

# EXPEDITIONARY TIMES

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Vol. 2 Issue 41

## Staying sharp



Emergency training keeps medics at top of their game

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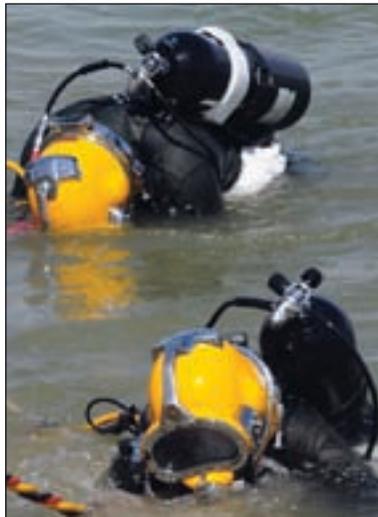
## Taking off



Oregon Guard Soldiers provide theater-wide medical evacuations

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## Deep diving



Army divers work to make new bridge possible in Iraq

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# Wagonmasters take command of MND-North sustainment mission



Col. Larry Phelps, 15th Sustainment Brigade commander, watches as Soldiers raise the Wagonmaster flag in front of the brigade's headquarters Oct. 5 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq, after a transfer of authority ceremony with the 16th Sustainment Brigade.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
SGT. MATTHEW C. COOLEY  
15TH SUST. BDE.  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS



CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq – The 15th Sustainment Brigade Wagonmasters took command of the Multinational Division-North sustainment mission from the 16th Sustainment Brigade, in a transfer of authority ceremony at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation building Oct. 5 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

The Fort Hood-based unit's new area of responsibility spans from the Turkish border at Habur Gate to northern Baghdad, an area roughly the size of Pennsylvania.

"During the course of the deployment in MND-N, (the 16th) planned and executed over 6,000 convoy logistical patrols, driving over 6 million miles delivering supplies to the Warfighter," said Col. Martin Pitts, 16th Sust. Bde. commander. "We issued out over 6 million gallons of fuel, 4.5 million bottles of drinking water and delivered 23 thousand tons of subsistence. We handled over  
**SEE TOA ON PAGE 4**

# Operation Back to School brings Soldiers, Iraqi Army, children together

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
SPC. JOHN STIMAC  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

NUBAI, Iraq – A combined effort between Soldiers, Airmen and the Iraqi Army at Camp Taji, Iraq, brought much-needed school supplies to young Iraqi school children Oct. 7 at Al Abar Primary School – the first in a string of

humanitarian efforts called Operation Back to School.

Operation Back to School is a volunteer mission that has been months in the making, spearheaded by Air Force Lt. Col. E. Kent Wong, director of operations, 821st Expeditionary Training Squadron, who said a joint effort between Army and Air Force made this day possible.

Maj. Rob Edwards, brigade public affairs officer and

provost marshal with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team and a Saltillo, Miss., native, said the mission began in early August.

"I received an email from Lt. Col. Wong asking for help on starting this project," said Edwards. "It reminded me of a mission we did in 2004 in the green zone, in which we had asked a church to send school supplies. We found a school

that needed help and we delivered the supplies to them. It was something I remember to this day about that deployment."

Staff Sgt. George Warner, joint node network supervisor with B Company, 155th Brigade Special Troops Battalion out of Tupelo, Miss., and a Meridian, Miss., native, said he put out the word back home to his friends and family to make donations.

**SEE SCHOOL ON PAGE 4**

## Balad Blotter September 30 - October 6

### GO-1 VIOLATION:

A complainant reported a subject was missing from a mandatory formation following an indirect fire attack. The company commander found the service member and brought the subject to the law enforcement desk. Patrols made contact with service member and smelled a possible alcoholic substance on the subject's breath. The service member was advised of rights by the patrols.

### PHYSICAL ASSAULT:

A complainant reported an assault had occurred at the Morale Wellness and Recreation west facility. Patrols made contact with the victim and the witness. The victim said between roughly 9:30 p.m. and 9:45 p.m. he was playing basketball with the suspect at the outside courts of the MWR west when he was struck by the suspect, who was wearing his Army physical training uniform. The victim said he was playing defense against the suspect, and when he attempted to block the suspect's shot, the victim was hit by the suspect on the left side of the face. The victim received a 1 cm laceration adjacent to his left eye. The witness said he was watching the basketball game when he saw the suspect strike the victim with a closed fist during the game. The witness said the victim did not provoke the suspect and that the suspect left in a white four-wheel drive, four-door, pickup truck.

### FAILURE TO OBEY ORDER:

A complainant contacted the law enforcement desk and reported an individual had gained entry to the Army and Air Force Exchange Service Base Exchange after refusing to be identified by the guard. The patrols made contact with the guard and the subject, whom they took into custody and transported to the LED. The subject entered the BX after the guard had denied entry due to the fact the subject could not produce identification. The subject asked the guard if he would be shot if he entered? The security guard told the subject he had a radio and would call his bosses if he did not comply. The security guard stated the subject entered the BX without an ID card after being denied entry.

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# Mental health: battling combat stress behavior

By CAPT. STEVE BRASINGTON  
COMBAT STRESS CONTROL PSYCHIATRIST



The mood is getting critical in some outfits when it comes to consulting Combat Stress Behavioral Health Specialists. The message from a minority of noncommissioned officers is a Soldier who wants to visit combat stress is not tough enough.

The innuendo coming from battle-hardened sergeants is Soldiers who want to go to combat stress want to get out of duty and let others pull their load, because they are lazy, liars or both. Hidden in these comments is the idea any man or woman who goes to combat stress clinic is not a true member of the combat elite. The premise is the men and women of combat arms can take stress and manage challenges without any external assistance.

Let us examine together a recent tragedy covered on page 1 of the Oct. 3 issue of Stars and Stripes in an article entitled "Trial examines military's 'leave no man behind' ethos."

The story is set near Fort Bragg, N.C. The main subject was Pfc. Luke Brown, a 27-year-old described by the journalist as "a hulking soldier built like an NFL lineman."

Reportedly, Brown described himself as a binge drinker. After imbibing enough to raise his blood level to twice the legal limit, he argued with bouncers at the local saloon, then ran away from liberty buddies into the woods yelling, "nobody loves me" and "I want to die," according to a witness.

His buddies went after him. The rescue went badly and Brown died, either in the woods or the vehicle used by the Soldiers to take him back to base.

The article focused on the most probable cause of

death. Was it asphyxiation from choking, given one of the Soldiers deliberately choked him out to subdue him? Was it cardiac arrhythmia, arising from the strenuous physical exertion in the woods to escape his rescuers?

No matter the court's conclusion, this was an alcohol-related death.

This was arguably a preventable death. Alcohol is the third leading cause of death in the United States. It is estimated to claim 75,000 to 79,000 lives per year.

Did these friends anticipate a night of fun becoming a struggle for life or death? Did they think critically about off-duty behavior before the night began with a self-professed binge drinker?

A part of my job that I greatly enjoy at combat stress is interviewing Soldiers for Department of the Army packages, such as recruiter, drill sergeant and dog handler etc.

Recently, I was very impressed with a candidate for drill sergeant. He had led Soldiers in combat numerous times on multiple deployments. He shared that a key ingredient to his success was taking the time to imagine various scenarios and how to respond. After critically evaluating different courses of action, he was prepared to take the best course to close with the enemy and kill them without violating the Law of Armed Conflict. He said this approach left him with a clear conscience that let him sleep well. He was applying critical thinking every time he led troops in combat.

On duty or off, I invite you to imagine the worst-case scenario and develop a plan. Self-sufficiency may not always lead to the best outcome. Had the friends of Brown summoned police or simply dialed 911, they would not be on trial for homicide.

Seek help – it is a sign of maturity not weakness.

**Give a Shout Out!**  
Tell your family and friends how much you miss them.  
Send a brief message to: [expeditionarytimes@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:expeditionarytimes@iraq.centcom.mil) Subject line: "Shout Out"

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Expeditionary Times is published weekly by the Stars and Stripes central office, with a circulation of 5,000 papers.

The Public Affairs Office is located on New Jersey Ave. Building 7508, DSN 318-433-2154. Expeditionary Times, HHC 13th ESC, APO AE 09391. Web site at [www.dvidshub.net](http://www.dvidshub.net)

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36th Sustainment Brigade  
90th Sustainment Brigade  
41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team  
155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team  
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing  
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

## Army physical fitness test standards while deployed

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



There is a perceived myth some Soldiers believe concerning the Army Physical Fitness Test and height/weight standards while deployed. The APFT is not automatically waived during deployment. The decision to conduct the

APFT while deployed is up to the commander based on circumstances. Army Regulation 600-8-19, paragraph 5-6a (4) states the APFT is waived for deployed Soldiers where mission precludes the administration of the APFT. Most missions and locations afford the Soldier time and space to train for and administer the APFT. There are no waivers for height/weight standards while deployed. Soldiers must still be weighed in, even if your unit is the rare exception that cannot take the APFT. As Soldiers it is our personal responsibility to have or maintain a good physical condition. A Soldier's level of physical fitness has a direct impact on his unit combat readiness.

For those Soldiers who need a test for promotion but are unable to take the APFT; your commander will include a statement in the promotion packet indicating mission precludes the administration of the APFT. This does not apply to Soldiers who failed the most recent record APFT prior to deployment or failed to take the APFT within 18 months of mobilization date. As directed by Headquarters Department of the Army, deputy chief of staff G-3/5/7, deployed units unable

to administer the APFT due to mission or conditions will annotate officer evaluation reports or noncommissioned officer evaluation reports with the following statement: "Officer or NCO was unable to take the APFT during this period due to deployment for combat operations/contingency operations." This does not exclude obtaining and annotating height/weight data on evaluation reports.

Upon return from deployment, Soldiers will be administered a record APFT no earlier than three months for active-component and six months for reserve-component Soldiers.

For more information on this matter refer to Department of the Army Personnel Policy Guidance. <http://www.armyg1.army.mil/MilitaryPersonnel/PPG/PPG.pdf>

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## Sexual Assault Response Coordinator

Be SARC smart: When you date someone, communicate your limits clearly with that person from the beginning. Both verbal and nonverbal communication, body language, can be used to ensure the message is understood. 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; you may also call 433-7272 or 443-9001, 122/135 for assistance.

## Corrections

In the Sept. 9 edition of the Expeditionary Times, the article, "Volunteers help hospital operate smoothly" should have said, "Spc. Ezell Green, a truck driver with the 547th Transportation Company and a volunteer, said the work makes a difference for him, as well as the patients." Also in that story Tech. Sgt. Brandise Caszatt should have been referred to as she.

The Oct. 7 edition of the Expeditionary Times should have stated that it was Vol. 2 Issue 40 on the front page.

The photo outline on the front page for the article titled, "13th ESC signs \$31 million contract with Iraq," should have said Col. David DeMartino.

The article, "Teamwork helps bring water to Q-West" should have said, "These conservation measures will continue, but the water situation improves daily," said Lt. Col. William B. Smith, Jr., the Q-West mayor and a Hattiesburg, Miss., native." The Expeditionary Times regrets these errors.

# Your legal rights under the SCRA

By 1ST LT. MELVIN RAINES II  
CHIEF, LEGAL ASSISTANCE  
13TH ESC JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL



**Protection from foreclosure and evictions:**

The SCRA protects service members against foreclosures of mortgages, as long as the following facts are established:

- The relief is sought on an obligation secured by a mortgage, trust deed or other security in the nature of a mortgage on either real or personal property;
- The obligation originated prior to entry on active duty;
- The property was owned by the service member or family member prior to entry on active duty;
- The property is still owned by the service member or

family member at the time relief is sought;

- The ability to meet the financial obligation is materially affected by the service member's active duty obligation.

The SCRA also prevents evictions from premises occupied by the service member if rent is less than \$2,720.95 per month. If your rent is below this amount, the landlord must obtain a court order authorizing eviction. This provision applies regardless of whether quarters were rented before or after entry on to military service. In cases of eviction from dwelling quarters, courts may grant a stay of up to three months or enter any other "order as may be just" if military service materially affects the service member's ability to pay rent. This provision is not intended to allow military members to avoid paying rent, but rather to protect families when they cannot pay the rent because military service has affected their ability to do so.

**Insurance protection:**

The SCRA protects service members from losing health or life insurance coverage if they are called to active duty military service, deployment or overseas tours of duty.

**Health insurance:** If a person is called to active duty, they are entitled to reinstatement of any health insurance that was in effect on the day before such service commenced, and was terminated on a date during the period of such service.

There are many new provisions regarding Reserve TRICARE. For more information, visit the TRICARE website at: (<http://www.tricare.mil/>).

The SCRA provides a wide range of protections to deployed service members. The Legal Assistance Office is ready to help with any of the above issues.

For further assistance, please feel free to contact our office at DSN 318.483.2560. The building number is 7235 (the castle on Pennsylvania Avenue).

# Chaplain's corner.. finding peace in a hostile environment

By CAPT. ULISESE MATAAFA  
13TH ESC CHAPLAIN

Peace is the state of being physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually calm, relaxed, rested and quiet. It is also a state of being freed from personal conflicts with one's unresolved issues or from distractions from people around you, hostile environments and from the stress and pressure of daily activities.

Can you imagine what it feels like to experience such peace and freedom for an hour, a day, a week or a month while you are separated from your family and friends during your deployment?

