

EXPEDITIONARY TIMES

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Vol. 2 Issue 42

Finding closure



Wounded veterans return to Iraq, Joint Base Balad

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Going the distance



More than 1,000 run Army Ten-Miler at JBB

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Fiesta



Q-West celebrates Hispanic heritage month

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Soldiers stand tall at moment of truth

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SPC. CORY E. GROGAN
41ST IBCT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

AL ASAD AIR BASE, Iraq – Soldiers from 2nd squad, 1st Platoon, with 2nd Battalion, 218th Field Artillery's A Battery, 41st Infantry



Brigade Combat Team, confronted and effectively overcame the deadliest threat to service members in Iraq, Sept. 22.

As the squad rolled along a routine convoy route, it took a direct hit from an explosively formed projectile. An EFP is metal that forms into a projectile as it travels at a high velocity. This allows it to rip through armor before it explodes, said Sgt. Nathan Wormer, assistant convoy commander with the unit and a Portland, Ore., native.

Soldiers on the truck sustained only minor injuries from the bomb.

Wormer said he and everyone else knew what they needed to do when they heard the route assessment team call out "IED, IED, IED" on the radio.

"Once it happens, all of your knowledge kicks in and it feels just like training," said Parker.

Convoy Commander Sgt.



Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 218th Field Artillery's A Battery, with Oregon's 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, prepare for a mission Oct. 3 at Al Asad, Iraq. Second squad, first platoon was hit by an explosively formed projectile Sept. 22, but none of the group was seriously hurt.

1st Class Richard Parker, a Battleground, Wash., native, said the biggest relief came when he found out everyone was OK after the potentially deadly attack.

After the explosion, the squad provided security as people started coming out of their houses, said Lt. Matt Brewer, first platoon leader and a Sherwood, Ore., native.

"If these guys wouldn't have had the presence of mind not to start shooting, it could

have been a lot worse and they would have been doing the enemy a favor," he said.

The truck, driven by Staff Sgt. Kelshall Rivas, a Weslaco, Texas, native, carried Sgt. Bao Truong, the truck commander, and Pfc. Samuel Price, truck gunner, both Portland, Ore., natives.

"Muscle memory kicked in," said Rivas. "It doesn't matter who you are or what you're driving, the initial explosion can stop you. But af-

ter that, you need to make the right decisions and know what you're doing."

Rivas said his vehicle was in front of a cordoned area, when an unidentified vehicle entered roughly 40 meters away from him.

"I fired a warning shot and thankfully they turned around," he said.

Rivas attributed leadership and discipline to the squad's

SEE EFP ON PAGE 4

Mississippi mechanics run work shops like family business

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq – Mississippi Army National Guard maintenance Soldiers continuously strive to achieve the highest operational readiness ratings



at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

Motor-pool Soldiers with 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms out of Senatobia, Miss., maintain 98 percent of their vehicles at full mission capability.

Numerous factors account for this level of achievement – experienced mechanics, actively-involved vehicle crews, long hours of diligence, dedication to the mission, and building and main-

taining cooperative relations in and outside the battalion, said Maj. Walt Vinzant, 2/198th CAB executive officer and a Senatobia, Miss., native.

"We help each other out like a family," said Sgt. 1st Class Gary L. Tillman, the unit's battalion motor sergeant and a Grenada, Miss., native. "We share ideas, materials, parts. If a shop needs something quick to repair a vehicle, they'll call motor shops

from other companies in the battalion. Then they'll contact units outside the battalion that they've developed good relations with."

This collaborative approach compliments the Army's vehicle maintenance system, which has four levels – unit, direct support, general support and depot, said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Chuck Patterson, battalion

SEE SHOP ON PAGE 4

Balad Blotter

September 30 - October 6

MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT:

A complainant telephoned the law enforcement desk and reported a vehicle accident with injuries at the Taxiway Bravo South Trim road. Patrol and guardian medics arrived on the scene and transported operator number one to the Air Force Theater Hospital for further medical evaluation. Injuries to operator number one were assessed as a bloody nose due to not wearing seat belt and making contact with the airbag and front windshield. Operator number one reported to the law enforcement desk and said via Air Force Form 1168 Statement of Witness, he was driving on the flight line behind vehicle number two, which he was escorting, when he noticed he was coming to a check point. Operator number one said he attempted to stop when his boot got caught between the gas pedal and brake pedal resulting in his inability to brake. Vehicle number one struck the back of vehicle number two. Damage to vehicle number one consisted of the front bumper crushed inward roughly one and a half feet, shattered lights and hood, major fluid leaks, a cracked windshield and driver's side air bag deployment. Damage to vehicle number two consisted of minor scratches and paint transfers to rear bumper.

LARCENY OF PRIVATE PROPERTY:

A complainant contacted the law enforcement desk and reported a larceny had occurred at the East Gym. The complainant said via Air Force Form 1168/Statement of Complainant that he had placed his silver Giant Rainer mountain bicycle in the bicycle rack at the main entrance to the gym. The complainant said when he returned to the rack, he noticed his bicycle was missing. The complainant further said the bicycle was unsecure in the bicycle rack.

FAILURE TO OBEY ORDER:

A complainant telephoned the law enforcement desk and reported a subject with cell phone contraband. A patrol arrived on scene and made contact with the subject. The patrol took possession of the contraband, via DA Form 4137/Evidence/Property Custody Document, and placed currency at the law enforcement desk/Bldg. 7168 for safe keeping. The subject was later released to a supervisor.

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Mental health: secondary victims

By CAPT. STEVE BRASINGTON
COMBAT STRESS CONTROL PSYCHIATRIST



In the previous issue of the Expeditionary Times, I briefly related the death of Pfc. Luke Brown. On the evening before his death, he was drinking at bar near Fort Bragg with his battle buddies, including Sgt. Justin Boyles. Boyles apparently watched as Brown ran into the woods yelling, "I want to die." Boyles led the rescue to bring a drunken Brown out of the woods. Tragically, Brown died and Boyles was charged with his murder.

The military court issued Boyle's verdict recently. Boyles received a bad conduct discharge and two years confinement.

The event changed two lives forever. The secondary victims included these Soldiers' families, the paratroopers close to them and others who knew them.

The defense attorney said, in the Oct. 7th issue of Stars and Stripes, "They were in an impossible situation."

The threshold for safe drinking is no more than 14 drinks in a week for a man or seven for a woman.

On any given day, a man should consume no more than four drinks, while a woman should have no more than three. A drink is defined as 12 ounces of

beer, 4 ounces of wine or 1.5 ounces of liquor.

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism reported, "Young adults in the military are more likely to drink heavily (i.e., consume five or more drinks per typical drinking occasion at least once a week) than older enlistees. Please see <http://www.niaaa.nih.gov> alcohol alert 68 for more information.

Harmful use of alcohol can potentially place people in impossible circumstances, resulting in unintended consequences.

The Army has resources to assist you.

In the October 10th issue of Stars and Stripes, Brig. Gen. Steve Jones, the head of Pacific Regional Medical Command and Tripler Army Medical Center, said data from troops returning from Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom revealed rising levels of alcohol abuse and related incidents, yet there has been no increase enrollment for alcohol treatment.

World-class resources are available. The Army has recently hired more mental health and substance abuse counselors to meet the needs of Soldiers. If appropriate, use available behavioral health resources.

Recovery for substance abuse is possible. People do change. War certainly changes people. Your health is important. Allow others to benefit from the positive change in you.

SOLDIERS ATTACKED: training kicks in, 41st IBCT Soldiers react

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ability to keep the situation from getting out of control.

"Parker calmed everybody," he said. "You need that leadership. He took control and that is what needed to happen."

Parker said, "I cannot be prouder of my guys. Everyone did an outstanding job, everybody was calm."

The situation has helped the squad become more aware, said Wormer. Everyone was tense for a couple days, but they all still wanted to get back out and do their job, he said.

"There's no way we could have handled this much better, and we are not going to show weak-

ness," said Wormer.

Rivas echoed the sentiment.

"You take the experience and learn from it and strengthen what you did right," he said. "I am solid and I have a job I am ready to do. I know I want to be in the (route assessment team) because I know I can handle everything that goes with it. They left me to fight another day, and my resolve is strong."

Rivas, who joined the squad after volunteering for the deployment, said he is more comfortable with this group of comrades than he has been with any other group in his military career.

"It helps a lot knowing you have people who have your back," he said.

EXPEDITIONARY TIMES

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

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The Fair Credit Reporting Act

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



It is important to obtain a periodic financial check up just as it is important to obtain periodic health and dental checkups. It is particularly important for Department of Defense civilians and service members to periodically review their credit reports because a negative credit history can have adverse effects on your security clearance. Moreover, you can pay higher interest rates and premiums due to inaccurate credit reporting.

The Fair Credit Reporting Act requires each of the nationwide consumer reporting companies – Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion – to provide you with a free copy of your credit report, at your request, once every 12 months. The FCRA promotes the accuracy and privacy of information in the files of the nation’s consumer reporting companies. The Federal Trade Commission, the nation’s consumer protection agency, enforces the FCRA with respect to consumer reporting companies.

