiers within the 419th CSSB together one last time before the headquarters company redeploys.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Tuana Harrison

Spc. Eduardo Castellanos of Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 260th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, and a San Salvador, El Salvador, native, passes out mail as the battalion mail orderly clerk.



U.S. Army photo by 2nd Lt. Rylie J. Eustice

Sgt. Mary Christine Thomas (right) with the Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 419th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, and a Hayward, Calif., native, receives an Army Commendation Medal for her performance during her tour in Iraq from Lt. Col. Kristan Hericks, an Irvine, Calif., native, the 419th CSSB commander.



U.S. Army photo by 2nd Lt. Rylie J. Eustice

Staff Sgt. William Philpott the noncommissioned officer in charge for the service and recovery section of 1st Maintenance Co., 260th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, and a Mitchell, Ind., native, works underneath a vehicle.

Spc. Zachary Carter (left) of Rockledge, Fla., and Pfc. Joseph King, of Las Vegas, both fire control systems repair specialists from the armament section of 1st Maintenance Company, 260th Combat Service Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, are setting up operations for the Combined Support Functions Modular on the General Purpose Interface Assembly for the Direct Support Electrical System Test Set.



U.S. Army photo by 2nd Lt. Rylie J. Eustice