It would be like waking up in the morning and finding yourself on a remote island somewhere in the Pacific

or perhaps in the Bahamas. It would be like having your spouse and children with you walking along the sandy beach, kicking sand and throwing your children in the air. While walking along the beach, you feel the grains of sand between your toes and you leave foot prints as evidence you have been there.

What an awesome experience of sharing peace and enjoying calm, relaxing freedom with loved ones. Most people already have plans to capture this reality to celebrate reuniting with their families at the end of deployment.

Peace is a gift from God. It can be experienced and discovered through spiritual fitness discipline. Before you go running in the morning or get ready to go to work, take a few minutes for spiritual devotion and prayer.

Spiritual fitness discipline is doing one or more activity

to experience the joy and satisfaction of being connected with God and with other people.

Some people do their devotion and reflection through reading a spiritual book, writing and keeping a journal, joining a study group to learn more about spiritual promise, playing musical instrument, attending worship service, or volunteering for community services such as supporting the Iraqi children ministry.

People spend a lot of money to vacation to exotic places around the world to find peaceful experiences. However, money and convenience cannot buy peace because peace is a state of being in harmony with yourself, with other people and with God. It is a discovery of peace and joy through turning the trials and challenges of life them into opportunities to care for others.

# WAGONMASTERS: 'we bring our standard'

## TOA FROM PAGE 1

40 million pounds of mail. We made facility and structural improvements across the brigade footprint to the tune of 74 completed projects valued at over \$61.5 million."

Col. Larry Phelps, commander of the 15th Sust. Bde., said this is the third time in less than five years the Wagonmaster colors were uncased in Iraq.

"Coach, your team is ready – put us in," he said to Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz, commander of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

Phelps thanked the 16th for setting a positive example as a sustainment brigade and working to create a smooth, professional transition.

"We are honored to be serving at this historic juncture in the Iraqi mission, and looking forward to working with the 264th, 515th and 395th CSSBs," Phelps said. "Together we are an unstoppable team."

The Wagonmaster's mission will mirror the 16th Sust. Bde.'s but with one difference.

As Phelps told service members recently, tens of thousands of Soldiers will return to the U.S. in the coming months, along with their equipment.

The 15th is responsible for sustaining the force in MND-North, closing bases across the area, and getting Soldiers home.

"There is no better unit to replace the magnificent Soldiers of the 16th Sustainment Brigade than the 15th," Wentz said.



Col. Larry Phelps, 15th Sustainment Brigade commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. Nathaniel Bartee, 15th Sust. Bde. senior noncommissioned officer, uncasing their unit flag in the Morale, Welfare and Recreation building Oct. 5 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq, as part of a transfer of authority ceremony with the 16th Sust. Bde.

During the transfer of authority ceremony, civilian painters marked the walls surrounding the brigade's headquarters with the 15th's patch – their trademark wagon – along with other Wagonmaster markings.

Following the TOA ceremony, the

Wagonmasters raised their colors, the Belton, Texas, flag, and the Texas flag in a short ceremony outside of the brigade's headquarters to the song "The Eyes of Texas are Upon Us."

Belton is the 15th Sust. Bde.'s adopted community and the raised flag was

the city's first – made specifically to be flown in Iraq.

Phelps told the group it would be a matter of hours, not days, until the 15th patch was everywhere.

"Where we put our brand ... we bring our standard," he said.

# SUPPLIES: much-needed supplies for Iraqi children

## SCHOOL FROM PAGE 1

"Word has gotten around and now supplies are being sent not only from Mississippi, but from all over the U.S.," said Warner. "We recently just put together 800 kits for the school children."

The kits include anything from pencils and pens to folders and rulers, which are put in backpacks for each child.

Warner said the service members work closely with members of the IA as a joint effort to help Iraqi communities.

"This makes a good statement to the Iraqi people that both sides are working together to better the Iraqi people," said Warner.

When word of the project spread on Taji, many Soldiers and Airmen wanted to volunteer, Edwards said.

"We wanted to make it fair for everyone, because everyone wanted to go to the school and hand out school supplies," said Edwards. "But we wanted the people that put the time volunteering in the warehouse to get the oppor-

tunity to go."

Edwards said there were many committee meetings with members of the IA, and Dr. Kamouna, an Iraqi education liaison, identified the school in need quickly.

This was done through Lt. Col. Rafed, of the IA.

"This goes along with the concept of pulling troops out of here soon," said Edwards. "In the past we were taking the lead, now we put the Iraqi forces to lead the project."

Edwards said the committee wanted to choose a high-need school that American forces had not been to before.

Al Abar school in the Mushada Na-



A young Iraqi school child from Al-Abar Primary School pauses for a picture as she receives a backpack with school supplies Oct. 7 from Operation Back to School. Through the program, 81 girls and 130 boys in a low-income neighborhood received much-needed school supplies.

hia region, a completely rural area, is very poor and lacks resources, Edwards said.

"We wanted to show the image that the IA is making the connection with its people and that this is their country now," he said.

Eleven IA soldiers were brought on the mission, performing security and handing out kits to the children.

"The mission was safe and successful and we brought smiles and happiness to the children of the school," said Lt. Col. Rafed Mohsen Edan, brigade civil affairs officer with the Iraqi Army, through an interpreter.

Edwards said the mission went better than he expected.

"There was a young girl who wanted to go home right away and show her parents what she got," said Edwards. "She was so excited. We are accustomed to being able to buy whatever our children need for school, and we take it for granted. Knowing that these children don't even have the basic necessities that we are accustomed to is sad, but seeing the innocence in their expressions and the genuine excitement makes it an unforgettable experience."

# Emergency training keeps medics at top of game

By SGT. MATTHEW C. COOLEY  
15TH SUST. BDE. PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq – The 15th Sustainment Brigade medics conducted emergency medical training with their doctors, for the first time Sept. 26 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

The exercise was designed to familiarize the medics with trauma equipment and procedures, as well as the challenges of driving a front-line ambulance at night.

“It’s difficult driving, especially at night ... it’s important to know where you’re going,” said Spc. Teresa McCall, a medic with the 15th Sust. Bde.

Two Soldiers acted as patients, using makeup and mock injuries to make the training more realistic. One role-player had a simulated gunshot wound

to the head and a broken leg, while the other was unconscious with simulated gunshot wounds to the chest and leg.

The evac team then simulated treatment for life-threatening injuries before bringing the Soldiers back to the TMC for further care.

“(The) sooner we get to the patient the better off they’ll be,” said Spc. Jeffery Blackmon, also a medic with the 15th Sust. Bde.

Upon arrival at the TMC, one medic documented the injuries to aid in a



U.S. Army photo by Capt. John Balman

**Fifteenth Sustainment Brigade medics strap a role-player to a litter as part of an emergency medical training exercise Sept. 26 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.**

medical evaluation request while others brought the role-players to the treatment room.

The medical evacuation request is usually sent soon after a patient needing it arrives, said Pvt. Mandy Dixon, a medic with the 15th.

“Within a minute of them coming inside the door,” she said.

In the treatment room, another team of Soldiers gave the role-players intravenous fluids and simulated inserting a breathing tube in the unconscious patient.

Although medics are trained to treat injuries, 15th Sust. Bde.’s doctors were on the scene to direct the action.

“Everybody is trained to do evac, treatment (or) whatever it needs to be,” McCall said.

The medics said the training was important and they hope it continues, especially with some of their newer counterparts from other units.

For now, Dixon said she is confident she and her comrades are prepared.

“The 15th’s medics are ready and able to save a life,” she said.

## Soldiers get behind wheel of MRAP

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SPC. BETH GORENC  
TASK FORCE 38, PUBLIC AFFAIRS

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Since the introduction of the Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle, service member casualty rates and incidents of serious injury during deployments have declined.

“There is no fail-safe measure that can prevent all loss of life and limb on this or any other battlefield,” said Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates in a January 2008 speech. “That is the brutal reality of war. But vehicles like the MRAP, combined with the right tactics, techniques and procedures, provide the

best protection available against these attacks.”

For many deployed troops, those words provide assurance during ground missions and convoys. For one Task Force 38 Soldier, the facts and statistics provide pride and satisfaction.

Indiana National Guard Maj. Richard Schwaiger, the TF 38 officer in charge of logistics, helped design a version of the MRAP in his civilian job as a vehicle engineer manager, at one of the companies that produces them.

“There is a tremendous amount of personal and professional satisfaction in knowing that Soldiers will make it back home to families, friends and coworkers because of something my coworkers and I had a hand in,” said Schwaiger.

Schwaiger’s responsibility for the well-being of Soldiers in convoys did not stop once he deployed with the task force, he said.

“We are an aviation unit, but we are responsible for force protection assets and elements,” he said. “MRAP training helps us to better understand ground maneuver units to provide better support.”

Task Force 38 Soldiers attend-



**Army Spc. Katie Modderman, a radio transmitter operator for Task Force 38, affixes part of a thermal imaging system on a Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle during MRAP drivers training at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, Sept. 17.**

ed an MRAP driver training course, to better their understanding of convoy vehicles.

David McFarland, an MRAP driver instructor and field service representative, worked with his team of instructors at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, to ensure Soldiers knew how to properly maintain and operate these vehicles.

Having previously driven missions throughout Iraq, McFarland said he understands what Soldiers go through and the concerns they have about their safety when they go outside the wire.

“We work to give Soldiers confidence to perform missions and return safely,” he said.

The class focused on preventative maintenance checks and services, driving during day and night conditions and driving with a thermal imaging device that enhances vision during conditions with reduced visibility.

Spc. Katie Modderman, an Allendale, Mich., native, and radio transmitter operator with TF 38, said she is more of an asset to the unit due to her training.

“The more qualifications you have at different levels, the better you are for the unit and the more tasks you can complete,” she said. “It was something new and different to do.”

Though Modderman was among the first group of five Task Force 38 Soldiers to complete the course, MRAP driver training is available to all Soldiers throughout the duration of their deployments at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

**The Dirty Dozen**

- Lack of Crew Coordination
- Complacency
- Distraction
- Exceeding Your Limitations/Abilities
- Indiscipline
- Fatigue
- Stress
- Peer Pressure
- Lack of Knowledge
- Lack of Training
- Lack of Leader Involvement
- Lack of Pre-mission Planning

# CRSP Soldiers work in yard

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. RYAN TWIST  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Soldiers and civilians at the Central Receiving and Shipping Point at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, are slated to aid in the draw-down of roughly 80,000 pieces of equipment from Iraq in the next three to nine months.

Second Lt. Gabriel A. West, officer in charge of the CRSP with the 159th Seaport Operations Company out of Fort Story, Va., said the overall mission of the CRSP is to receive, stage, document, upload and download unit equipment, retrograde equipment, and empty containers throughout Iraq.

“We bring stuff in and we push stuff out,” said West, an Allentown, Pa., native.

Sgt. 1st Class Stephen W. Latch, non-commissioned officer in charge of the CRSP, said JBB’s mission is particularly essential.

“The JBB CRSP is the largest and most active,” said Latch. “If I fail to do my job, then a large portion of the supplies that are supporting the war-fighting Soldiers won’t reach their final destination. We have a very vital mission at the CRSP.”

On a typical day in the CRSP yard, a convoy comes in with cargo that needs to be downloaded, West said. They log the equipment to track where it is headed and upload the cargo on a convoy



**Spc. Austin D. Pryor, the Central Receiving and Shipping Point’s inbound representative with the 159th Seaport Operations Company and a Long Beach, Calif., native, checks the cargo radio frequency tag, which tracks the cargo from one location to another, Oct. 7 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.**

as backhaul to another destination, he said.

Latch, a Little Rock, Ark., native, said if two units transfer, the incoming unit’s equipment comes through the CRSP and is shipped to their new duty location. Without their equipment, the new unit cannot properly relieve the old, he said.

Sgt. Omero O. Baker, the CRSP’s frustrate and unfrustrate noncommissioned officer with the 159th SOC, said when cargo gets to the CRSP, he calls the points of contact for the equipment

to arrange for pickup or delivery. He also takes cargo that has been left behind or lost in transit and finds the POC to get the situation resolved, he said.

“Soldiers or civilians at other (Contingency Operating Locations) will be able to have the supplies they need to accomplish their missions,” said Baker, a Baltimore native. “Whatever is here that doesn’t need to stay on JBB, I get it out to the personnel.”

Latch said he coordinates with the Empty Container Collection Point and

CRSP personnel to ensure no trucks leave empty, if possible. He said he wants to lessen the exposure and the need for trucks out on the road in theater.

Latch said he interacts with civilians often, and stressed being aware of possible culture and language differences.

“We do have a good relationship with most of our customers,” said West.

Spc. Austin D. Pryor, the CRSP’s inbound representative with the 159th SOC and a Long Beach, Calif., native, said the CRSP personnel, civilians and other units’ Soldiers, respect each other. They all have a job to do and if there are any questions, they get the help they need; otherwise everybody wants to get done as quickly as possible, he said.

“One of our goals is to take the cargo which comes here to the CRSP yard, that is meant for units who are here on JBB, and get it to those customers in the fastest amount of time possible,” said West. “That is what we have the most control over.”

A lot of cargo goes through the CRSP yard on a daily basis, including containers, bulk cargo and vehicles, he said.

“We just broke a record last month of over 7,000 pieces,” said West.

West said he constantly looks around and tries to discover ways to improve their overall mission. He asks himself whether they could push cargo through faster, or how they could improve the customer experience, he said.

Pryor said it takes a lot to keep the mission successful, especially “organizational skills, a lot of patience and motivation.”