A credit report includes information on where you live, how you pay your bills, and whether you have been sued, arrested or have filed for bankruptcy.

Nationwide consumer reporting companies sell the information in your report to creditors, insurers, employers and other businesses that use it to evaluate your applications for credit, insurance, employment or renting a home.

The three nationwide consumer reporting companies have set up a central Web site, a toll-free telephone number, and a mailing address through which you can order your free annual report. To order, visit <https://www.annualcreditreport.com>, call 1-877-322-8228, or complete the Annual Credit Report Request Form at <http://www.ftc.gov/credit> and mail it to: Annual Credit Report Request Service, P.O. Box 105281,

Atlanta, GA 30348-5281. Do not contact the three nationwide consumer reporting companies individually. They provide free annual credit reports only through the above resources.

You may order your reports from each of the three nationwide consumer reporting companies at the same time, or you can order your report from each of the companies one at a time. The law allows you to order one free copy of your report from each of the nationwide consumer reporting companies every 12 months.

Information for this article was obtained from the Federal Trade Commission’s Web site – <http://www.ftc.gov>.

The Weekly Standard

By SGT. 1ST CLASS DANILO EGUDIN
 13TH ESC ASSISTANT INSPECTOR GENERAL



The Army has been and continues to be a values-based organization where everyone is encouraged to do what is right by treating others as they should be treated, with dignity and respect. Hazing is fundamentally in opposition to our values and is prohibited. Hazing is defined as any conduct whereby one military member or employee, regardless of rank, unnecessarily causes another military member or employee, regardless of rank, to suffer or be exposed to an activity that is cruel, abusive, oppressive or harmful. Hazing is not limited to superior/subordinate relationships nor is it limited by whether or not the Soldier is “on-duty.”

Hazing includes, but is not limited to, any form of initiation rite of passage or congratulatory act that involves: physically striking another to inflict pain; piercing another’s skin in

any manner; forcing or requiring the consumption of excessive amounts of food, alcohol, drugs or other substances; or encouraging another to engage in illegal, harmful, demeaning or dangerous acts. Soliciting or coercing another to participate in any such activity is also considered hazing. Hazing need not involve physical contact among or between military members or employees; it can be verbal or psychological in nature.

When authorized by the chain of command and not unnecessarily cruel, abusive, oppressive or harmful, the following activities do not constitute hazing; physical and mental hardships associated with operations or operational training, administrative corrective measures, including verbal reprimands and a reasonable number of repetitions of authorized physical exercises, extra military instruction or training, and physical training or remedial physical training. Commanders should consult their servicing staff judge advocate, inspector general or the next senior commander in their chain of com-

mand if there is a question about the type of corrective punishment being imposed.

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 Lt. Col. Melanie Meier/
 Maj. Jeffrey Copek
 Al Asad (96th SB):
 DSN 440-7049
 Sgt. 1st Class Tamera Wynn

Sexual Assault Response Coordinator

From the Joint Base Balad Sexual Assault Response Coordinator Team: Consent is a choice in which an individual agrees by free will to engage in sexual acts. The fact that a person is in a relationship or was in a relationship does not mean the person automatically consents to sexual activity. Your JBB SARC team is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call the JBB 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.

Interested in a movie?

Check the movie schedule on Page 20

Chaplain’s corner: tips for enriching conversations

By LT. COL. ROY T. WALKER
 13TH ESC CHAPLAIN



Here we are in Iraq. After months of training, planning and anticipation, we are on the ground and working the mission.

The bags have arrived, the transfer of authority has occurred and we are moving full speed ahead.

Although our mind is fully engaged in the mission, I think it would be safe to say, our heart is still with those we love. As a result, e-mails, letters, care packages, phone calls and Skype are

much appreciated links that keep us connected to home.

It is amazing how far we have come in the world of technology and how easy it has become to reach out and touch those we love and miss.

Yet, along with the ability to communicate comes a great deal of responsibility.

Service members have a responsibility to avoid sharing information that could jeopardize the mission or be used to harm other service members and Department of Defense civilians.

Equally as important, service members have a responsibility to govern what they said to their spouses and loved ones.

Remember, it is hard to take back what you say or repair ill-spoken words. We have a responsibility to our families and friends back home to weigh out our conversations against complaints, accusations and petty arguments.

Sure, you might feel better getting an issue off your chest. However, the matter just left you and found its way to your loved ones.

Those at home have the same responsibility. They too must guard their conversations against complaints, accusations and petty arguing.

A secret for achieving this goal is to process issues prior to your conversations.

Weight out if raising the issue will

add value to the conversation or be another stressor in time.

Also, carefully determine what issues absolutely must be addressed and which can wait until you speak face to face.

Lastly, ask yourself, “How would I handle receiving such information?”

When you weigh these factors, most issues are really not worth upsetting your partner, significant other or loved ones.

I remember several situations in which I used the above criteria and I am so glad I did.

So, as you communicate, remember to get the most out of your conversations. Take time, weigh what you say and make every moment count.

Mechanics collaborate toward total readiness

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maintenance officer and a Hattiesburg, Miss., native. In this system, the lowest echelon performs the simplest tasks, he said. This begins at the user level, with vehicle crews conducting preventative maintenance, checks and services, he said. Unit maintenance also involves company and battalion-level upkeep and repair, he said.

When a unit lacks the resources to perform a task, it will evacuate the repair item to a higher echelon, said Patterson.

However, Q-West has no base-wide maintenance shop for Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicles, leaving no place on base to take MRAPs for higher-echelon maintenance. This requires that units perform most of the maintenance, up to 85 to 90 percent of it, themselves, said Patterson.

"If we sent vehicles off the base for repairs, we wouldn't see them for a long time," he said. "The companies get the job done by helping each other out, and the civilian field service representatives also help a lot."

Additionally, the battalion is responsible for a higher number of combat vehicles than normal. When the 2/198th CAB arrived in July, it assumed the missions of three battalions, said Patterson. The battalion staffs the Q-West Mayor Cell, mans the Base Defense Operations Center, including a force protection company, and fields three convoy security companies, he said. Along with these three major missions, the Mississippians inherited the vehicles and equipment of



Spc. Cornelius C. Love, a mechanic with 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, Mississippi Army National Guard, out of Oxford, Miss., and a Tutwiler, Miss., native, pulls a 20-ton floor jack from beneath a Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle after helping to replace the vehicle's front shocks Sept. 30 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq. Diligent maintenance has helped the 2/198th CAB keep roughly 98 percent of combat vehicles fully mission capable.

three battalions, said Patterson.

This added responsibility is most apparent with A Company, 2/198th CAB, out of Hernando, Miss., said Sgt. 1st Class Randolph Dover, motor sergeant for A Co. and a Sardis, Miss., native.

A Co. is the force protection element for Q-West, and its motor shop has a greater responsibility than servicing just the company's organic equipment, he said.

The company is also responsible for the construction and material handling vehicles of the department of public works, said Dover.

"One key to our success is that vehicle crews work with our mechanics," said Dover. "During the last deployment, I'd see the crews park their vehicles at the motor shop and leave. Now, the crews help more in maintenance. They learn their vehicles better; learn the sounds, the feel of their trucks, so they can tell us what is wrong. This says a lot for the crews that want to stay and work on their trucks during their off-time."

Sgt. John D. Pumphrey, a truck commander with first platoon and a Columbus, Miss., native, assisted Sgt. David A. McDonald, a unit mechanic and a Coldwater, Miss., native, in replacing the rear brakes on Pumphrey's Humvee. They also replaced the seals on the truck's rear hub.

"During my down time, I usually come to the motor shop and help with my vehicle," said Pumphrey. "I learn something new every day I spend here."

Initially serving in the light infantry, Pumphrey said he had little experience with combat vehicles but gained valuable knowledge since the deployment.

"I'm far from mechanically inclined, but I've learned a lot more since my light infantry days," he said. "I understand the limitations of the vehicle, what it can and can't do."

Sgt. 1st Class Perrin E. Dickerson, motor sergeant for B Company, out of Greenwood, said crew involvement was imperative to B Co.'s success.

"The vehicle crews are very involved, and that makes a big difference. Everyone works together for the mission," said Dickerson, a Senatobia, Miss., native.

Although the Mississippians treat this as standard practice, Staff Sgt. James B. Thomason, an Everett, Wash., native, who extended six months with A Co., 2/198th CAB after his Washington National Guard unit returned home, said their standard sets them apart from other units.

"The biggest difference that I see from my unit is that the Mississippians are more family oriented, whereas my unit was more by-the-book military oriented," said Thomason. "These guys are like a big family."

The maintenance sections support each other, creating a tight-knit community.

"We are busy, but everyone helps each other so you never feel like you

can't do something," said Spc. Yukia C. Kennedy, a mechanic with C Co. out of Oxford, Miss., and a Greenville, Miss., native.

"Plus, we joke around with each other," said Kennedy. "We have fun, but we get the job done. I sell shoes back home, so this job is a lot different than that. I get a lot dirtier here, but I'd rather be here than home selling shoes. This is important."