## NCOs re-up in Iraq, Families watch from home

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Two non-commissioned officers re-enlisted in the Army Oct. 6 during a ceremony here at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, extending their careers indefinitely as their families watched from home.

The commanding general for the Fort Hood, Texas-based 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz, conducted the re-enlistment ceremony for 1st Sgt. Francis Halmsteiner, the senior NCO for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 13th ESC, and Staff Sgt. Fernando Flores, operations NCO for HHC, 13th ESC.

The Soldiers’ Families watched from the 13th ESC conference room at Fort Hood through a video teleconference link, allowing them to see and hear the ceremony.

Following the re-enlistment, Wentz commended the Soldiers and their Families for their decision to serve their country during a time of war.

“Thank you, because without you supporting your Soldier, I know they couldn’t do what they do,” said Wentz.

Halmsteiner, a 14-year veteran of the Army and a native of Fairfield, Calif., enlisted in the Army as a medic in 1990.

“I was looking for something more exciting than college,” said Halmsteiner. “I earned my Expert Field Medical Badge, jump wings and I was certified as an emergency medical technician during my first enlistment.”

Halmsteiner said he left the service for a time but felt the Army pulling him back, so he came back on active duty in 2008 and joined the 13th ESC just in time for pre-deployment training.

Flores, a 10-year veteran of the service and a native of Laredo, Texas, enlisted because he enjoyed the feeling it gave him. He considers it an honor to give back to his country and be a mentor to other Soldiers.

“It’s a great satisfaction knowing I can influence Soldiers and help them as they try to come up through the ranks,” he said.

Both Soldiers said their Families had an enormous effect on their decision to re-enlist indefinitely in the Army.

“This is the career of careers,” said

Halmsteiner, “but I had to think of my Family. My first son will be born next month and I’m here in Iraq.”

While Halmsteiner’s family is young, Flores has six children, including two stepchildren, ranging in age from three years to 20 years old. In Flores’ career, he’s spent roughly two years on hardship tours to Korea and this is his third tour in Iraq.

“Half my career I’ve been away from home,” said Flores. “So my wife and kids were a huge factor in my decision.”

His wife of 10 years, Amparo Flores, said she supports her husband’s decision to reenlist.

“It’s going to be challenging and there’s going to be a lot of hurdles, but I think it’s going to be great,” said



**The commanding general for the Fort Hood, Texas-based 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz, conducted the re-enlistment ceremony for 1st Sgt. Francis Halmsteiner, the senior noncommissioned officer for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 13th ESC, and Staff Sgt. Fernando Flores, operations NCO for HHC, 13th ESC, Oct. 6 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.**

Amparo Flores. “We’re in it together; he’s here for me, I’m here for him.”

Halmsteiner and Flores said they spoke to their Families numerous times before they made the decision.

“I’m really proud of my husband,” said Amparo Flores. “Not only for what he’s accomplished, but for what he’s going to accomplish. I’m very proud.”

# US Army chief of engineers briefed on missions in Iraq

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

AL BAKIR AIRFIELD, Iraq – Chief of Engineers and United States Army Corps of Engineers Commander, Lt. Gen. Robert L. Van Antwerp, visited the 194th Engineer Brigade and the 37th Engineer Battalion – Joint Task Force Eagle, Sept. 23, at Al Bakir Airfield, Iraq.

Since May 2007, Van Antwerp has commanded the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. His visit included briefings from commanders Brig. Gen. Robert Harris with the 194th Eng. Bde., from Jackson, Tenn., and Lt. Col. Paul Huszar with the 37th Eng. Bn. - JTF Eagle, out of Fort Bragg, N.C., about operational and technical issues and the changing engineer mission in Iraq.

During his brief, Huszar, a Seabring, Fla., native, addressed issues such as route clearance and civil support and capacity development – two primary missions for JTF Eagle.

JTF Eagle supports major operational environment owners, including 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry, and 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, with route clearance.

“Since June 26, two JTF Eagle route clearance companies have traveled more than 8,000 km,” said Huszar.

“In that time, it has taken a large number of patrols to find a small number of IEDs.”

Van Antwerp and Huszar continued discussing the dynamics of the changing IED fight, noting that it is indisputably positive and shows promise for Iraqi Security Forces and the Iraqi Army.

“Furthermore, while IED attacks have lessened along primary routes, they are still present in cities, villages, and locales, areas where U.S. forces do not operate as per the Security Agreement between the United States and the Government of Iraq,” said Huszar.

“We should focus on civil capacity and supporting our Iraqi counterparts during this vital time of transition,” Huszar said to Van Antwerp. “Our projects deliver essential services to the population by, with and through our Iraqi partners. This in turn creates opportunities for sustainable employment.”

Examples of such projects include the canal improvement campaign – which will refurbish the preexisting canal system in Salah Al Din – and the



Lt. Gen. Robert L. Van Antwerp explains the Brigade Engineer Battalion concept to Soldiers, noncommissioned officers and officers of the 194th Engineer Brigade and 37th Engineer Battalion – Joint Task Force Eagle. Van Antwerp stressed the importance of partnering with Iraqi forces in engineering.

Baqubah landfill project – which will address the significant trash issue in the Diyala Province, said Capt. Greg Sabalan, JTF Eagle civil capacity project manager and a Clarksville, Tenn., native.

Van Antwerp ended his visit with a question and answer session with Soldiers. He described the emerging brigade engineer battalion concept, which will fill the engineer gap that brigade

combat teams are experiencing. He also touched on current events in the engineer community in the United States.

In his closing remarks, Van Antwerp expounded on the importance of partnership.

“This is an amazing and highly capable battalion,” he said. “It is important that you continue to work with your Iraqi counterparts in engineering so we may set them up for future success.”

## Medic lends helping hand to Iraqi children

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SPC. JOHN STIMAC  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

NUBAI, Iraq – A medic with the 36th Iraqi Army Brigade’s military transition team, 1st Cavalry Division out of Fort Hood, Texas, gave medical treatment Oct. 7, not to wounded Warfighters, but to Iraqi children in Nubai, Iraq.

Staff Sgt. William Osorio, team medic with the 36th Brigade, 9th Iraqi Army military transition team, out of Fort Riley, Kan., said he learned of the mission through operations and civil affairs service members.

“We conducted (reconnaissance) of schools in the area to find a suitable school for needy kids,” said Osorio. “Civil affairs really wanted to be in on this program, and we wanted to support them as well as the Iraqi Army.”

Osorio said an Iraqi medic was brought along, in an effort to show the Iraqi community a new face.

“Going out with the IA is even more special,” said Osorio. “This way it shows

the Iraqi media and people that we are relying more and more on the IA. It is showing that they are ready to take control of their country.”

Osorio, a Bronx, N.Y., native, said bringing the Iraqi medic was a great idea, because it helped break down the language and cultural barrier he would have had with the children.

Areef Jamel, the medic who was on site with Osorio, received his training at Taji Academy.

“I am here mainly to help, advise and mentor the medics,” said Osorio. “I also gave hands-on technical advice on treatments that the medic could give.”

Osorio said he saw a total of eight children and seven adults, with injuries that ranged from bumps and bruises to infections.

“The boy that we treated had a pretty bad infection in his finger,” said Osorio. “His finger had to be lanced and bandaged up and then I gave him some medication to help fight the infection.”

Maj. Rob Edwards, brigade public affairs officer and provost marshal with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, said this separate mission was discussed

in a prior committee meeting because the school did not have an on-site nurse.

“Most schools in the states have a school nurse or at least one in the area,” said Edwards. “This school is in a very rural area and there is not a school nurse or caregiver in the area at all.”

Edwards, a Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., native, said this mission was coordinated with the Iraqi Army, as part of the Status of Forces Agreement that was put in place to help the Iraqis start to take the lead in missions to take back their country.

“The medics were there solely to provide humanitarian assistance to any child in the school that needed treatment, and it was a great success,” he said.

Edwards said the children were hesitant to come forward at first, but once they were told they would still get their schoolbags and supplies, they allowed themselves to get examined by the medics.

“This not only helped the children, but raised awareness to the school leadership as well,” said Edwards. “The IA presence helped out a lot with some of the barriers we had with the children, but were also an authority figure for the children and kept them in line as well.”

Edwards said the success of the mis-

sion has encouraged them to try to identify more schools in similar situations. The mission could not have been accomplished without the help of the IA and the school administrators, Edwards said.

Osorio said everybody did their job superbly.

“The most rewarding portion of conducting this mission was seeing the kids getting some medical treatment,” he said. “The kids warmed up to all of us really quick. It was nice seeing that they wanted to take pictures with us, hold our hands and not be scared that we were there.”



Staff Sgt. William Osorio, team medic with the 36th Brigade, 9th Iraqi Army military transition team gives medical attention to an Iraqi boy at Al-Abar Primary School, with the assistance of Areef Jamel (far right), an Iraqi Army medic.

# 13th ESC troops make moves in Iraq

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – This week, Provider Soldiers earned promotions, received awards, and re-enlisted in the Army, all while helping to maintain sustainment operations throughout Iraq.

Three Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), were promoted for their exceptional service.

“The secretary of the Army has espoused special trust and confidence in the fidelity, valor and personal courage of...” read 1st Sgt. Francis Halmsteiner, senior noncommissioned officer for HHC, 13th ESC, while each supervisor stepped forward and promoted his Soldier.

Spc. Rodmond D. Maddox, the mail clerk for HHC, 13th ESC, had his specialist rank pinned on by Sgt. Steven Perez, the mail room supervisor for HHC.

Sgt. Juan R. Zuniga, who works in



Spc. Rodmond D. Maddox, the mail clerk for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), receives his specialist rank from Sgt. Steven Perez, the mail room supervisor for HHC, 13th ESC.

the training room, joined the NCO corps when his supervisor, Staff Sgt. Marcus Johnson, training room NCO, pinned Zuniga's stripes on him.

Johnson added a rocker to his stripes when his rank was pinned on by Staff

Sgt. Fernando Flores, the company operations NCO.

“It feels great because I’ve known Johnson since he was an E-4,” said Flores. “From the motor pool to the orderly room to the training room, he’s

been getting ready for this and I’m really proud to see him get the rank he deserves.”

Three Soldiers from the headquarters were also awarded Army Achievement Medals for exhibiting selfless service by going above and beyond the call of duty.

Zuniga received his AAM for meritorious service while fulfilling his duties as environmental compliance NCO for the unit. According to his citation, Zuniga serves as a model for environmental excellence.

Cpl. Mariah Robins, a supply clerk, received her award for service in the unit’s orderly room and for acting as the unit supply sergeant during the change of command inventory.

Her citation read, “Cpl. Robins’ initiative and professional abilities contributed significantly to the successful transition of property.”

“Every Soldier deserves an award for something they’ve earned, for going above and beyond the call of duty,” he said. “It’s great for the command to even recommend somebody for an award. Having Soldiers be proud of their unit, that’s important too.”

## Soldiers pursue higher education online

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
1ST LT. DANIELLE GORDON  
395TH CSSB, 15TH SUST. BDE.

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq – Although they are far from any university classroom, Soldiers with the 395th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion have placed a priority on furthering their academic studies.

With the help of tuition assistance and internet access, Soldiers can continue their academic careers throughout deployment – a choice several Soldiers from the 395th have made.

The majority of the students in the 395th said they are pursuing degrees from the online campus of Post University in Waterbury, Conn., close to the unit’s reserve center in New Haven, Conn.

Spc. Anika Alcalá, a supply clerk with the unit and a criminal justice freshman online at Post University. She said studying keeps her occupied and is making her deployment go by more quickly.

“It’s tough, but I’m on top of my assignments, as well as mission-focused,” said Alcalá, a Brooklyn, N.Y., native.

Spc. Ransome Cuffy, a human resource specialist and a native of New Haven, Conn., is in his first year pursuing a degree in business administration from Post University.

“It’s very strenuous, but in the long run it’s for my personal development,” said Cuffy.

Cuffy said studying in a classroom



Spc. Anika Alcalá, a supply specialist with the 395th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, reads at her desk in the supply office. Alcalá, a Brooklyn, N.Y., native, is pursuing a degree in criminal justice from the online campus of Post University in Waterbury, Conn.

would be more ideal but, with the support of his fellow student-Soldiers, he continues to hit the textbooks after hours and dedicate free time to his academic enrichment.

“Right now it’s like serving two masters at one time,” Cuffy said. “It takes a lot of discipline – self-discipline.”

Spc. Christopher Brown, an administrative assistant from Ashland, Mass., pursuing a master’s degree from Norwich University in Northfield, Vt., said he strongly encourages other Soldiers to pursue education online while deployed.

“I feel that, because of the way the job market is, it will help me in marketing myself better when we redeploy,” he said.

## Guardians render aid to Iraqi accident victims

BY SPC. ANITA VANDERMOLEN  
41ST IBCT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

SCANIA, Iraq – Task Force Guardian Soldiers with the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, rendered roadside aid to a local national truck driver after his loaded truck and trailer rolled over the morning of Sept. 30.

A Guardian convoy was heading south when Spc. Paul A.C. Miller, the lead truck commander, saw the accident ahead and radioed for permission to stop and provide medical aid, said Staff Sgt. Eric Blondheim, the convoy commander.

The crew found a man, roughly 30 years old, and his son, roughly 12 years old, near the vehicle, said Miller.

Pfc. Joshua Arguss, a driver and civilian emergency medical technician, conducted the initial exam of the civilians, said Miller.

An assessment of the man’s injuries was relayed to Staff Sgt. Eric Blondheim, the convoy commander. He sent the medic, Pfc. Jason Jones, to the scene, said Miller.

Arguss and Jones worked together to bandage and care for the injured man, said Spc. Ryan Kirk.

“It was the first time Doc Jones got to do something,” Blondheim said. “He was right on it. He prioritized the injuries and gave aid.”

The boy had no injuries, said Kirk.

Blondheim said he informed the area sheriff and his command of the situation. He requested the Iraqi Police and an ambulance come to the scene, he said.

“It is my nature to step in and render assistance,” said Blondheim, also a deputy sheriff in Oregon.

The man was transported to Scania, where he was treated for his injuries, said Blondheim.

During this time, Kirk and Miller provided security and cleared built-up traffic caused by the accident, he said.

Before leaving the scene, the Soldiers gave the man’s son water and food while he stayed to protect the vehicle and its contents, said Kirk.

“We did whatever we could to help,” Blondheim said. “We followed standard operating procedures.”



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Ryan Kirk

Spc. Joshua Arguss, a convoy driver with the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, provides aid to an Iraqi civilian after his loaded truck and trailer rolled over along the road.

# Smoking cessation class helps service members kick habit

By SGT. KEITH S. VANKLOMPENBERG  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – For service members looking to make the most of their deployment by bettering themselves and living healthier, the smoking cessation program at Joint Base Balad, Iraq is here to help.

“We offer a class that meets once a week for four weeks,” said Air Force Col. Scott Marris, chief of the Air Force Traumatic Brain Injury and Mental Health Clinic at JBB and a Cheney, Wash., native.

Marris said his class can accommodate up to 12 individuals at a time, and meets Monday evenings.

“We talk about the physical addiction to tobacco, as well as the behavioral and psychological addiction,” he said.

Marris said he combines instruction with open discussion, allowing the group to help each other get through the process of quitting.

“There’s nothing like getting ideas from someone going through the same experience,” said Marris. “We know people are more successful when they are part of a group than when they just use the patch.”

In addition to the class, Marris said he can work with service members’ primary care physicians to provide a prescription pill to deal with cravings, a nicotine replacement, or both.

Marris said most smokers do so because they are stressed, and being



Photo illustration by Sgt. Keith S. VanKlompberg

in Iraq can be a much more stressful experience than service members are used to.

“It is the nature of the combat zone,” said Chaplain Capt. Ulises Mataafa, the plans and operations chaplain for the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary). “Soldiers live under constant pressure, and it’s important to redirect that energy.”

The chaplains, along with both the Air Force and Army-run clinics at JBB, work to find proper outlets for Warfighters dealing with stress.

“People think smoking is a stress

reliever; really it’s just going through the motions of a deep breathing exercise,” said Sgt. William Guerre, an occupational therapy assistant with the 55th Medical Company Patriot Clinic Combat Stress Control Center and a Kokomo, Ind., native.

Guerre said relationship issues, multiple deployments and operational tempo can place great amounts of stress on a Warfighter, and combating that stress is essential to his or her well-being. He said the Patriot Clinic offers services to help service members deal with specific causes of their stress, as

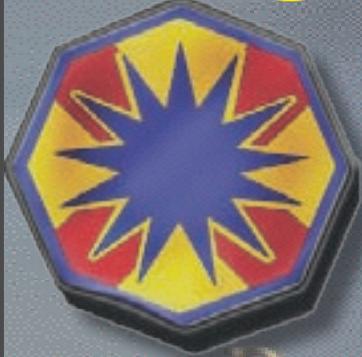
well as instruction on deep breathing and other relaxation techniques.

Marris said his class is very flexible and if someone cannot attend a session, he can meet with them individually. He said he will even change the course days and location to meet the needs of a group, if necessary.

“As long as people are committed to quitting, we’ll make it happen,” said Marris.

For more information on the smoking cessation class, or to sign up for the next session, please call (318) 443-2994.

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# Oregon Guard Soldiers provide theater-wide medical evacuations

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Every day in Iraq, medical evacuations help save the lives of injured service members and civilians who would die without immediate care.

The Oregon National Guard Soldiers with C Company, 7th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, stationed at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, cannot afford to take days off because lives are on the line. They perform theater-wide medical evacuations and transport missions constantly.

“We’re always on call, on alert,” said Maj. Geoffrey Vallee, a UH-60 Black Hawk pilot and commander of C Co. and a Salem, Ore., native. “This mission is very reactionary.”

Vallee said the crews always have their helicopters and medical equipment ready, so when a mission comes along the only variables are location and level of urgency.

Sgt. 1st Class Patrick Casha, C Co.’s first platoon sergeant and a flight medic, said the operational tempo is not at a constant high – crews often wait all day for mission calls that never come. Not having a mission means Soldiers are not hurt, and that is good, said Casha, a Tualatin, Ore., native.

“You hope to sit around all day,” he said, “but you also want to do your job.”

When a nine-line medevac request is called in, the crew on rotation springs into action. An urgent call requires the helicopter to be off the ground within 15



Sgt. Tracy Braeme, a UH-60 Black Hawk crew chief with C Company, 7th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment and a Sublimity, Ore., native, prepares her crew’s helicopter for a medical evacuation mission Oct. 8 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

minutes, Casha said.

“It’s a pretty challenging thing,” he said, “but everybody does their job as part of a team and we get off the ground pretty quickly.”

Each Black Hawk team is composed of two pilots, one medic and one crew chief. The medic provides en route care for the patient and, when necessary, is

assisted by the crew chief.

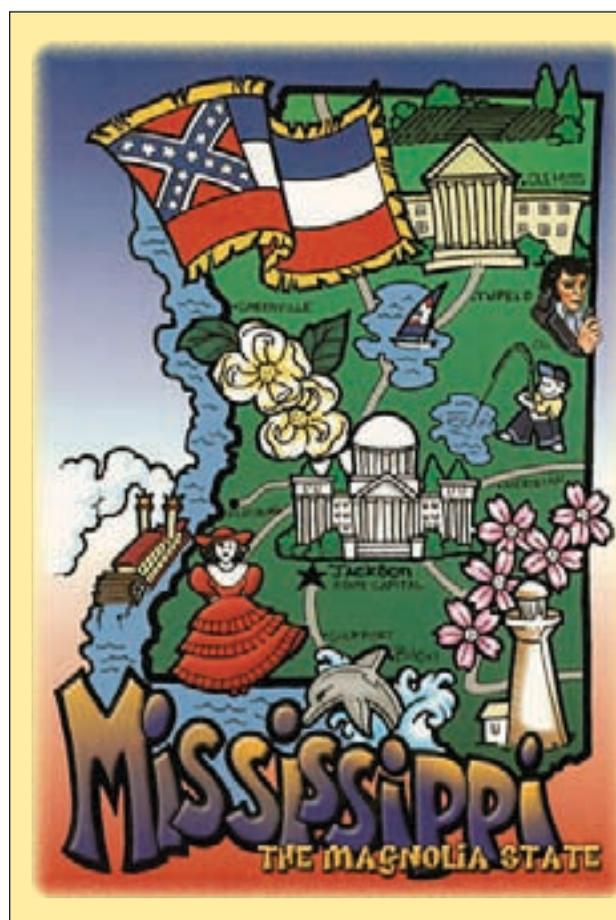
“My first priority is the security of the helicopter and all the people in it, but I also provide assistance to the medic,” said Sgt. Tracy Braeme, a crew chief with C Co. and a Sublimity, Ore., native.

The Soldiers of C Co. said the mission, while challenging, can be very rewarding.

“I can’t imagine doing anything else,” said Casha, who works as a paramedic in Oregon.

Vallee said it is being able to do good things not only for American Soldiers, but for the Iraqi people that he finds most gratifying.

“It’s an easy mission to be proud of,” said Vallee.



To: Spc. Timothy Millican



*We love you and miss you lots! Can't wait til you get home. Would love to hear your voice. Write when you get a minute.*

*With love and prayers,*

*Mom, Bob, Scott, Jennifer,  
Eric, & Jocelyn*

## Check CHUsdays

Each **TUESDAY** Check The Following in Your **CHU**

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

# Unit takes fire, continues mission despite burnt facilities

BY CAPT. VINCENT CERCHIONE  
260TH CSSB, 10TH SUST. BDE.

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – A fire at the 260th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion's headquarters building Sept. 26 at Camp Liberty, Iraq, destroyed the building's attic causing roughly \$300,000 in damages to facilities and equipment but injuring no one, said Capt. Scott Mori, the battalion logistics officer and a Fort Collins, Colo., native.

Officials determined the fire was caused by faulty electrical wiring in the building's attic. Dry timber exacerbated the initial flames, enabling the fire to spread quickly throughout the attic.

Soldiers tried to save computers and equipment during the fire, however, due to smoke and water, more than half of the battalion's electronic equipment was damaged, said Capt. Scott Burnett, the battalion communications officer and an Oklahoma City native.

The 260th CSSB, out of Hunter Army Airfield, Ga., had conducted its mission every day for the last five months, dealing with threats to convoys, continuous missions and the Iraqi heat. On the evening of Sept. 26, however, the 260th came under a different kind of fire.

At roughly 5:45 p.m., alarms sounded as smoke began to creep out of the attic and into the offices and command section hallway.

The fire spread as leaders hurried

personnel out of the building, grabbing computers and sensitive information along the way.

Soldiers from the battalion came running with fire extinguishers, but the fire spread quickly. Within moments, firefighters were at the Tactical Operations Center, attempting to save as much computer and electrical equipment as possible.

"I felt kind of sad," said Command Sgt. Maj. Dwight Williams, a Baltimore native. "It had become our home and we were making so much progress with our systems. But our Soldiers have done such a great job with everything that has happened and haven't complained yet. They just execute and move out."

With the assistance of 1st Cavalry, 82nd Squadron, from the Oregon National Guard and the 260th CSSB's partner unit for logistics missions, the battalion's intelligence and operations shops, as well as the support operations sections, all kept the unit's missions moving.

The fire affected more than just the headquarters building, damaging connectivity throughout all the battalion's



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Mike Brantley

**Soldiers from the 260th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion exit the unit's headquarters building after it caught fire Sept. 26. Faulty electrical wiring caused a fire in the attic, damaging the facility and causing Tactical Operations Center personnel to relocate without stopping support to Multi National Division – Baghdad.**

sections, which have been temporarily displaced to the company areas to continue their missions.

Capt. Steven Smith, the battalion's operations officer and a Baton Rouge, La., native, said he tried to see the silver lining throughout the ordeal.

"The fire was actually a benefit, as it allowed the battalion to inadvertently practice a jump (Tactical Operations Center) exercise since we were displaced by the fire," he said. "We were up and running again within two hours and showed how proficient the Soldiers are at making things happen."

This has not decreased the capabilities of the battalion, as units and all sections offered up computers and equipment to facilitate the headquarters personnel.

The 260th CSSB is split between two locations at Camp Liberty, said Mori. Some staff, like the communications section, have already begun their move to the new facility – a building recently vacated by a redeploying infantry battalion, said Mori. Once the rest of the new facility is inspected and completely prepared, the remainder of the battalion staff will move, he said.

"I am very proud of our Soldiers," said Lt. Col. Joe Dixon, the 260th CSSB commander and a Frankfort, Ind., native. "Our Soldiers came together in a time of adversity and proved what they are truly capable of. Our leaders accounted for and ensured their Soldiers were safe, and we were able to continue our operations without any degradation of mission."

## Wagonmasters reenlist in Iraq

BY SGT. MATTHEW C. COOLEY  
15TH SUST. BDE. PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq – Sgt. Elizabeth Whitehead, personnel clerk and Laredo, Texas, native, became the 15th Special Troops Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade's first in-theater reenlistment Oct. 1 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

Whitehead said she planned to make the Army a career and reenlisted soon after coming to Iraq for a bonus.

"I wanted to reenlist anyway, but I did it here in Iraq because I knew it would be tax free," Whitehead explained. "I wanted to make sure I got the bonus before it goes down."

Sgt. Rachelle Hurd and Staff Sgt. Shanna Culotta, battalion retention noncommissioned officers, explained the present reenlistment situation in Iraq, stressing that tax-free deployment bonuses will be reduced by Oct. 20.

Although some Soldiers wait for



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Mike Brantley

**Sgt. Elizabeth Whitehead, a personnel clerk with the 15th Special Troops Battalion, is the first Soldier in the battalion to reenlist during her unit's deployment to Iraq.**

special events, such as a child's graduation or their own birthday, these retention NCOs urge Soldiers who want to reenlist to do it quickly before the money is gone.

Soldiers who were not eligible for a bonus at Fort Hood, Texas, may qualify while deployed to Iraq, they said.

Hurd said Soldiers want to remain

in the Army because it is a good career.

Culotta agreed, singing an Army marching cadence.

"We like it here we love it here, we finally found a home," she said.

For more information on reenlistment options, contact your battalion retention team.

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# Army divers work to make

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

HABANIYAH, Iraq – The 86th Engineer Dive Team, out of Ft. Eustis, Va., is conducting diving operations in the Saqlawiyah area of the Euphrates River to remove sunken pontoon sections of the existing civilian bridge so the Iraqi government can continue with its construction of a new and more stable bridge.

The first unit to arrive on the site Oct. 4 was 1st Platoon, C Company, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, out of Fort Bragg, N.C., with the mission of securing the area for the engineers.

Second Lt. Ronald J. Smith, the first platoon leader, said his platoon is partnered with Iraqi Police in the Saqlawiyah and Fallujah areas as well as engineer units working on the Saqlawiyah Bridge.