Kennedy's commitment to the mis-



Staff Sgt. Michael D. Asbury, shop foreman with C Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, Mississippi Army National Guard, out of Oxford, Miss., cleans and reseals a differential carrier on a Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle Sept. 30 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq. Diligent maintenance has helped the 2/198th CAB to keep roughly 98 percent of combat vehicles fully mission capable.

sion and feeling of accomplishment are common with maintenance Soldiers across the battalion.

"I've learned a lot more being over here, and this has made me more proficient at my job," said Spc. Cornelius C. Love, a C Co. mechanic and a Tutwiler, Miss., native. "We keep the vehicles going and help train the crews on how to fix vehicle issues themselves. The convoys wouldn't roll without us."

Sgt. Joseph L. Ciaramitaro, a mechanic with A Co., 2/198th CAB and a Crockett, Miss., native, said he too, appreciates the importance of the mission.

"I love maintenance; every day is different," said Ciaramitaro. "There's always some new problem to tackle. Maintenance is an essential job because without it the whole mission fails. We're doing our part to keep vehicles up to standards and making sure they come back from every mission safe."

The commitment and high morale results from the influence of experienced noncommissioned officers, said Sgt. 1st Class Wilton R. Cooper, C Co. motor sergeant.

"For the younger Soldiers, this is their first deployment and they didn't have a lot of maintenance experience," said Cooper, a Mantachie, Miss., native. "As long as the NCOs have a positive attitude, the Soldiers have more confidence. I'm proud of the younger Soldiers for overcoming intimidation with the new equipment, and the NCOs had a lot to do with that."

Many of the 2/198 CAB maintenance NCOs are employed as federal or state technicians, and they have worked together for years, said Tillman. These factors decrease the time required to master new equipment, he said.

An example of such an experienced motor shop can be seen in A Company, 106th Brigade Support Battalion, out of McGee, Miss., a unit attached to 2/198th CAB for the deployment.

"This has been a good but challenging deployment so far," said Sgt. 1st Class Bradley W. Johnson, A Co., 106th BSB motor sergeant from Brookhaven, Miss. "The working environment is better than we had during the last deployment, but we are short-handed. We took over for a company that had more mechanics but had an 80 percent operational readiness rating. Our company has half as many mechanics but maintains a 100 percent rating. The success is due to long hours and very experienced mechanics."

Even some of the junior enlisted Soldiers have outside experience.

"I re-enlisted to deploy with (A Co., 106th BSB)," said Pfc. Joseph V. Morgan, a mechanic with the unit and a Seminary, Miss., native. "I was out 17 years and joined back up eight days before mobilization, but I make my living as a mechanic. If it has a motor, I can fix it."

Civilian advisers who work with the Mississippians said they appreciate the high level of experience.

"Being from Ft. Bragg, I'm used to dealing with active-duty Soldiers," said Mark A. Evans, an MRAP field-service representative and a Fayetteville, N.C., native. "Active duty Soldiers do a great job, but most of them don't have near the work experience of the National Guard Soldiers. You just can't make up for that with training. I like working with National Guard Soldiers because they tend to be older and are more used to the job."

Their performance resulted from the collaborative efforts of maintenance, logistics, leadership and vehicle crews, said Vinzant.

"It's like watching a sports team that gets better and better as the season progresses," said Vinzant. "You can see the pride in their faces and their work. Leadership is always at the root of success and is apparent at every level. They're doing a great job. Knowing them, I would expect nothing less."

Service members mentor local children

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Joint Base Balad, Iraq, hosted 77 children, ages six through 18, and 21 adults from some of the local communities for its first Iraqi Kids' Day Oct. 10, in the H-6 housing area.

Iraqi Kids' Day, in conjunction with the Kids of Iraq program, lasted from 9:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. and featured educational activities, sports and an American-style lunch.

Air Force Master Sgt. Donald S. Peters, first sergeant for the 332nd Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron out of Dune Field, Fla., said the event took roughly three weeks of preparation and planning.

"(The goal was) to assert a positive image of the United States military with the local community and show them we are their friends and we are people too," said Peters, a Tallahassee, Fla., native. "We are here to help them, and I think they understood that today."

More than 100 volunteers found out about the event through word of mouth; kids' day was never advertised, said Peters.

"We tried to accommodate every-



Spc. Matthew Harris, a supply specialist for the 23rd Ordnance Company and a Paducah, Ky., native, greets the child he is to mentor Oct. 10, at Iraqi Kids' Day at the H-6 Morale, Welfare and Recreation center at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

body," he said. "Some of them could only do a half day, some of them did a whole day."

Future plans for similar events are being discussed, said Peters.

Sgt. 1st Class Diana L. Southard, headquarters platoon sergeant for the 23rd Ordnance Company out of Grafenwoehr, Germany, said her platoon started an outreach project called

Operation Creative Learning.

"(The idea) was to gather art supplies so that the kids would have something to do, a little bit more than just basic school supplies," said Southard, a Medford, Ore., native.

She said her platoon had no outlet to distribute the supplies to the kids.

"The Kids of Iraq day became a great opportunity for us to donate our sup-

plies and actually interact with the kids without going off the (contingency operating location)," said Southard.

Each child who participated took home a gift bag containing school supplies and toys.

Sgt. Matthew F. Carpenter, a chaplain assistant for the 90th Sustainment Brigade out of Little Rock, Ark., mentored two Iraqi boys at the event.

"At first the language barrier was kind of difficult," said Carpenter, a Portales, N.M., native. "But as the day wore on, we just found ways to communicate, with our hands, to point, or to find somebody that spoke their language."

Carpenter said he volunteered for the event because he loves children and he wanted to learn more about the culture in the area. He said the most memorable moment was when the younger boy he was mentoring kissed him on the cheek to say goodbye.

Peters said the event was also for the service members to learn more about the local communities.

"A lot of the (service members) that come here do not have an opportunity to interact with the communities locally because they do not go outside the base fence line," said Peters. "This gave them an opportunity to be able to see the positive things we are doing and the mission that they are doing."

840th provides door-to-door service

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SPC. JOHN STIMAC
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The mission of the 840th Deployment Distribution Support Battalion expanded in May, due to the re-deployment of units in accordance with the responsible drawdown of U.S. forces throughout Iraq in the coming months.

The unit is composed of Soldiers, Airmen and Coast Guardsmen from units throughout the United States, who change their station of duty to various locations in Jordan, Kuwait and Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Galbusieri, the detachment sergeant with the 840th Transportation Battalion and a Fort Lauderdale, Fla., native, said the unit received notification in May it would acquire 31 additional personnel—which would require additional workspace.

"We have been working with the Air Force and civilian contractors to construct two new office trailers to house the new personnel, installing electrical lines and ordering new equipment," said Galbusieri, "and the working relationship has been excellent."

Lt. Col James Utley, commander of the 840th Trans. Bn., and an Acworth, Ga. native, said the unit's mission is to

coordinate deployment and redeployment support, container management and surface distribution operations.

"We are responsible for three major functions, the biggest one being redeployment support," said Utley. "We input everything on the transportation coordinators automated information management system, which is the system all units use to process all the equipment through."

Utley said they will handle all units' equipment moved out of Iraq, including every brigade combat team in the country. The goal is to take the burden off redeploying units, he said.

"We take care of everything from custom inspections to having all the proper documentation," he said. "We want to relieve the burden of the unit and allow the bulk of the unit to be able to leave a little earlier."

Sgt. Maj. Bryan L. Elder, the 840th sergeant major and a Carrollton, Ga., native, said the unit is in charge of three major distribution ports located in Ummqasar, Iraq; Aqaba, Jordan; and Shuwaikh, Kuwait, with a commercial operations support element in Shuaiba, Kuwait.



Members of the 840th Deployment and Distribution Support Battalion pause for a unit picture. The personnel assigned to Joint Base Balad, Iraq, include Soldiers, Airmen and Coast Guardsmen.

"What we do is hire civilian contractors to pick up the equipment for a unit that is scheduled to redeploy, wash their equipment and load it on the ship to expedite it back to their home stations," said Elder. "We are responsible for almost 60 percent of all equipment in Iraq that has to be retrograded back to the states."

Since March, the unit has moved more than 15,000 containers out of Iraq, Galbusieri said.

Utley said this is part of a relatively new program called door-to-door redeployment.

"Multi National Corps-Iraq assessed

that something needed to be done and gave us some instruction and we ran with it," said Utley. "In the next three months, we will be moving four BCT's equipment through the port in Aqaba, Jordan."

Elder said this is a new concept – using civilian contractors to streamline the process of getting equipment out of Iraq and sending units home more quickly.

Utley said the push began roughly a month and a half ago and the unit is preparing to redeploy its first BCT.

"I think we are doing something good here and making history at the same time," Utley said.

Noncommissioned officers with the 10th SB inducted into NCO Corps

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

CAMP VICTORY, Iraq – Command Sgt. Maj. Allen Fritzsching, senior enlisted adviser with the 10th Sustainment Brigade, welcomed 35 of the Army's newest non-commissioned officers into the NCO Corps in a ceremony Sept. 30 at Hope Chapel at Camp Victory, Iraq.