“Our platoon is out here for the security aspect, and (the engineers) job is to get in the river and actually pull the stuff out; communication is good, we are all working well together,” said Smith, a Pittsburgh native.

Smith’s platoon rotates guard shifts with another platoon within the company.

“(The mission) is expected to last approximately three weeks; it is going to take as long as the divers need to actually remove the pontoons from the bottom of the river bed,” he said.

Capt. Yosif Aobid Mhmod, chief of force security for the Fallujah Iraqi Police Department, has worked closely with both the infantry platoons and the engineers on site.

Mhmod said the bridge is important to the local population because it is the only link between Habaniyah and Saqlawiyah.

The Saqlawiyah Bridge is just one part of the U.S. military’s joint mission in the area, said Smith.

“Right now we have a platoon working with the Iraqi Army, training them on patrols and Ranger tactics, bettering them at that,” he said.

The local population and Iraqi officials are appreciative of the efforts U.S. Soldiers put forth to help build the new bridge, Mhmod, a Falhat, Iraq, native, said through an interpreter.

“We have good coordination between the IPs and the U.S. Army,” said Mhmod. “We appreciate them to offer the assistance for (this project); it will be very helpful for the Iraqi people.”

First Lt. Joseph M. Lunn, the diving officer for the 86th Engineer Dive Team, arrived on site with his team Oct. 5, and conducted their first two dives that day.

The river is 40 feet deep at its lowest point and flows at a speed of roughly five knots, although the divers experienced gusts of up to eight knots, said Lunn, a Novi, Mich., native.

A typical current is about one or two knots, he said. The faster currents they experience on the site can push the divers off the project and cause them to become disoriented, said Lunn

“This is probably one of the top five currents that these guys have seen,” he said. “It is extremely fast.”

To combat the extreme current, the divers’ assistants, called tenders, tighten or loosen a rope attached to their diver to help keep them from becoming disoriented, said Lunn.

Once the pontoons have been located, Lunn said he expects to have all of the sunken pontoon sections extracted in roughly two weeks, despite the extreme current.

Sgt. Benjamin Lane, a lead diver for the 86th EHD, was the stand-by diver during the first dive of the day Oct. 6. Each dive requires a stand-by in case of any emergencies, said Lane.

Lane, a Berthoud, Colo., native, said he has been diving for the Army for more than four years, but this is his first deployment to Iraq.

The length of a dive depends on its depth, said Lane.

“If it’s less than 30 feet you can be in there all day,” said Lane. “If it is deeper than that then you have to start dealing with the amount of time you can stay in.”

Staying in deeper water for an extended period of time can have deadly consequences, he said.

“For this particular job, it is about two hour dives,” said Lane.

Lane said he is optimistic about the Saqlawiyah Bridge mission.

“Sometimes it can be difficult, but it is a good experience to have,” said Lane.



Members of the 86th Engineer Dive Team act as dive assistants, called tenders, helping the divers in the water combat the current of the Euphrates River Oct. 6 near Marjayoon, Taqaddum, Iraq.

# new bridge possible in Iraq

Spc. David M. Pulver, diver second class for the 86th Engineer Dive Team and a Honolulu native, is helped out of his gear after a roughly two-hour dive in the Euphrates River Oct. 6 near Marine Air Base, Al Taqaddum, Iraq.



Sgt. David B. Craig, a lead diver for the 86th Engineer Dive Team and a Madison, Wis., native, and Spc. David M. Pulver, diver second class for the 86th EDT and a Honolulu native, emerge after a roughly 2-hour dive in the Euphrates River Oct. 6 near Marine Air Base, Al Taqaddum, Iraq.

Sgt. Benjamin Lane, a lead diver for the 86th Engineer Dive Team, acts as the stand-by diver on the Euphrates River Oct. 6 near Marine Air Base, Al Taqaddum, Iraq.

# Religious dance team brings inspiration to Taji

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. KORY SMITH  
10TH SUST. BDE. PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – The Anointed Praise Dance Team is a spiritual dance group founded before B Company, 101st Finance Management Company of Troops Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade arrived at Camp Taji, Iraq.

When the old unit redeployed, Sgt. Felicia Burnett, noncommissioned officer in charge of customer vendor pay service with B Co., and a Yazoo City, Miss., native, took charge and never looked back.

Cpl. Lucrecia Ruffin, a military pay analyst in B Co., said the dance team has five members and has performed countless times at the Camp Taji Ministry Center.

“The group practices there three

times a week, but on performance weeks we practice at least five times a week,” Ruffin said. “Performances are held every second and fourth Sunday of the month.”

Burnett said the dancers’ past experience makes performances easier to train for.

“A lot of hard work and dedication goes in to preparation for each performance,” she said. “Most of the group has some kind of dance background, so it makes it a lot easier to teach them.”

The dancers said dancing is their way of expressing themselves in the church setting, just like singing in the choir.

Upon redeploying to Fort Campbell, Ky., Burnett said she plans to start a spiritual dance mission.

If anyone is interested in being a part of the Anointed Praise Dance Team, please contact her at the finance building located behind the post office here, she said.



Pvt. Teneka Lindsay, a human resources specialist with the 1st Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division and a Durham, N.C., native, dances during the Anointed Praise Dance Team performance Sept. 1 at Camp Taji, Iraq.

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# 13th ESC dunks one for charity

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), sponsored a 3-on-3 coed basketball charity tournament at the East Gym at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, to kick off the unit’s Combined Federal Campaign fundraising efforts.

The event raised \$910 and had 10 participating teams, said 1st Lt. Britany K. Haynes, the officer in charge of reception, replacement, return to duty, rest and recuperation, and redeployment/casualty operations in the finance/human resources operations cell for the 13th ESC, and the 13th ESC CFC representative who organized the event.

The winning team for the evening was the Buckets, which was made up of three noncommissioned officers from the 80th Ordnance Battalion.

The real focus of the night, however, was not basketball, but getting out the word about the CFC drive, said Haynes, a Baton Rouge, La., native.

“It was all about awareness and promoting the campaign itself; making sure everyone knows exactly what the CFC is, what it represents and how their contributions are being used,” said Haynes.

Soldiers may donate to any of the more than 2,000 charities that the CFC represents, or they may donate without

specifying a charity, she said.

Any unappropriated funds will be donated to the Wounded Warrior Fund, a charity that helps personnel who have been injured on the battlefield and have difficulties when they get home, said Haynes.

Maj. Linda A. Bass, the human resources plans and operations officer for the 13th ESC, shared her personal experience with one of the programs sponsored by the CFC.

“I lost my brother in combat, up in Mosul,” said Bass, a Bessemer, Ala., native. “He was struck by an (improvised explosive device).”

Bass said she was her brother’s official escort home. She had her father settle all of his affairs and about a month after the event, she realized she was not handling the loss of her brother in a healthy manner.

“I had no outlet whatsoever for my grief,” said Bass. “My family was falling apart, my daughter was out of control; it was unbelievable.”

She said she found her outlet within the survivors counseling program offered through the tragedy assistance program for survivors. The program gave her a chance to talk to someone else going through a similar situation and grieving process, she said.

Bass said, “Without all of us giving, these organizations could not help people, like me, who need it most.”

Service members jump for the ball at the 3-on-3 coed basketball charity tournament Oct. 4 in support of the Combined Federal Campaign at the East Gym at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.



# 13th ESC CG visits troops in MND-S

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

BASRAH, Iraq – Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz, commanding general of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), visited southern Iraq Oct. 1, where the 36th Sustainment Brigade took charge of logistics operations at Contingency Operating Locations Basrah and Bucca, Iraq, in September.



Basrah is home to the 34th Infantry Division of the Minnesota National Guard.

Bucca was a detainee operation center until the last detainee was moved out of the prison camp Sept. 17.

Now, units on COL Bucca provide military transition teams and a part of entry team to work with the Iraqi Security Forces and the Umm Qasar Port Authority in an effort to get the port fully functional. In addition, the ice plant located there provides potable water to the local communities, said Bucca's commander, Marine Col. Daniel J. Lund.

At Basrah, Wentz toured the supply support area, the ammunition transfer and holding point, and the fuel point. He also visited the ice plant at Bucca.

Wentz also met with the Deputy Commanding General for Multi-Na-



Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz, commanding general, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), discusses the responsible drawdown of U.S. troops and forces from Iraq with Contingency Operating Location Bucca commander, Marine Col. Daniel J. Lund, during an Oct. 1 visit to COLs Basrah and Bucca.

tional Division-South, Brig. Gen. Gerald E. Lang in Basrah.

During the tour, Wentz was briefed on the SSA operations by the officer in charge of the SSA at Basrah, 2nd Lt. Jackie Oeser, with the 308th Brigade Support Battalion, 36th Sustainment Brigade, 13th ESC.

"At first we did struggle because it was tough managing all the equipment, but my Soldiers did a good job of getting everything under control,"

said Oeser.

Oeser, a graduate of the United States Military Academy, class of 2008, said the backup of supplies causes productivity to slow down, but her team is working 12 to 14-hour shifts to alleviate that stress.

"My (noncommissioned officers) have great ideas and we are working to get to a point by the end of October to never be backed up like this again," said Oeser, a Montgomery, Ala., native.

Wentz encouraged the unit to continue improving the area for the next unit.

"It's frustrating right now, but you have to remember how difficult it was for you so when it's time for you to leave, you don't leave it like this for the next unit," said Wentz. "I look forward to coming back in November to see it all done."

Wentz continued his tour at the ATHP at Basrah, which supplies ammunition to all the troops in the southern Iraq region.

"The NCOs run (ATHP) like a well-oiled machine," said Lt. Col. Michael Phillips, commander, 308th BSB. "They're great NCOs and the training they help provide, such as close quarter marksmanship, helps keep us safe."

Overall, Wentz said he was pleased with the visit and will take the lessons learned back to Balad, but he also left a message for the Soldiers of COL Bucca and COL Basrah.

"Enforcing simple tasks and simple standards is the difference between right and wrong," said Wentz. "It's up to you leaders out here, not us at Balad to get that message to your Soldiers."

He said discipline and standards make the difference between Soldiers getting hurt and doing the right thing.

Wentz said, "We have to do our part to set the right conditions for the Soldiers that follow us."

## Soldiers learn to communicate on the job with Iraqis

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Every day, local-national convoys with the Iraqi Transportation Network travel through an entry control point to get onto Joint Base Balad, Iraq.



Soldiers with the ITN escort platoon, 699th Maintenance Company

out of Fort Irwin, Calif., are responsible for escorting the ITN drivers and vehicles during their time at JBB.

When vehicles arrive on base, they are staged in the frustration yard. The drivers then wait in the holding area until all the drivers and trucks in the convoy have been verified.

"We organize them by (transportation movement request) and make sure we have the right trucks going to the right places," said Pfc. Joseph Hol-

land, an ITN escort with the 699th.

The 699th provides for the basic needs of the drivers, said Spc. Tyler Norris, an ITN escort with the platoon and a Las Vegas native. The drivers receive water while they wait to get back in their trucks, he said, and if the drivers have to stay overnight in the frustration yard, the unit provides meals.

This partnership with the Iraqi trucking companies led to an intermingling of cultures between Soldiers and local nationals, said Holland, a Columbus, Ohio native.

"Working with the Iraqis really broke down a lot of cultural barriers and learned biases," said Holland. "A lot of people think they're all terrorists and fear them, but that's not the case. They're a great group of individuals."

Waleed Shaker Youssef, a driver for the ITN and native of Baghdad, said, through an interpreter, he

has worked with Soldiers at different bases for five years and has enjoyed the experience.

Norris said the language barrier can be challenging at first.

"Most of them understand us," said Norris. "We use a lot of hands and arm signals, and understanding Arabic is a lot easier than actually speaking it."

He said most communication is easy enough when gestures fill in the blanks, but there are times they need a translator to convey specific instructions.

The Iraqis are not as different from Americans as some would think, said Holland. There are more similarities than differences, he said.

After drivers have been cleared through security, 699th Soldiers escort them to the central receiving and shipping point, where they wait until their trucks are ready to be loaded, said Norris.

The long hours involved with escorting the ITN drivers are part of a working relationship, Norris said.

The drivers have been given an opportunity to make an honest living through the partnership, said Youssef.

"As far as Iraqi to American, American to Iraqi, they understand our concepts, our goals and what has to go on," said Norris.



Spc. Tyler Norris, an Iraqi Transportation Network escort with the 699th Maintenance Company and a Las Vegas native, plays a game with an ITN driver as they wait in the frustration yard Oct. 7 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

# JBB hosts Hispanic heritage luncheon

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. RYAN TWIST  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – In observance of Hispanic Heritage Month, service members competed in art and essay writing contests, with the winners announced during a luncheon at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation east lounge Oct. 8 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

“The contest theme was ‘What Hispanic heritage means to me,’” said Master Sgt. Scott D. Shockley, an equal opportunity adviser with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary). “The purpose of the contest is to enhance educational awareness, by highlighting some of the achievements and contributions that Hispanic Americans have made to this nation.”

Sgt. 1st Class Johnnie M. Mitchell, also an equal opportunity adviser with the 13th ESC, said her Hispanic battle buddy, Master Sgt. Rita Cossio, is a positive influence with her ability to handle life’s trials and tribulations. She said Cossio’s story, which she told at the luncheon, helped her better understand Cossio as a person and Hispanics as a whole.

Cossio, an Arcadia, Calif., native, said she needed to tell her story from her perspective so people would understand.