Fritzsching was the guest speaker for the event, which was held to honor members of the 620th and 260th Combat Sustainment Support Battalions, who fall under the 10th Sustainment Brigade.

Command Sgt. Maj. Dwight Williams, senior enlisted adviser for the 260th CSSB, and Command Sgt. Maj. Ricky Elcan, senior enlisted adviser for the 620th CSSB, hosted the ceremony.

"Today is a very significant mile-

stone in their career as both a Soldier and Leader in our Army," said Fritzsching. "It marks their symbolic step from being led to being a leader. Today they officially became a member of the Noncommissioned Officer Corp which is referred to as the backbone of the Army."

Sgt. Raymond Taylor, the human resources NCO with Headquarters and Headquarters Company 260th CSSB and a Columbus, Ohio, native, was one of the inductees.

"For senior leadership to put together a ceremony of this caliber further lets me know how



The color guard team was led by Sgt. 1st Class Christopher McCall, a Conway, S.C., native, during the noncommissioned officer induction ceremony Sept. 30 at Hope Chapel at Camp Victory, Iraq.

important my role is as a sergeant," Taylor said.

Sgt. Trina Linstead, the materials

NCO with the 639th Combat Service Support Company and a Kalispell, Mont., native, said she was proud to be inducted into the NCO Corps.

"I take my position seriously, and will continue to strive to learn and develop my skills as a leader," she said.

Williams said he wanted the new NCOs to appreciate the importance of their jobs.

"I want the newly inducted NCO's to love being non-commissioned officers because if you love something, you will cherish it, and that is what I want them to do, cherish the Army and all of our traditions," said Williams. "Some of these NCO's will hold the position that I now hold, and I want to sit back with confidence and watch them lead, mentor and coach the younger (Soldiers)."

National Guard medics care for local national workers

STORY BY
SPC. MICHAEL CAMACHO
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Part of a medic's mission is to provide aid to anyone who needs it, in any situation.

Medics with the 547th Transportation Company, Washington, D.C., National Guard, treat Iraqi Department of Public Works employees every Monday and Wednes-

day morning at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

"The reason we treat the (Iraqi workers) is because if they take time off to go to the (Troop Medical Clinic) or the hospital, they lose an entire day of pay," said Staff Sgt. Charles Robinson, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the 547th Trans. Co.'s medic team. "It's good for us to go and help them out so they won't lose any time."

The medics treat local nationals for simple problems such as cuts and bruises, stomach aches or headaches, said Robinson, a Washington native. These are minor problems that can be

solved without going to the hospital or TMC anyway, he said.

Robinson said the medics stay on site from 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. to provide primary medical care for Iraqi workers before they have to go to work. In that hour, the medics on duty can treat up to roughly 50 patients, depending on the nature of the injury or symptoms, he said.

Medics on site can only treat on a first-aid level. If a local national shows signs of a fever, infection or a serious injury, they are taken to a higher-level medical facility, he said.

The DPW employs Iraqi citizens from Bakr Village, said Staff Sgt. Illya Edwards, NCOIC of escorting DPW workers. They do the manual labor on base, and although safeguards exist, sometimes accidents happen on the job, she said.

Most of the workers support themselves and their families with the money they make, Robinson said. Losing one day of work due to an illness or injury that could have been treated is money lost, he said.

It allows them to stay at a work ready status, Robinson said.

After 15 months, 724th Trans. Co. slated to go home

STORY BY
SPC. LISA A. COPE
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION SPEICHER, Iraq – The 724th Transportation Company passed its mission to the 70th Transportation Company, during a transfer of authority ceremony Oct. 12 at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Facility at Contingency Operating Location Speicher, Iraq.

The 70th Trans. Co. was one of the last units to serve a 15-month deployment during Operation Iraqi Freedom and will soon return to their home base in Mannheim, Germany.

Capt. Patrick Henrick served as the commander of the 70th Trans. Co. during the 15-month deployment.

"True, there are many more companies who drove more miles or conducted more missions than the 256,000 miles and 161 missions we had," said Henrick. "There are other companies that are responsible for more equipment than the \$26 million we took care of. There are quite a few examples of companies that were also forced to change mission and relocate to a new base. There are other companies who turned in more excess (equipment) than the \$7.57 million we turned in, but there are not too many who did it all at the same time. Fifteen months is a long time."

Henrick said he is most proud of the fact that every one of the 158 Sol-

diers who deployed with his unit is returning safely back to Germany.

First Sgt. Andrew Crockwell, with the 70th Trans. Co., said the greatest danger during a 15-month deployment is complacency. He is proud of his Soldiers and leaders for handling the last few months of the deployment professionally and not allowing complacency within the unit.

With their mission complete, the 70th's Soldiers are now focusing on redeployment and returning home to their loved ones, said Crockwell.

"These Soldiers are tremendously excited about returning to Germany, getting back to the Mannheim community, reuniting with their family members ... they are bursting at the seams," he said.

Maj. Sean F. Counihan, command-

er of the 724th Transportation Company out of Bartonville, Ill., said his unit has a big job ahead of them.

"Over the next 10 months our mission will be extremely dynamic," said Counihan. "(The 724th TC) will be a vital cog in the logistical machine that is responsible for the redeployment of forces and equipment in the Iraqi theater of operation."

Although it is a difficult mission, Counihan said his unit has the experience and skills it needs to succeed.

"In order to accomplish this task, we need to be responsive, flexible and opportunistic," said Counihan. "We have a great deal of experience in this unit, but we must not fall into that last-time mentality. We need to be aware of our current operating environment, and continue to adapt and improve every day."

Embedded Airmen aid Taji Soldiers at Combat Stress Clinic

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

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – The Combat Stress Clinic at Camp Taji, Iraq, is swirling with digital-print patterned activity. Mostly, the health care providers are outfitted in Army combat uniforms, but a few sets of sage tiger-striped garb mark the Air Force's presence among the sea of Soldiers.

Four 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing mental health care providers are embedded into the Army's 55th Medical Company here, providing treatment and prevention of mental health issues for service members in the Baghdad and central Iraq area.

"The Air Force's role here is to augment the Army in terms of combat stress treatment and other mental health concerns," said Air Force Master Sgt. James Bridwell, mental health technician at the Camp Taji CSC. "We function as a unifying force by providing the manpower – psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker and mental health technician – necessary to treat the troops here.

"Whether Army or Air Force, mental health is the same across the board. Yes, there are some differences between the two branches. But, as far as the mission, we are all on the same page."

The clinic does not just focus on combat stress – the providers and technicians treat a variety of health issues affecting service members' mental and emotional resilience.

"Our main focus is to come together and keep the Warfighter mission-capable," said Army Staff Sgt. George McQuade, noncommissioned officer in charge of the clinic's prevention team. "In the past, when we were experiencing more troops being engaged in combat here, we were treating things like stress reactions. Since the mission has changed from a few years ago, we're looking at different issues from before.

"Now, we see the troops facing communication, family and job issues, more so than combat-related issues. One way the Air Force has helped us with these changing needs is by their commitment to the drug and alcohol program."

In order to keep the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines on Camp Taji at their best, the dual-branch team takes a two-pronged approach. McQuade, deployed from Fort Benjamin Harrison in Indianapolis, Ind., said mental health providers treat patients while techni-

cians participate in preventive treatments.

"We conduct classes to help prevent mental health issues from surfacing," said McQuade. "We want to address issues that are concerns among troops as well as their leadership. We get out there and see what's going on in the different units. This may mean we are giving instruction on anger management, redeployment or stress management depending on the needs of the unit."

Air Force Maj. Derek Munoz, CSC staff psychologist, said the clinic stays busy, comparable to a stateside outpatient clinic.

"Day-in and day-out, we have our normal scheduled appointments, plus (the providers) trade off being on-call for any emergency appointments," he said. "We have walk-ins every day, and since demographics drive the system, we mostly see Soldiers opposed to Airmen."

Bridwell, deployed here from Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, N.C., said Soldiers at Camp Taji have not been put off by receiving treatment from Airmen. Aside from the occasional administrative differences, the team has been successful in avoiding branch-related snags in treating mental health matters.

No matter what the specific health

topic, the Air Force providers face some similar issues treating Soldiers as they face treating security forces Airmen.

"I've never worked with the Army before this deployment, but I find some resemblance between them and our security forces," said Air Force psychiatrist Capt. Joy Jones, deployed from Offutt Air Force Base, Neb. "It takes time to break down the tough exterior, get them to talk, or for some, to go to mental health at all. We all need to be educated and let commanders know that having a person go to mental health doesn't mean they're out of the fight. I've seen people who waited too long to get help and then end up with career-ruining problems because they didn't come for help early."

As one of the many successful joint missions downrange, the Air Force and Army professionals at the CSC take pride in their common dedication to helping fellow service members in need.