“It was really an emotional event for me, but it was also a time to stand up and tell who I was, where I came from and especially what my parents did for me and for my brothers and sisters,” said Cossio, the deployed sexual assault coordinator with the 13th ESC. “I think many, many of the Soldiers have the same story as I do.”

Cossio said Hispanic Heritage Month is a time for people to come together.

“When they asked me to speak ... I really didn’t think I had a story,” said Cossio. “I looked at my past. I looked at what my family had done for me



Sgt. Gloria M. Corrales, with the 72nd Signal Battalion out of Manheim, Germany, and Pfc. Juan A. Gonzalez, with E Battery, 151 Field Artillery out of Anoka, Minnesota, dance at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation east lounge Oct. 8, for the Hispanic Heritage luncheon at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Corrales, a West Palm Beach, Fla., native, has been Latin dancing for five years and Gonzalez, a Ramsey, Minn., native, has been Latin dancing for 12 years.

and where my parents came from and I thought, ‘I can tell it.’”

She said her father, an immigrant from Mexico, had perseverance and was determined to live the American dream.

He suffered to help her get where she is today, she said.

“He always told me, ‘You know sweetheart, you are who you are because of where I came from,’” said Cossio, “That

has always been in my heart.”

She said even though she is married, she keeps her father’s last name to carry on his legacy.

“When the committee chose Master Sgt. Cossio as the guest speaker for today’s event, they made an excellent choice,” said Shockley, a Chamois, Miss., native. “She is one of the most caring and professional (noncommissioned officers) that I ever worked with. I think she is a great representation of her culture and heritage.”

Cossio said Hispanics have a rich history that individuals sometimes forget, failing to remember that Hispanics are Americans as well. She said they do not realize America is a melting pot.

“I think it’s Hispanics in all Latin communities; sometimes people forget the richness, the happiness, the boldness we bring as a culture,” said Cossio.

Air Force Staff Sgt. Armad Todd, weapons director with the 727th Expeditionary Air Control Squadron out of Salt Lake City and a Fresno, Calif., native, won first place in the essay contest. Chief Warrant Officer 3 Israel Rivera, the battalion maintenance technician with the 72nd Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) out of Manheim, Germany, and a Waukegan, Ill., native, won second place. Spc. Ryan Johns, a health care specialist with the 248th Area Support Medical Company out of Marietta, Ga., and a Fort Worth, Texas, native, won third place for the essay contest.

Air Force Master Sgt. Chad Arnold, superintendent of plans and programs with the 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron and a Fort Worth, Texas, native, won first place in the art contest. Staff Sgt. Lozano, administrator noncommissioned officer in charge with the 847th Human Resource Company out of Fort Snelling, Minn., and an Edina, Minn., native, won second place. Capt. John Contreras, a MC-12 Liberty aircraft pilot with the 362nd Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron out of Ramstein Air Force Base, Germany, won third place in the art contest.

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# Uncle, nephew serve together, continue military tradition

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
STAFF SGT. JEFF LOWRY  
TASK FORCE 38  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The Army is often called a family and, for two Indiana National Guard Soldiers serving in Iraq, that description rings true.

Lt. Col. Dan Kozlowski and his nephew, Capt. Rodney Gervais, are in different sections of Task Force 38, but both are stationed at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"I got off that plane in Iraq and there's my nephew, meeting me at 4 a.m. and saying 'Welcome to Iraq, Uncle Dan,'" said Kozlowski, the Task Force 38 staff judge advocate.

Kozlowski, an Indianapolis native, mobilized with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 38th Combat Aviation Brigade in July. Gervais deployed with Company C, 1st Battalion, 137th Aviation Regiment in March, as the unit's commander. The two Indiana Guard aviation units are headquartered in Shelbyville, Ind.

"I figured it would be nice to meet and welcome him here," said Gervais, a Crown Point, Ind., native.

As the company commander, he said he did not always have a peer to chat with and found the position somewhat

lonely. After his uncle arrived, he had a Soldier and family member he could lean on, he said.

"It's good to have him here," said Gervais, "to take my hat off and have somebody to talk to."

The two said being on base together, while not quite like a family reunion, provides a familial connection.

"It brings a little of home here," said Gervais.

The two frequently have lunch or other meals together, they said.

Though the Army dictates missions and decides where Soldiers are deployed, a similar scenario happened five years ago, when both Soldiers were in Stabilization Force 15 in 2004, helping Bosnian reconstruction efforts, they said.

"It's just like it's always been," said Kozlowski. "Whether doing something in Indy, doing something in Lake County, doing something in Bosnia, doing something in Iraq; he's just always been there, part of the same family."

The Guard Soldiers come from a family steeped in military service, they said. Kozlowski's father and Gervais' grandfather both served in World War II, and Gervais' father served two tours in Vietnam.

Kozlowski, whose father died when he was 14, said he looked up to his brother-in-law who was a big influence on him.

"He picked up that role of father or big brother," said Kozlowski. "His ex-



Indiana National Guard Soldiers, Lt. Col. Dan Kozlowski and Capt. Rodney Gervais, pose for a photograph at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Kozlowski, 38th Combat Aviation Brigade staff judge advocate, is Gervais' uncle. Gervais is the C Company, 1st Battalion, 137th Aviation Regiment commander, and they are both assigned to Task Force 38.

periences over there in Vietnam are the reason why I joined 30 years ago."

Gervais' father was an enlisted infantry Soldier with the 101st Airborne Division, and he received the Purple Heart twice, Gervais said.

"He's absolutely an inspiration, to get through two tours there and accomplish what he accomplished," said Gervais.

Gervais has roughly three more

months left in his deployment and his uncle is scheduled for roughly 10 more, but both said they are glad for the other's presence here in the desert.

"It's good to have somebody to bend their ear," said Gervais of his uncle.

Kozlowski agreed.

"Deploying with my nephew twice; what's that all about?" said Kozlowski. "That's a blessing. What a way to deploy."

## Pilot flies into Indiana history books

BY SPC. BETH GORENC  
TASK FORCE 38, PUBLIC AFFAIRS

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – While flying troops and supplies between contingency operating locations throughout Iraq, an Indiana National Guard Soldier made history.

Chief Warrant Officer Chuck Sawyer, a UH-60 Black Hawk standardization instructor pilot with C Company, 1st Battalion, 137th Aviation Regiment, flew his 1,000th combat hour Sept. 22 and became the first Indiana National Guard Soldier to do so.

"It's an honor to be the first one," said Sawyer, a Shelbyville, Ind., native. "It's a capstone achievement in an aviation career."

During his first deployment to Iraq in 2005 with D Company, 126th Aviation Regiment, Sawyer flew roughly 650 hours. This deployment, Sawyer

has flown roughly 390 hours thus far.

"For an aviator, it takes a lot of dedication, a lot of study and a lot of time to get good at what you're doing," he said.

Sawyer said he was not the first person to achieve this distinction.

"Soldiers from the Vietnam War have flown more than 1,000 combat hours," he said. "I learned to fly from those veterans when I was young."

As an experienced Soldier, pilot and mentor, Sawyer said his goal was not to reach the history-making title, but to pass his knowledge and skills to younger aviators.

"Even though we are in a combat



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

Indiana National Guard Chief Warrant Officer Chuck Sawyer, instructor pilot for C Company, 1st Battalion, 137th Aviation Regiment, stands by a UH-60 Black Hawk Sept. 28 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. He flew his 1,000th combat hour while deployed in Iraq.

zone, a non-training environment, I want to pass on as much information and training as possible to the younger guys," he said. "My goal is to ensure pilots get the best training possible."

Indiana Army National Guard Spc.

Donald Tharp, also with C Co., said Sawyer provided guidance and mentoring to everyone.

"When I first starting flying, I was nervous," said Tharp. "He pulled me to the side and helped me calm down."

Sawyer's mentorship did not stop at comforting the specialist during that first flight, Tharp said.

"He's always pushing people to study academics of the aircraft," said Tharp. "He is always pushing people to be better at what they do."

First Sgt. James Hudnall, with C Co., said Sawyer is an asset to the company and the deployment.

"He is a very fit, dedicated and knowledgeable Soldier who is extremely confident," Hudnall said. "He is representative of the loyalty and professionalism of the military in general."

Hudnall said he was pleased with what Sawyer achieved, but the company's Soldiers will remain focused on their mission while in Iraq.

"We will keep on driving until we get home," said Hudnall.

# Sudoku

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

Last week's answers

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

Level: Hard

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	9			3				

# TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. What was the first Arnold Schwarzenegger movie to win four Academy Awards?
2. Who is the most voluptuous female in Toontown?
3. What movie earned Tom Hanks his third straight Oscar nomination, in 1996?
4. What Marx Brother's name spelled backwards is the name of a daytime talk show host?
5. What director earned a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart during his tour of duty in Vietnam?

1. Terminator 2 2. Jessica Rabbit 3. Apollo 13 4. Harpo's 5. Oliver Stone

## JB 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

1700 Provider Chapel

### 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)

### Thursday

1100 Air Force Hospital

### Mon., Wed., Fri.

1700 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

### Monday-Friday

1130 555th Engineer Bde. (Bldg. 7200)

### JEWISH SHABBAT SERVICES- Friday

1700 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

### Saturday

0930 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

### ISLAMIC PRAYER - Friday

1700 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

### ISLAMIC PRAYER - Friday

1230 Provider Chapel

### PAGAN/WICCAN FELLOWSHIP - Thursday

1900 The Shack

### Saturday

1900 The Shack

### GREEK ORTHODOX - Sunday

0900 Provider Annex

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CALL:

Gilbert Chapel: 443-7703

Provider Chapel: 433-2430

Freedom Chapel: 443-6303

## JB BALAD ACTIVITIES

<b>INDOOR POOL</b> Swim Lessons: Mon., Wed., - 6 p.m. Tue., Thu., Sat., - 6:30 p.m. Aqua Training: Tue., Thu., - 7:30 p.m., 8:30 p.m.	a.m., 5-6 p.m. Edge Weapons & Stick Fighting Training: Tue., Thur., Sat., - 8-10 p.m.	p.m. Caribbean Night: Friday- 8 p.m. Chess & Dominoes Tourney: Friday- 8 p.m. Salsa Class: Saturday- 8:30 p.m. Poker: Saturday- 7:30 p.m.	CC Cross Fit: Monday- Saturday- 10:30 p.m. Cross Fit: Mon., Wed., Fri., - 5:45 a.m., 7 a.m., 3 p.m., 6 p.m. Tue., Thu., - 7 a.m., 3 p.m. Sunday- 5:45 a.m., 3 p.m. P90x: Monday- Saturday- 4:30 a.m., 4 p.m., 10 p.m., 12 a.m. Soccer: Tue., Thu., - 8:45 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Wednesday- 8 p.m. MACP Level 1: Friday- 8 p.m. 5 on 5 Basketball: Saturday- 8 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. Saturday- 8:30 p.m. Darts: Saturday- 8:30 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.	Friday- 7 p.m. Aerobics: Monday, Wednesday, Friday- 7 p.m. Body by Midget Toning Class: Tue., Thu., - 7 p.m. Dodge ball Game: Tuesday- 7:30 p.m. Furman's Martial Arts: Mon., Wed., Sun., - 1 p.m. Gaston's Self-Defense Class: Fri., Sat., - 7 p.m. Open court basketball: Thursday- 7 p.m. Open court soccer: Mon., Wed., - 7 p.m. Zingano Brazilian Jui Jitsu: Tue., Thu., - 8:30 p.m.
<b>EAST REC- REATION CENTER</b> 4-ball tourney: Sunday- 8 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Monday- 8 p.m. Karaoke: Monday- 8 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	<b>EAST REC- REATION CENTER</b> 4-ball tourney: Sunday- 8 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Monday- 8 p.m. Karaoke: Monday- 8 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	<b>H6 FITNESS CENTER</b> Spin: Sunday- 9 a.m. Monday- Wed., Fri., - 2 a.m., 8 a.m. 2 p.m., 7 p.m., 9 p.m. Tue., Thu., - 5:45 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Saturday- 9 a.m., 7 p.m. Boxing: Sunday- 4 p.m. Tue., Thu., - 2 p.m. Boot Camp: Sunday- 8:45 a.m. Tue., Thu., - 7 p.m. Power Abs: Mon., Tue., Thu., - 8 p.m. Friday- 9 p.m.	<b>H6 FITNESS CENTER</b> Spin: Sunday- 9 a.m. Monday- Saturday- 4:30 a.m., 4 p.m., 10 p.m., 12 a.m. Soccer: Tue., Thu., - 8:45 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Wednesday- 8 p.m. MACP Level 1: Friday- 8 p.m. 5 on 5 Basketball: Saturday- 8 p.m.	<b>H6 RECREATION CENTER</b> Bingo: Sunday- 8 p.m. Texas	<b>WEST REC- REATION CENTER</b> Green Bean Karaoke: Sun., Wed., - 7:30pm 9-ball tourney: Monday- 8 p.m.	<b>WEST REC- REATION CENTER</b> 3 on 3 basketball tourney: Saturday- 7:30 p.m. Floor hockey: Mon., Wed., Fri., - 8-10 p.m.

## UPCOMING SPORTS ON AFN



### Wednesday 10/14/09

College Football Primetime: Arkansas State @ Louisiana-Monroe, Live 3 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 National League Divisional Series - Game 5: Teams TBD (if nec.), Live 3:30 a.m. AFN/sports  
 American League Divisional Series - Game 5: Teams TBD (if nec.) Live 11 p.m. AFN/sports

### Thursday 10/15/09

ESPN College Football Primetime: Boise State @ Tulsa, Live 3 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 American League Divisional Series - Game 5: Teams TBD (if nec.), Live 3:30 a.m. AFN/sports  
 AMA Motocross Lites: Southwick, Tape Delayed 7 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 US Men's Soccer - World Cup Qualifier: USA vs Costa Rica (RKF Stadium; Washington, DC), Tape Delayed 8 p.m. AFN/sports

### Friday 10/16/09

San Jose Sharks @ Washington Capitals, Live 2 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 National League Championship Series - Game 1: Teams TBD, Live 3:30 a.m. AFN/sports  
 St. Louis Blues @ Phoenix Coyotes, Live 5 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 College Football Primetime: Cincinnati @ South Florida, Tape Delayed 10 a.m. AFN/sports

### Saturday 10/17/09

NASCAR Nationwide Series: Dollar General 300 (Lowe's Motor Speedway, Concord, NC), Live 3 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 ESPN College Football Primetime: Pittsburgh @ Rutgers, Live 4 a.m. AFN/prime pacific  
 American League Championship Series - Game 1: Teams TBD, Live 3:30 a.m. AFN/sports  
 National League Championship Series - Game 2: Teams TBD, Tape Delayed 2 p.m. AFN/sports

### Sunday 10/18/09

NASCAR Sprint Cup Series: Bank of America 500 (Lowe's Motor Speedway, Concord, NC), Live 2:25 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 American League Championship Series - Game 2: Teams TBD, Live 3 a.m. AFN/sports  
 2009 ALLI Dew Tour: PlayStation Pro (Orlando, FL), Tape Delayed 8 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 Chicago Fire @ New England Revolution, Tape Delayed 10 a.m. AFN/xtra

### Monday 10/19/09

NBA Mexico Game: Phoenix Suns vs Philadelphia 76ers (Monterrey, Mexico), Live 2 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 Sunday Night Football: Chicago Bears @ Atlanta Falcons, Live 3:15 a.m. AFN/sports  
 Los Angeles Galaxy @ Houston Dynamo, Tape Delayed 5 a.m. AFN/xtra

### Tuesday 10/20/09

2009 American League Championship Series - Game 3: Teams TBD, Tape Delayed 12 a.m. AFN/sports  
 Monday Night Football: Denver Broncos @ San Diego Chargers, Tape Delayed 4 a.m. AFN/sports  
 2009 American League Championship Series - Game 4: Teams TBD, Live 5 p.m. AFN/sports

# Arts & Entertainment

## 'Jennifer's Body': Survey says, it stinks!

BY SPC. NAVEED ALI SHAH  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



For the review of "Jennifer's Body" we are joined by Sgt. Jayson Hoffman and Sgt. Keith VanKlompberg – the Ebert and Roper of Balad – with a guest appearance by Staff Sgt. Joel Gibson. We researched this movie together. And, to quote the movie, the "paranormal research" says this movie sucks.

**VanKlompberg:** The entire plot is laid out in the first 10 minutes – and 15 minutes later Hoffman was apologizing to me.

**Hoffman:** That's true. I would now like to issue a public apology to anyone

who saw this movie because I encouraged it. Also, if you're planning on seeing the movie, I strongly discourage you.

Produced by the same people who brought you 2008's surprise hit "Juno," "Jennifer's Body" is a about a high school girl who becomes a demon and eats boys, starring Megan Fox (Transformers 2) as the popular girl who uses her sex appeal to mask her insecurities. Amanda Seyfried (Mama Mia!) plays her nerdy best friend. This is the second screenplay written by Diablo Cody. Her first, "Juno," was a smash hit.

**Hoffman:** An overrated smash hit.

**VanKlompberg:** "Juno" was carried on the shoulders of Ellen Page and a hilarious Michael Cera. Diablo Cody takes the annoying ultra-modern

teen slang that was fresh and almost tolerable in "Juno" to catastrophic levels in "Jennifer's Body."

**Hoffman:** Horrendous. Terrible. It's just plain awful.

**VanKlompberg:** The dialogue goes completely overboard.

**Hoffman:** I feel the movie was a very confused. It didn't know if it was a horror or a comedy or a teen flick. If I may suggest something, I think if trash was a genre, that's what "Jennifer's Body" would be.

Another relic from "Juno," – J.K. Simmons plays a ridiculous role in "Jennifer's Body" as the oblivious, eccentric high school teacher with a claw for hand. He is a talented actor and he was vastly underused in this film.

**VanKlompberg:** My favorite

part of the movie was when I had to use the bathroom. I stood at the urinal and debated not coming back into the theater.

**Hoffman:** I'd rather see Norm from Cheers belly dance than see this movie again.

**Gibson:** In this movie, Fox proves without a doubt that she was the finest actress in her old high school.

Final thoughts?

**Hoffman:** Diablo Cody thinks she writes witty banter, but it's annoying and the worst part is nobody talks like that. Fox is overrated and Seyfried is more fun to watch and listen to. And because I didn't pay to get in, I can't ask for my money back, but If I could have those 80 minutes of my life back, that would be a start.

## Finding 'The Lost Symbol,' again

BY SPC. NAVEED ALI SHAH  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



Dan Brown is at it again and his latest work, "The Lost Symbol," sold a million copies in a week and it now sits loftily atop the New York Times Best Seller list.

However, in this writer's opinion, a book hasn't made it in today's world until the Internet accepts it. In the six years since Brown's last book, "The Da Vinci Code," was published, a lot has changed. Twitter, for example, is now a ruling body in cyberspace – its masses choosing life or death for any gladiator who is brave or foolish enough to

step into the cyber arena.

There is hope, though, for "Symbol," because there are already Dan Brown sequel generators on several Web sites. All you have to do is plug in the city and a shadowy organization and you've got a do-it-yourself sequel starring none other than Brown's own magnanimous title character, Robert Langdon. Some call that stupid; I call it hope.

"Symbol," like its predecessors, begins with world renowned "professor of symbology," Langdon, being summoned by dark forces to a dark place where he finds a surprise: blood and gore. Well, to be fair, it was a surprise to Langdon, if not the reader. An appropriately complicated and often baffling

fling pursuit ensues in which innocent lives are threatened unless our hero is able to unlock the mysteries the mysterious man wants unlocked.

The antagonist, Mal'akh, has kidnapped Langdon's friend and is holding him hostage in exchange for Langdon's help in solving an ancient mystery involving the Order of Freemasons. Deciphering the puzzle would ostensibly lead to great power for Mal'akh.

Somehow the Central Intelligence Agency gets involved in the pursuit, though our nation's capitol is clearly under the jurisdiction of the Federal Bureau of Investigations, the Capitol Police, or even the Secret Service before the CIA.

In the end, Brown gives his readers

a sense of enlightenment, which is why I like the "The Lost Symbol," despite its several obvious sticking points.

Apart from the predictability of his plot, and the question of how the CIA got involved, the problems with the novel are not huge for Brown's fans. Just like all his books, the reader can easily get lost in the enjoyable plot, its twists and turns pulling the reader further down the proverbial rabbit's hole.

"The Lost Symbol" also fulfills Brown's other cliché of containing prose so boring there are paragraphs which weigh the novel down like bricks, but for the patient reader, a reward awaits at the end of the yellow brick road.

## OFFICER SPACE



### Sustainer Reel Time Theater

#### Wednesday, Oct. 14

5 p.m. Shorts  
8 p.m. The Hurt Locker

#### Sunday, Oct. 18

2 p.m. Zombieland  
5 p.m. Gamer  
8 p.m. Julie & Julia

#### Thursday, Oct. 15

5 p.m. Shorts  
8 p.m. Surrogates

#### Monday, Oct. 19

5 p.m. The Final Destination  
8 p.m. Zombieland

#### Friday, Oct. 16

2 p.m. Gamer  
5 p.m. Zombieland  
8:30 p.m. Zombieland

#### Tuesday, Oct. 20

5 p.m. Zombieland  
8 p.m. Gamer

#### Saturday, Oct. 17

2 p.m. The Final Destination  
5 p.m. Zombieland  
8 p.m. Gamer

#### Wednesday, Oct. 21

5 p.m. Gaeer  
8 p.m. Julie & Julia



# PHOTOS AROUND IRAQ

U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Tyrone Clakely



An Iraqi officer speaks words of motivates his soldiers while running during physical training Sept. 26 at Camp Taji, in central Iraq.



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

Iraqi Soldiers from 4th Iraqi Army Engineer Regiment, treat a mock casualty's wounds while U.S. Soldiers from the 65th Engineer Battalion, 130th Engineer Brigade, 8th Theater Sustainment Command, observe and evaluate the skills Iraqi Soldiers have learned during a four-day combat lifesavers course Sept. 28 on Contingency Operating Location Speicher, in northern Iraq.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Benjamin Boren

An Iraqi soldier searches a tree while looking for hidden armaments during a joint cache search mission with U.S. Soldiers from the 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Sept. 26, in Al Busayfi, Iraq. The Soldiers were searching for stored weapons and ammunition they had been informed were in area.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Canaan Radcliffe

Children from a local orphanage smile for the camera with their goody bag during a mission with Iraqi Police, Iraqi Soldiers, U.S. Soldiers assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Combat Division, and B Company, 414th Civil Affairs Battalion, to distribute humanitarian aid to an orphanage Sept. 17 in Hawija, Iraq.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Canaan Radcliffe

The sun bursts through the clouds during a mission with the Sons of Iraq, Iraqi Security Forces and U.S. Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, as they head out on a cordon and search mission Sept. 23 near Contingency Operating Location Warrior, in Kirkuk, Iraq.

# NEWS AROUND IRAQ

## US, Federal Police, bring gift of clean water

BAGHDAD – Something as simple as clean water can easily be taken for granted. In Iraq, however, purified drinking water is a luxury not everyone enjoys.

Soldiers of C Troop, 5th Squadron, 73rd Airborne Reconnaissance Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, found a simple filter can have a profound impact Sept. 21, during their visit to the village of al-Tameem, in eastern Baghdad here, Sept. 21.

U.S. troops and Iraqi Federal Police from 2nd Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 1st Federal Police Division arrived in the village and set up shop in an open area, and from there, the combined goodwill team moved on foot from street to street with an FP truck laden with water filters.

“What we did was we went house to house and met with the people,” said Capt. Jeffrey Black, commander of C Troop.

“The FPs hadn’t been in there in a while so we went in to talk to them just to get to know the people, let them know that the FPs and the U.S. forces are here for them.”

Each person who answered the knock received a water filter for their home and the knowledge that U.S. and Iraqi Security Forces had come to help.

They were also given information to use should the need arise, Black said.

“We passed out little tip-line cards, saying, ‘Hey, if there’s a problem, call us, call the FPs,’” he said.

The act was one of charity; more meaningful than the typical aid mission, according to 1st Lt. James Teeter, assigned to C Troop.

“That’s like the poorest area that we’ve got and those people desperately need it,” Teeter said.

“The place is run-down, there’s sewage in the streets and they’ve got no clean water, so it feels good to go out there and be able to give them something useful as opposed to a trinket or a soccer ball - we gave them something that can help them stay healthy.”

The FPs and paratroopers were met with smiles and kind words from children, parents and elders.

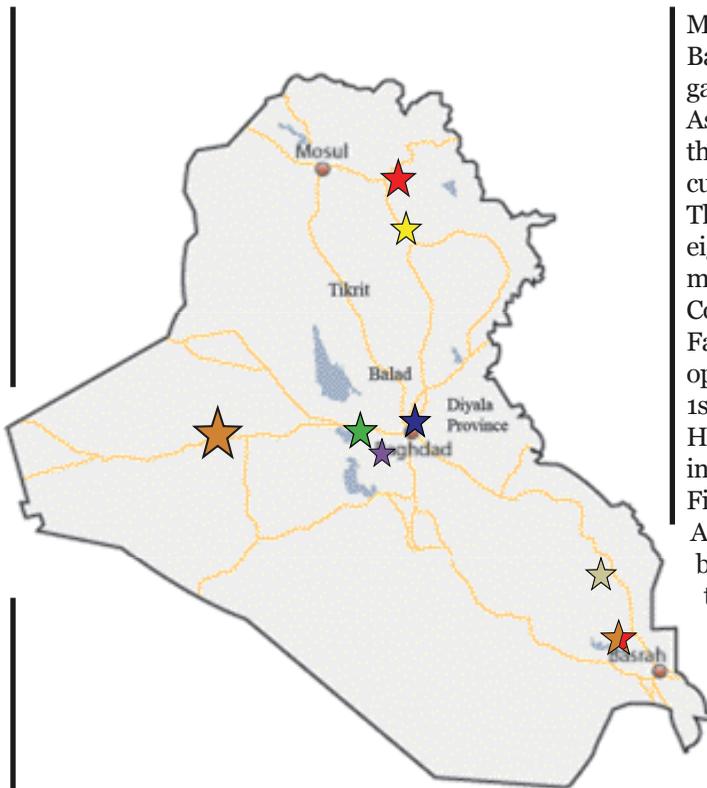
“It’s nice to be able to put a smile on someone’s face,” Teeter said.

The people of al-Tameem will now be able to provide clean drinking water for their families, showing that a simple act of generosity can have profound effects.

## Iraqi Police capture Kirkuk assassination ring member, bombing conspirator

BAGHDAD – Iraqi Security Forces captured six suspects involved in terrorist acts conducted in and around Kirkuk, Mosul and Baghdad in four different security operations today.