"We all get along and are working for the same goal," said Sergeant Bridwell. "It's great working with the Army because they've been doing this a long time and they have this down to as close to an exact science as it can be. Together we do whatever we can to get our people – Airmen and Soldiers – on the right road. And at this point, I think the only way to tell us apart is by the uniform."

Passport Program provides worldwide experiences

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Although the Army can fly Soldiers to countries throughout the world when they take leave, only 10 percent of service members travel to places outside of the United States, said Capt. Desha Platt.

Platt, a personnel officer with the 90th Sust. Bde., said Soldiers can take advantage of leave time to relax and get their minds off everyday missions.

"It's a once in a lifetime opportunity," she said. "A lot of them cannot afford to plan a trip to Australia or wherever they want to go, and the government flies them there for free."

Deployed Soldiers who do not have passports can get or renew them through the Joint Base Balad Passport Program, said Sgt. David Dawley, the noncommissioned officer in charge of legal assistance with the 49th Transportation Battalion and a Hastings, Mich., native.

The majority of Soldiers go home to see family and loved ones, said Spc. Donald Cox III, human resource specialist



with the 90th Sus. Bde. and a North Little Rock, Ark., native.

Others, especially Soldiers with children, sometimes avoid going home because it will be more difficult to leave again, he said. Instead, they may choose to visit other countries, to experience different cultures or vacation with their families, he said.

Dawley said the passport program is in place to allow Soldiers to expand their travel options for leave.

"Some people don't have huge families back home or they just want to go see the world," he said. "They can go literally

anywhere with a passport, so it's unlimited opportunities."

Soldiers are briefed before they leave so they know what is expected of them and what they need to have prior to departure, Cox said.

Service members must have the proper travel documents and know if there are any other travel requirements for the place or places they plan to visit, said Platt. For some locations, Soldiers may need vaccinations, she said.

In countries where English is not the official language, knowing common phrases in the native language can be beneficial, said Platt.

Platt also said while in other countries, travel safety and operational security are key. Soldiers must beware not to advertise themselves as targets, she said.

She said Soldiers should allow those 15 days to be their time to relax.

"It gives you an opportunity to clear your head and get refocused," said Platt. Everyone gets burnout and needs that break away from here. Always a Soldier, but for that 15 days you are just a tourist, just seeing the world."

For additional information on the JBB passport program contact Dawley at 433-2836.

According to the Joint Base Balad Passport brochure the following items are required to process new passport applications for Soldiers.

1. Two passport photos
2. Completed but unsigned DS-11, 2008 version.
(Available at http://travel.state.gov/passport/forms/ds11/ds11_842.html)
3. \$100 money order (from the U.S. Post Office) made payable to "U.S. Department of State." (Add \$20 if a passport card is also needed. Renewal fee is \$75, plus \$20 if a passport card is needed.)
4. Original birth certificate or naturalization certificate. Yes, the original is required (or equivalent) from the state Vital Statistics Agency. The original will be returned with your passport. For information about ordering a birth certificate, see <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/howto/w2w/w2welcom.htm>. For Soldiers who have an official passport, but not a tourist passport, the official passport may be used in place of the birth certificate or naturalization certificate.
5. Copy of leave form or signed Passport Prioritization Form.
6. One form of ID (Example, Military ID or Driver License card)

Soldiers read to Iraqi children, visit new school

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SGT. 1ST CLASS TAD BROWNING
36TH SUST. BDE. PUBLIC AFFAIRS

DHI QAR PROVINCE, Iraq – In conjunction with the Read Iraq program, Soldiers from the 36th Sustainment Brigade read books and delivered school supplies to Iraqi children Oct. 5 at the Al Moa Men School in the Dhi Qar Province of Iraq.



Lt. Col. Clinton Moyer, the chief of civil military operations, who extended with the 36th after serving a tour here with the 287th Sustainment Brigade, worked to maintain a relationship with and give support to the local Iraqis.

“Our mission was to go out and meet with Shaykh Tayseer of the Al Ghizzie tribe, who runs the water pump that supplies the water onto Contingency Operating (Location) Adder,” said Moyer, “and to go into the classroom and do our Read Iraq program, where we get Soldiers into the classroom to read stories in English to the kids. We also provide them with school supplies.”

Moyer said this is his 26th Read Iraq mission.

“It’s a good program,” said Moyer. “The kids really enjoy it and it gives the Soldiers an opportunity to get out and see a part of Iraq that they typically don’t see.”

Sgt. 1st Class Belinda Bilder, the human resources noncommissioned officer in charge with the 36th Special Troops Battalion, said she felt a little uncomfortable at first working through an interpreter, but once she got into the classroom the children’s faces lit up.

“As soon as I held up the SpongeBob (SquarePants) book, they all got excited because they knew who SpongeBob was,” said Bilder, a Copperas Cove, Texas, native.

Spc. Juan Zamora, a personnel clerk with the 36th STB, said he was not sure what to expect during the visit, but once he started reading he realized the kids were receiving the message.

“I was excited,” Zamora said. “In the back of my mind I was thinking, ‘this is really neat, really fun to be here and have this great opportunity to meet with the local national kids.’”

Zamora also said his favorite part of the experience was seeing the chil-

Texas Army National Guardsman, Spc. Lina Michael, with the 36th Sustainment Brigade, laughs while translating a book read by Spc. Juan Zamora to Iraqi children Oct. 5 at the Al Moa Men School in the Dhi Qar Province of Iraq.



Texas Army National Guardsman, Spc. Juan Zamora, with the 36th Sustainment Brigade, reads a book to Iraqi children Oct. 5 at the Al Moa Men School in the Dhi Qar Province of Iraq, as part of the Read Iraq program.

dren’s response to the story.

The crowded classrooms where the Soldiers read were situated in a couple of small buildings made of mud, brick and straw. Desks and benches sat unevenly on a dirt floor.

With assistance from the Army

Corps of Engineers and the 287th Sustainment Brigade, which donated school supplies, the kids will soon have a new environment in which to learn, at a schoolhouse built by Iraqis to help improve the education system, said Moyer.



“One good thing is that every single thing that we gave those kids today came at zero cost to the American taxpayers,” said Moyer. “It was all donated by organizations back in Kansas, like this group called ‘Give us hope, help us learn,’ run by retired Col. Gary Lagrange.”

A lot of the school supplies being handed out were donated from J. Schiedler Elementary and Clearwater Middle School, in Topeka, Kan., where Moyer teaches as a civilian.

“They did book drives and they mailed me hundreds of books,” he said. “I really appreciate the fact that the 36th (Sust. Bde.) wants to continue these missions.”

The new Iraqi-built Al Moa Men School will open soon, and more Soldiers will have the opportunity to read to the children of Iraq and experience their culture, said Moyer.

Sgt. Clayton Beaver, a Soldier with the 368th Seaport Operations Company from Fort Story, Va., handed out school supplies and said he enjoyed doing public relations work with the Iraqis.

“It was great; it made you realize how lucky we are,” said Beaver. “It was really nice seeing some smiles on the kids and seeing the actual environment.”

13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)

“Phantom Support”



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Task Force Muleskinners depart

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. 1ST CLASS MIKE BRANTLEY
10TH SUST. BDE. PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – The 10th Sustainment Brigade ended its one-year tour of duty in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 09-11 Oct. 14, as it transferred authority to the 96th Sustainment Brigade out of Salt Lake City.

The brigade, which departed Fort Drum, N.Y., in November 2008, was stationed at Camp Taji in support of Multi-National Division – Baghdad and Multi-National Forces – West, handling sustainment support for more than 140,000 Soldiers, Marines and civilians operating in a battle space equal to one-third of the country of Iraq.

Col. Mark E. Drake, commander of the 10th Sust. Bde. and a St. Paul, Minn., native, handed four combat sustainment support battalions and one sustainment brigade troops battalion to Col. C.J. Read, commander of the 96th Sust. Bde. and a Layton, Utah, native.

“The mission we transfer today would be better described as a privilege,” said Drake. “Our objective has always been to provide responsible and reliable sustainment. It has been an honor to contribute to such a worthy endeavor.”

Drake added that any success his Muleskinners enjoyed was a direct result of great leadership of the nine battalions and more than 8,600 Soldiers who were a part of the task organization over the past 12 months.

“I will not bore you with the statistics,” remarked Drake, “but I will tell you that the Muleskinners Soldiers have issued tons of food; supplied hundreds of thousands of cases of bottled water; pumped millions of gallons of fuel;



Command Sgt. Maj. Allen G. Fritzsching, senior enlisted adviser for the 10th Sustainment Brigade (left), and Col. Mark E. Drake, commander of the 10th Sust. Bde., hold up farewell gifts presented to them by the 751st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Jody Dew and Command Sgt. Maj. Chet Welch, in appreciation for their service at Camp Taji, Iraq.

managed and issued tons of ammunition; fixed a lot of equipment; moved a lot of stuff and drove their butts off – over 3.5 million miles.”

This is the brigade’s first deployment to Iraq, following deployments as the 10th Division Support Command in Florida for Hurricane Andrew relief operations in 1992.

They have kept busy, however.

The 10th has been deployed all over the world, in places like Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, Uzbekistan to support peacekeeping and humanitarian missions. They also deployed to Afghanistan in August 2003, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The Muleskinners leave behind a

legacy of unequalled sustainment support in the Iraqi Theater of Operations, said Drake.

To his Soldiers he said, “All your efforts focused on the single objective to support and sustain the customer and you did that magnificently.”

The Task Force Muleskinners are set to return to Fort Drum soon.

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AMC commander visits JBB

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Gen. Arthur J. Lichte, commander of Air Mobility Command, visited the base Oct. 6 to observe inter and intra-theater airlift capabilities and learn about air mobility operations and direct-delivery missions throughout Southwest Asia.



In an interview during his visit, Lichte shared his perspectives on the challenges his Airmen face in a deployed environment, the downrange impact of total-force integration in AMC missions, and the evolution of mobility efforts during the U.S. forces drawdown in Iraq.

332nd AEW/PA: Sir, why did you decide to visit Joint Base Balad?

Lichte: I always wanted to come see where the action is and see the great people here at Balad. Actually, it's part of a whole visit that I'm going on through Iraq and Afghanistan to get an assessment of how Air Mobility Command is supporting our No. 1 customer. So, it's an opportunity for me to come down here and see the great people in action. I've been in and out of here several times on aeromedical evacuation flights, but I got a little more time this time ... it's great to come in and see everybody.

332nd AEW/PA: What are your impressions of the AMC mission here, and is there anything specific you'll be taking with you to pass along when you return back to the states?

Lichte: I've been very impressed by the men and women of Air Mobility



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.

Command who are deployed here – they are working in some harsh conditions as you know. They are keeping some very old air planes flying and up in the air, and to get to see them firsthand and thank them firsthand is a tremendous opportunity for me. And, of course, I'll take their messages back home. I met a few of them who I (told) I'd go home and say "hi" to moms and dads, and I'll do that ... They work 12-hour shifts six days a week, and half of them come out on the seventh day and continue to work. So we're really, really proud of them ... They pull off miracles every day, and every time they launch air planes, they are saving

lives. Sometimes we forget that.

332nd AEW/PA: How have AMC assets, including personnel, made a significant impact on the overall mission here in Iraq?

Lichte: Well, I think when you just look at the number of sorties flown, two out of every three are mobility missions, and they are being supported by active, Guard and Reserve (Airmen). You can't tell the difference, the air planes can't tell the difference and they perform flawlessly. So, to see them in action is a thing of beauty.

332nd AEW/PA: As U.S. forces continue to draw down across the country, in what ways will the AMC mission have to evolve?

Lichte: No matter how much it draws down, I can assure you that Air Mobility Command (Airmen) will probably be the last ones out. As long as there are people here, who will be here to sustain them? As long as there are people on the battlefield, we will be here to medically (evacuate) them and to take care of them ... And I hope it does draw down quickly for all of our sakes, but until it does, I think you are going to see Air Mobility Command right in the forefront of the mission.

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Transportation Soldiers match up in football competition

STORY AND PHOTO BY SPC. LISA COPE
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION SPEICHER, Iraq –

Three Soldiers from the 264th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion got the chance to live out their dreams in August at the National Football League combine in Camp Buehring, Kuwait.

The NFL, in conjunction with the United Service Organization, was conducting one of its tours in support of the troops, with the intent of scouting and assessing the athletic abilities of service members deployed overseas.

All three Soldiers placed in the top three in their respective areas of the competition.

Spc. Jonathan R. Bradford, a heavy equipment truck driver for the 2025th Transportation Company out of Jacksonville, Ala., placed first in the quarterback/receiver and running back categories of the competition.

Bradford, a Montgomery, Ala., native, said he plays for the Montgomery Buffalos, a semiprofessional team, when he is home. In Kuwait, he competed in events such as the 40-yard dash, bench press and cone drills, to see if he met the physical conditioning requirements for the NFL, he said.

Bradford said he likes working with the two other football players because they have a lot in common. Football, much like the military, is teamwork dependent, he said.

“It is just like a football game, everybody comes together,” said Bradford. “It is like a big family, so working with those guys is great.”

Spc. Marvin B. Beaver, a heavy equipment truck driver for the 1083rd Transportation Company out of Camp Minden, La., placed first in the linebacker category of the competition.

Beaver, a Shreveport, La., native, said he learned values from football that helped him in his military career.

“The main thing is teamwork...you have to work hard every day...even though you know you are going to be tired, like in football,” he said.

Beaver said after the Army, he plans to play football for either Louisiana State University or University of Texas, and major in accounting. He said he hopes to make it into the NFL someday, preferably with the New Orleans Saints or the Dallas Cowboys.

Sgt. Alvin B. Bryant, a heavy equipment truck driver/instructor for the 1083rd TC, placed third in the linebacker category of the competition. He played one year of college football for University of Nebraska, but put his football career on hold when he became

Spc. Marvin B. Beaver, a heavy equipment truck driver for the 1083rd Transportation Company out of Camp Minden, La., and a Shreveport, La., native, prepares to throw a football Oct. 16 while playing outside his housing area at Contingency Operating Location Speicher, Iraq.

a father, he said.

“I basically jumped on the opportunity when it was presented to me in Camp Buehring, in Kuwait,” said Bryant, a Shreveport, La., native. “It has always been a dream of mine to become an NFL player.”

Bryant said the military has instilled values in him that will help him to become a better football player.

“(The Army) instills discipline, motivation, hard work, dedication and those are key statistics when fulfilling anything within life and definitely in the NFL,” said Bryant.

All three of the Soldiers are friends in the Army. If they ever had to play each other, however, just as in the military, different situations call for different actions, Bryant said.

“When we walk out on the field, of course we will be friends,” he said. “But as soon as that ball kicks off, we are warriors now and it is time to go to war.”



631st trains for convoy security missions

BY SGT. RYAN TWIST
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION MAREZ, Iraq –

Soldiers from the 631st Maintenance Company just started their tour here in Iraq, but they said they take their mission at Contingency Operating Location Marez, Mosul, Iraq, seriously.

Staff Sgt. Brumvie B. Williams, convoy commander of B Team, with the 631st Maintenance Company out of Stark, Fla., said a route reconnaissance mission Oct. 12 allowed Soldiers to learn to navigate the roads, communicate with each other and familiarize themselves with the terrain.

“I think it was successful,” said Williams, a Jacksonville, Fla., native. “We were able to reach our SP point. We briefed the mission beforehand, and we were able to complete the mission with no casualties, no incidents.”

Williams said the Soldiers gain valuable knowledge during their missions, giving them insight on what to expect along the route.

“It’s a lot better than coming into it cold and not knowing what to expect,” said Williams.

Capt. Maria J. Garcia, commander of the 631st, accompanied the Soldiers dur-

ing this training mission to observe their planning, as well as their tactics, techniques and procedures for convoy security, she said.

The training gives Soldiers valuable insight into the details of the mission. This allows them to ask well-informed questions and get help from Soldiers more familiar with the area instead of worrying about the unknown, said Garcia, a Gainesville, Fla., native.

The 158th Support Maintenance Company out of Tallahassee, Ala., is providing familiarization training for the 631st, in order to prepare the incoming unit for sustainment operations in the northernmost region of Iraq.

The 631st’s mission is to provide convoy escorts to KBR, Inc., personnel, said 1st Lt. Travis J. Petersen, recovery platoon leader with the 158th.

Petersen, a Cherokee Village, Ark., native, said the 631st Soldiers are capable and came to Iraq with a good mindset, knowing what they would be doing. He said he tried to provide thorough training for their mission.

Garcia said Soldiers learn how to do their pre-combat checks and inspections, and convoy briefs before they leave on their missions.

“The 158th is really taking the time to give them detailed information so that when we actually do our transfer of authority, we’re ready to take on the mis-

sion,” said Garcia.

Sgt. Christopher B. Miller, truck commander with the 733rd Transportation Company out of Reading, Pa., who is currently assisting the 158th, said the 631st is up to par on its training and the Soldiers are willing to learn. He said they have a few more route recon missions to accomplish, but the transition is going very well.

“I’ve only been on the mission for the last three months, but it’s a great mission,” said Miller, a Palmyra, Pa., native.

Miller said it can be intense to have to be ready to roll outside the wire at all times. He also said the lighting systems, maintaining vehicles for the missions and constantly working on communication systems were obstacles the 631st would have to face.

“These guys will have no problem accomplishing the mission and being successful at it,” said Miller.

Petersen said hauling vehicles out of Iraq has become a priority since the drawdown of U.S. forces and equipment from the country began. The biggest lesson for Soldiers to learn is being able to adapt to any situation, said Petersen. He said it is hard for the Soldiers to be away from their homes and families, but as long as the noncommissioned officers work to ensure they take care of their equipment and responsibilities, the unit will succeed.

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Operation Proper Exit brings v

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – After stepping on an improvised explosive device during an ambush Nov. 29, 2006, Spc. Craig Chavez nearly died. His face took most of the blast. He lost his left eye and took shrapnel to the right, rendering him blind. He was evacuated to the United States and thought he would never see again.