Near Tuz Khurmatu, located roughly 69 km southwest of Kirkuk, the 3rd Emergency Services



Unit, with U.S. forces advisers, arrested a suspect involved in an assassination and kidnapping ring that operates in and around the city of Kirkuk. In addition, the suspect played an active role in helping build the vehicle-borne improvised explosive device that destroyed a mosque and killed several Iraqi citizens in Taza June 20.

The security team searched several buildings for the warranted individual and ultimately arrested him without incident. One additional suspect was arrested during the search when, based on his answers to their questions, police determined that he may pose a threat to the local community.

In another security operation, the 3rd General Directorate Salah ad Din Police Unit, with U.S. forces advisers arrested two suspects during a search in Qara Tapa for an al-Qaeda in Iraq mortar cell leader who operates throughout Diyala Province. The suspects were questioned and determined to have connections to al-Qaeda operations in Qara Tapa, which is located approximately 124 km southeast of Kirkuk.

In a third security operation in northern Mosul, the 3rd Brigade, 1st Division Iraqi Army, with U.S. forces advisers, arrested one suspect during a search of two buildings for an AQI member who is responsible for multiple vehicle born improvised explosive device attacks throughout the northern-Iraq city.

In a fourth, security operation taking place in northern Baghdad, Iraqi Army Soldiers and U.S. advisers searched a building known to be used by the terrorist group Khata’ib Hizballah. During this operation, the security team encountered a suspicious individual, who was subsequently arrested without incident.

Iraqi Security Forces have significantly weakened terrorist networks that operate throughout Iraq by conducting routine security operations in search of those facilitating or participating in criminal activity.

## Advise, assist brigade aids detainee release

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – In the ever-complex environment of post-insurgency Iraq, an anti-tank platoon of paratroopers was called upon to perform a detainee release Sept. 23 in Fallujah.

Members of the 3rd Anti-Tank Platoon, D Company, 1st Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division (Advise and Assist Brigade) worked with Iraqi authorities to ensure the safe and orderly release of 14 detainees from U.S. custody in accordance with the Security Agreement.

The Security Agreement is an accord between two sovereign nations, Iraq and the U.S., and shows U.S. commitment to Iraq built on absolute Iraqi sovereignty.

Col. Mahmud Fayyad Ubayd, deputy chief of police for Fallujah, told the detainees the city welcomes them with open arms, but it would not tolerate violence, said Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Fitch.

He said Al Qaeda in Iraq may attempt to coerce the men into conducting illegal acts against the city’s people, said Fitch.

As part of the Army’s first complete advise and assist brigade assigned the mission of security force assistance, AT-3 has been assessing facets of Iraqi politics, economics, security and judicial systems, he said.

“Unlike deployments in the past, the Iraqi security forces and judicial systems seem to be in control,” said Fitch.

Paratroopers of the 504th are accustomed to a high operational tempo in combat, but Iraq has become a different place in the past two years, he said.

Camp Bucca, the largest detention center in Iraq, once holding tens of thousands of detainees, was officially closed Sept. 17.

## Ministry of Interior advisers meet Kurdish Mol lead planners in Irbil Province

IRBIL PROVINCE, Iraq – Advisers from the Iraq Training and Advisory Mission – Ministry of Interior, traveled here in September to meet with financial and planning leaders at the Kurdish Ministry of Interior Headquarters.

Their purpose was to look closely at the KMoI planning processes and explore the possible inter-ministerial exchanges between MoI and KMoI.

“Our field visit to the Kurdistan Region was another essential step in finding ways to bring the two ministries together on important process and policy initiatives,” said ITAM-MoI Planning Adviser J.T. Sebastyn. “By creating or increasing the opportunities for both ministries to come together through professional exchanges and forums, we will be able to strengthen the lines of communication and deepen the knowledge base of each ministry.”

The adviser team consisted of Sebastyn, David Mason, Lt. Col. Mark Schreiber and Max Henry. They met with Kamaran Mahmoud, the general director of properties the Kurdistan Regional Government; Maj. Gen. Abdulla Khaylanni, general director of police; and Dr. Tariq Rashid, general director of administration.

Kamaran stressed the importance of planning in a resource constrained environment. He described the KMoI approach to planning as highly consultative, consensus-based and technology-centric. KMoI plans and executes multi-year construction and modernization projects with the ability to carry funds between fiscal years.

Kamaran also described the current implementation efforts for the Iraq Police Data Management Sys-

tem. The IPDMS database has allowed the ministry to begin automation of personnel records.

Tariq Rashid described the KMoI approach to planning in two ways: annual planning which identifies operational and support resource requirements and long-range planning which identifies new construction and modernization, information technology and operational systems. Examples of long-range planning would be traffic control, national identification cards, and emergency services, he said. Tariq Rashid said he is interested in hosting joint training opportunities with the Ministry of Interior.

David Mason, with the legal adviser team, also explored rule of law issues to gain a greater understanding of the operation of relevant laws in the Kurdish Region of Iraq. His goal was to engage with senior KMoI officials the origin, operation and effectiveness of their legal system, he said.

The GDOP and the general director of administration both expressed a desire to hold future meetings and exchanges with MoI counterparts, to provide them with greater insight into the efficiency and effectiveness of the operations of the KMoI in Irbil.

## Gulf Region Division manages rule of law projects in Al Anbar region

 ANBAR PROVINCE, Iraq – The Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq, in partnership with the Iraqi government, has undertaken a number of projects throughout Iraq to provide a stable, safe environment so the rule of law can flourish under Iraq's emerging democracy.

GRD projects, managed by the Gulf Region District's Ramadi Resident Office and the Al Asad Project Office, include the construction of two new police stations near Ramadi and security upgrades to two courthouses — one in Al Qa'im and one in the ancient city of Hit.

"These projects will allow local judges and rule of law advisers to exert the necessary influence into a previous hostile environment without fear of reprisal," said Maj. Arlo Reese, the officer in charge of the Al Asad Project Office.

Engineers from the Al Asad Project Office are managing both courthouse projects that included the construction of entry control points, security lighting upgrades and the installation of backup generators. The Al Qa'im courthouse project also includes the placement of T-walls surrounding the facility.

Funding for the \$750,000 project was provided by the International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Fund.

The Iraqi-owned Al Mashriq Al Arabee Company is the general contractor for both courthouse projects.

The Muhammadi and Ramadi Highway police stations are of similar design and include the construction of a two-story, 20-meter by 30-meter building that includes office space, a conference room, bathroom and shower facilities, a kitchen and an armory.

Force protection measures for the police stations include T-walls surrounding the building, guard towers, a control entry point and security fencing.

Both stations will have a complete power generation plant with diesel generators.

Lt. Dalone T. Jenkins, the officer in charge of the Ramadi Resident Office, said the police stations are a vital security link for the Ramadi area.

"These police stations are important because they

will provide a platform for Iraq to maintain safety and stability for its citizens," said Jenkins. "This safety and stability extends from major thoroughfares of commercial trade, such as the highways, to the outlying cities, towns and villages. Iraqis are ready to take control of their country."

The Iraqi-owned Altayf Al-Abiad Company is the general contractor for both police station projects. The total cost for both stations is \$4 million with funding provided by the Iraqi Security Force Fund. More than 30 local Iraqis are working on the project, which is scheduled to be completed in early 2010.

The Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq has completed thousands of reconstruction projects in partnership with the U.S. government and the government of Iraq. Since 2004, GRD has completed 5,257 projects throughout Iraq valued at more than \$8.9 billion, and has 361 projects ongoing.

## Combined force clears dangerous route

 BAGHDAD — Whether it is for a new building, a bridge or even a nation, a strong foundation with the proper supports, is what makes it possible to flourish, grow and stand the test of time.

More than 100 senior level U.S. and Iraqi engineers attended the Iraqi Ground Force Command Engineer Conference at Camp Iraqi Heroes, an Iraqi base camp in Baghdad, to discuss theater-wide engineering capabilities and to plan the path forward in security and reconstruction efforts.

"While our mission focus remains the same, we have many changes and challenges facing us," said Maj. Gen. Michael Eyre, commander of the Gulf Region Division and senior engineer at the conference. "It has never been more important for us to bring together our engineering forces, to synchronize our efforts and provide the full spectrum of mutually supporting engineering capabilities and services."

As the reconstruction efforts continue to shift to the Government of Iraq, increasing the number and training of Iraqi engineers is essential to design, construct and maintain the country's infrastructure. Eyre said Iraqi engineers initially worked side-by-side with U.S. engineers only with route clearance, but have continued to increase their capabilities and capacity into full-spectrum engineer operations to include construction, bridging bomb disposal and geospatial operations.

"One of the things I have noticed as I travel across Iraq is that every day you are increasing your capacity to provide dependable engineer support throughout the country — not only for today's missions and projects, but for those of the future," said Eyre. "Your officers, NCOs and Soldiers continue to develop professionally while maintaining reliable engineer support to the Iraqi Army Divisions."

Participants around the room recognized the vital role engineers have in providing essential services and infrastructures to its citizens, but they also noted engineers need the resources — manpower, equipment and training — to accomplish their mission.

"The security environment has improved in Iraq as a result of the work done not only by the Iraqi security forces and the Coalition forces, but also due to the hard work of engineers," said Staff Maj. Gen. Abdul Ameer, Iraqi Ground Force Command chief of staff.

"However, the stage in which we live today and over the past year, indicate that the largest battle ground is the battle for military engineering {assets}. We are here to determine the readiness of our regiments and understand the problems they are facing."

The foundation is the most important part of any construction and its purpose is to support all other parts of the structure so it will function correctly. That

was the intention of the conference, said Eyre.

"Conferences like this are an opportunity for U.S. and Iraqi engineers to continue to work together as partners and engineers and to discuss our shared successes and find resolution to our challenges," said Eyre.

"Each of (the attendees) in this room plays an important role in building strong foundations today for tomorrow — ensuring a stable and self-reliant Iraqi Security Force and a secure, sovereign Iraq."

The Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq has completed thousands of reconstruction projects in partnership with the U.S. government and the government of Iraq. Since 2004, GRD has completed 5,257 projects throughout Iraq valued at more than \$8.9 billion, and has 361 projects ongoing.

## Leaders attend Iraqi International Academy workshop

 BAGHDAD — A three-day conference on English language curriculum development began Sept. 29 to bring together a range of subject matter experts from throughout Iraq to discuss, evaluate and decide on their preferred approach for the Iraqi International Academy.

The conference at the United Kingdom Embassy was co-chaired by Esther Hay from the British Council and David King, the Iraqi International Academy director from Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq.

Included in the Iraqi, U.S. and U.K. attendees were teachers, educators and senior Iraqi leaders, Staff Maj. Gen. Jassim Salim, director of the National Defense University, Staff Brig. Gen. Ayad Al-Rubaye, dean of the Defense Language Institute-Iraq, Brig. Gen. pilot Khalil Serhan, assistant dean of the Defense Language Institute-Iraq, and Wa'el Abasi, director of the Ministerial Training and Development Center for the Minister of Defense.

U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Frank Helmick, MNSTC-I and NATO Training Mission-Iraq commanding general, stressed the importance of the academy.

The IIA will provide English language, professional development skills and deeper awareness of the world beyond Iraq. The English language facilities will allow for deep immersion training, through ready access to the Internet, films, foreign news and views and food, in a modern campus setting. Doing this works toward the interests of the future generations of Iraq.

The curriculum development phase will be the academic foundation for the academy, essential to the capability of the Iraqi Security Forces because the English language is the primary language of the air and seas for engagement internationally.

Jon Wilks, British deputy ambassador, highlighted Britain's commitment to making the IAA a success.

"High-quality English instruction is something we can offer Iraq," Wilks said. "English is a key to reconnecting Iraq to the world. Levels of English proficiency in Iraq were once high and the British Council played a big part in that. I am delighted that the British Council is back in Iraq, ready to help push standards of English in Iraq higher than before and as an active partner in this seminar."

Hay actively engaged the group in open discussion on curricula selection; testing development, learning and teaching styles; managing student needs and expectations; and curriculum design and development.

By working together, exchanging views and experiences, the team came to a joint view.

The academy will use a blended curricula option to provide a richer pool of material to meet student needs. This blended option will allow teachers to better meet gaps in language training throughout the country.

# Phantom Support



U.S. Army photo by Chief Warrant Officer 2 James Neuman

Command Sgt. Maj. Ricky A. Elcan, a St. Louis native, presents a certificate of appreciation to Spc. Wesley VanWinkle, a St. Louis native, for his achievement in the Army combatives competition held at Camp Taji. VanWinkle took fourth place in the competition.



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

Lt. Col. Kristan L.K. Hericks (center) an Irvine, Calif., native, along with Command Sgt. Maj. Paul Swanson, of Perris, Calif., and Maj. Julie Aksamit, of Irvine, Calif., make up the 419th CSSB Command Team. The 419th CSSB successfully completed a 12-month tour at Camp Taji, Iraq, and will redeploy home to Irvine, Calif.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Lisa A. Cope

Three Iraqi children walk past a Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle on their way to school Oct. 6, near Marine Air Base Al Taqqadum, Iraq.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Adam Strange

Sgt. James Hil (left) and Spc. James Hall (right) 776th Maintenance Co., 419th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, both from Tullahoma, Tenn., perform the national anthem during the end of tour awards ceremony for the 776th Maintenance Company.



U.S. Army photo by Maj. Rob Edwards

Runners reach the three-mile water point during the Army Ten-Miler Oct. 4 at Camp Taji, Iraq. More than 300 runners participated in the race.