The medical team at the Air Force Theater Hospital at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, saved Chavez's life and removed the shrapnel from his right eye. Eventually, he saw his world again and, Oct. 11, he saw Iraq again.

Operation Proper Exit, a program run by the Troops First Foundation and supported by the United Service Organization, gave Chavez and seven other disabled veterans the chance to return to Iraq for a week, to visit the locations where they were stationed and even fly over the sites where they were injured.

This was the second trip for Operation Proper Exit,

which brought six disabled veterans back to Iraq in June.

"It's really an idea that came from the Soldiers," said Lindsey Kell, program director for the Troops First Foundation and a Laurel, Md., native.

"They just want to interact and be a Soldier again," she said.

The group landed at JBB Oct. 14, to visit the hospital to which most of them were evacuated before leaving the country for treatment in Germany and the United States.

A crowd of hospital workers gathered to meet the wounded Warfighters and thank them for their sacrifices, while the veterans thanked the medical staff.

"My doctors restored my vision," said Chavez, a Temecula, Calif., native. "You guys are the real heroes."

Each of the seven wounded Soldiers and one injured Marine told the story of the day they were injured and the treatment they

have received in their ongoing healing process.

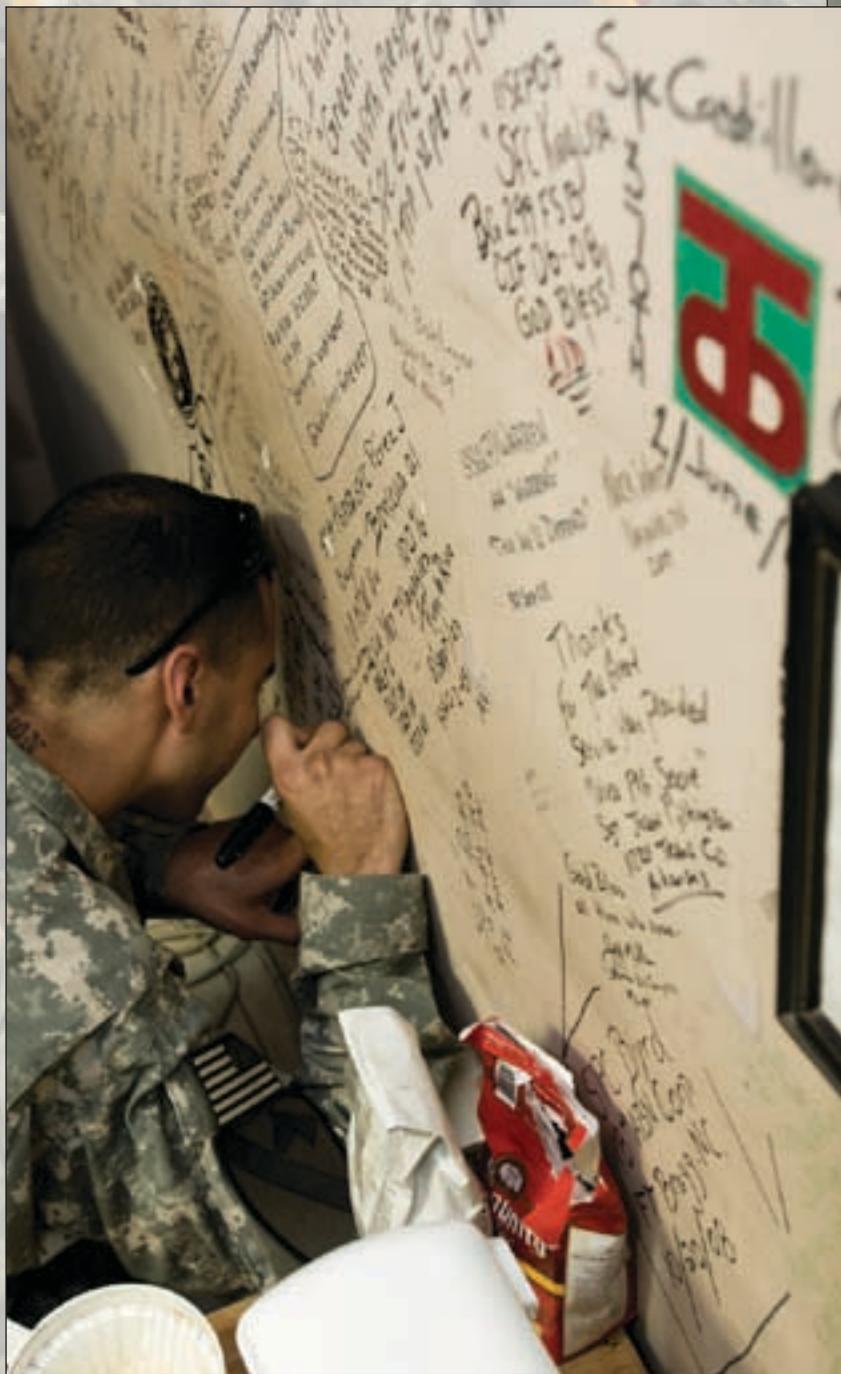
"It's a daily struggle, but I'm one of the lucky ones," said Chavez.

The Warfighters were given a tour of the hospital so they could see the advances that have been made in recent years.

They then moved to the Contingency Aero-medical Staging Facility, the final stop for wounded service members before they leave the country. At the CASF, the veterans signed the walls of a room called Heroes Haven.

"The first time I was on my back, this time I am on my feet," wrote retired 1st Lt. Edwin Salau, the charitable organizations and veterans' service organizations program coordinator for the Marine Corps Wounded Warrior Program, who lost his leg serving in Iraq.

After visiting the hospital and the CASF, the group traveled to Morale, Welfare and Recreation Center east



Retired Spc. Craig Chavez, who sustained multiple injuries as a result of an improvised explosive device detonation in 2006 including the loss of one eye and severe damage to the other, signs the wall at the Hero's Haven room of the Contingency Aero-medical Staging Facility Oct. 14 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.



Brig. Gen Paul L. Wentz, commander of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and Force Theater Hospital, pose with wounded veterans under Hero's Highway, the passageway for transport helicopters to the emergency department at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. From left to right: Sgt. Marine Sgt. John Eubanks, Air Force Col. Mark Koeniger, Sgt. John Hyland, Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz, retired Spc. Craig Chavez and Sgt. Robert Brown.

Wounded veterans back to Iraq

to speak to hundreds of service members and civilians about their experiences, and their decision to return to the country that took so much from them.

“My family asked, ‘why do you want to go back, when God gave you a second chance at life?’” said Chavez. “They don’t know what it’s like. It’s a different Iraq and it’s great to see that.”

One Soldier, who said she was friends with the Soldier killed and the others injured in a Sept. 19 helicopter crash at JBB, asked what her injured battle buddies would want to hear from her when she called.

“Let them know they’re still part of the team,” said Salau, a Stella, N.C., native. “In six months their phone is going to stop ringing. Leave here with the reminder that you’re not going to let that happen.”

Even after the paychecks and treatment stops, a big part of the military is still with veterans, Salau said.

“The warrior ethos doesn’t stop,” he said.



The eight wounded veterans spoke to hundreds of service members and civilians Oct. 14 at JBB’s East Morale, Welfare and Recreation center. The Warfighters told their personal stories of injury and recovery and gave advice to service members looking to interact with their injured battle buddies.



Retired Sgt. Ethan Peyton, who lost his hand while deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, speaks with workers at the Air Force Theater Hospital about the day he was injured, and how he has been dealing with treatment and life with a disability.



Workers at the Air Force Theater Hospital line up to thank the wounded veterans for their sacrifices. Most of the Soldiers were evacuated to the theater hospital for initial treatment before being flown to Germany or the U.S.

Air Force Col. Mark Koeniger, commander of the Air Force Theater Hospital, that brings injured Warfighters from the medical evacuation. 1st Class Joshua Olson, retired Staff Sgt. Lucas Wilson, retired 1st Lt. Edwin Salau, retired Sgt. Ethan

515th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion sponsors safety rodeo

STORY BY
SGT. DALENE MARSH
515TH CSSB

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION MAREZ, Iraq - The 515th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion sponsored a safety rodeo Oct. 3, emphasizing driving and operating skill as well as safety.

The purpose of a safety rodeo is to test Soldiers' skill on their assigned vehicle, including vehicle operation, team work and safety, said Sgt. Xavier Salone. The vehicle operator is required to drive through a series of stations which simulate practical conditions the Soldier might encounter while on mission, Salone said. At each station the operator is rated regarding time and skill. At the end of the rodeo the scores are tallied,

he said.

"The winner is weeded out for bragging rights as to who is the top operator," said Sgt. Humberto Sanchez, who said he has participated in 11 such rodeos.

In 10 of those rodeos, Sanchez said he earned the bragging rights as top operator.

Salone, who is with the 359th Inland Cargo Transport Company, and has participated in six rodeos, said an M915 line haul tractor is a 14-ton, six by four-wheel drive truck used in transportation companies for rapid and efficient transportation of supplies and equipment. It is used in conjunction with an M871 or M872 flatbed semitrailer.

At each station, the vehicle operator is required to position the truck and trailer so equipment can either be loaded or unloaded from the trailer, Salone said. Points will be calculated

according to the number of attempts used to position the truck and trailer, as well as the speed and safety exercised, he said.

Salone, a Shreveport, Louisiana, native, is the NCOIC of the Central Receiving and Shipping Point yard and organized the Safety Rodeo. Salone said he drew on his experience from the rodeos he has attended to incorporate all aspects of mission requirements, while emphasizing skill and safety. He was able to create stations using only mission essential equipment.

"A sister battalion had an accident in a CRSP yard, where a load was dropped and a Soldier was injured," said Sanchez.

This accident prompted the creation of an event that would be fun and competitive, for which Soldiers would have to practice their skills, while focusing on safety, Salone said.

The competition has been a work in progress.

"The hardest thing is to schedule the rodeo around the mission and to allow the Soldiers enough time to practice," said Salone. "The mission comes first."

Three teams competed on Oct. 3. Each team consisted of three operators. Based on points for speed, efficiency and safety, one team earned the top spot and bragging rights.

This team included Pfc. Adam Ridgway, Spc. Angela Otero and Spc. Meinardo Benitez, all with the 359th Inland Cargo Transfer Company.

To earn such rights, Ridgway, a Des Moines, Iowa, native, backed the 4K forklift off a trailer, drove it into a container and picked up a load of tri-wall boxes. He then drove the forklift out of the container to load the boxes on the M872 trailer.

"It feels great," said Ridgway.

Air Force, Army work to speed up retrograde

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq - The transportation priority four team with 2nd Battalion, 402nd Army Field Support

Brigade at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, have teamed up with units throughout Iraq, as well as the Air Force and Air Mobility Command, to speed up the retrograde process of excess theater equipment.

Most Army equipment is convoyed south to Kuwait, where it is cleaned and inspected before being put on a ship back to the United States. This is an expensive process that can take up to 90 days, said Robert Guess, the dep-

uty support operations officer for the 2/402nd AFSB.

Guess, a Miami native, said the TP4 team can get high-priority equipment back to the U.S. for retrograde in one-third the time and for less money.

The program started in 2007, when the Air Force began returning planes to the U.S. with plenty of open cargo space, said Guess. Space is filled according to priority and when there is not enough high-priority equipment to fill the planes, the TP4 team can take advantage, he said.

"The Stryker was a big success for us," said Guess.

He said his team has suc-



Strykers are loaded in to the back of an Air Mobility Command plane to be transported back to a source of repair in the United States.

cessfully transported 40 Stryker Light Armored Vehicles back to the U.S. on Air Force and Air Mobility planes that had cargo space.

The TP4 team has saved the Army more than three million dollars by flying track vehicles,

generators and containers straight from JBB to repair sites in the U.S., where they will be repaired and processed for return to units in the U.S. or in Afghanistan, said Jesus Salazar, the TP4 Team supervisor and a Dalton, Ga., native.

"We were able to get more than 5,000 pieces of equipment out of theater to date," he said.

Salazar said his team works mostly with brigade combat teams and combat aviation brigades in Iraq, using mobile redistribution property assistance teams to visit redeploying units and decide what equipment can forgo a convoy to Kuwait and instead process customs at JBB and leave Iraq directly.

Guess said the TP4 program's participation in the responsible drawdown of U.S. forces and equipment from Iraq is relatively small, but their efforts still help the process, preventing equipment from piling up in Kuwait.

"We're not just pushing everything to Kuwait and building that iron mountain," said Salazar.

SHOUT OUT!!!

Contact the Expeditionary Times for more information.

E-mail: expeditionarytimes@iraq.centcom.mil

More than 1,000 run Army Ten-Miler at JBB

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SPC. JOHN STIMAC
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Roughly 1,200 runners participated in the Army Ten-Miler, Oct. 10 at Holt Stadium at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Capt. Charles Allen, commander of the 102nd Quartermaster Company, said this was the race's seventh year here at JBB, held in conjunction with the Army Ten-Miler in Washington.



“Our predecessor and sister unit, the 20th (Quartermaster Battalion) from the 101st Airborne Division out of Fort Campbell, Ky., hosted last year’s run,” said Allen. “During the transfer of authority between our units, the 20th QM suggested that we carry the torch and host this year’s event as a representative of the 101st Airborne Division again and we obliged.”

According to the race’s official Web site, the mission of the Army Ten-Miler is for the military district of Washington to safely conduct the Army’s annual 10-mile race to promote the Army, build esprit de corps, support fitness goals and enhance community relations.

The Army Ten-Miler is the biggest 10-mile race in the nation and is designed to enhance the lives of Soldiers and their Families, according to the Web site.

The men’s winner at JBB was Adolf Kalyegira, a Ugandan Army

Sgt. Berenice Macias, the chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear sergeant with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 163rd Military Intelligence Battalion out of Fort Hood, Texas, and a Dallas native, sprints to the finish line of the Army Ten-Miler Oct. 10 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Macias finished in first place for the women with a time of 1 hour, 10 minutes.

Soldier, with a time of 57 minutes, 43 seconds.

Sgt. Berenice Macias, the chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear sergeant with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 163rd Military Intelligence Battalion out of Fort Hood, Texas, and a Dallas native, won the event for the women with a time of 1 hour, 10 minutes.

“This was a great event,” said Macias. “I usually run 5K’s; this is the first 10-miler I have ever run. I really didn’t do any formal training for this; I just like running, period.”

Second Lt. Theresa Fouda, adjutant for the 80th Ordnance Battalion out of Fort Lewis, Wash., and a Seattle native, said it meant a lot to compete in the race.

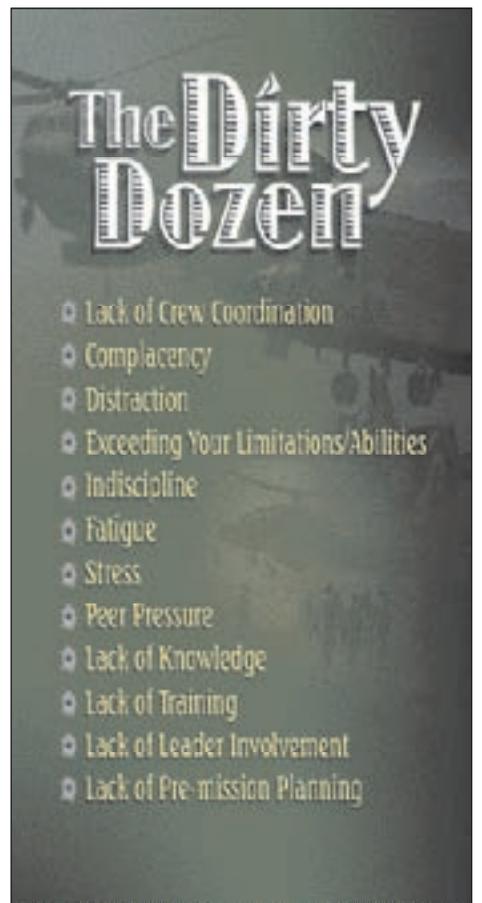
“Just the fact that we could do this as a team made it worth it for me,” said Fouda. “I ran it in about 1 hour, 24 minutes and I look forward to doing it again when I re-deploy.”

Allen said he trained himself for the race, completed it and enjoyed the entire process.

“I certainly felt I needed to participate in an event our unit hosted and coordinated,” said Allen. “The event required lots of external support from Soldiers within and outside of our unit.”

The race did not happen without the support of many, such as the Army and Air Force Exchange Service who volunteered their time and donations such as trophies and prizes, said Allen.

“Overall, the event appeared to be highly successful,” he said. “Everyone who volunteered and supported this event did so with the utmost professionalism.”



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Q-West celebrates Hispanic heritage month

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LO-

CATION Q-WEST, Iraq –

Two units used Hispanic foods, poetry, music, dancing and a guest speaker to teach troops about the importance of national Hispanic heritage month.

The 15th Special Troops Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) Wagonmasters and 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, hosted a Hispanic heritage month luncheon Oct. 10 at the main dining facility at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

Col. Larry Phelps, commander of the 15th Sustainment Brigade, danced the Bachata, a hip-swinging dance from the Dominican Republic, to celebrate the event.

“One of our primary rules is to work hard, play hard,” he said.

By congressional law and yearly presidential proclamation, Sept. 15 to Oct. 15 is Hispanic heritage month. Sgt. Railin Isaac, orderly room non-commissioned officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 15th Special Troops Battalion, 15th Sust. Bde., and a Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic, native, read the presidential proclamation to the luncheon attendees:

“I call upon public officials, educators, librarians, and all the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs,” she said.

Isaac and Sgt. Sandylane Rodriguez, a movement and chemical, biological

radiological and nuclear NCO and a Humacao, Puerto Rico, native; Sgt. Elizabeth Whitehead, personnel clerk and a Los Angeles native; Sgt. 1st Class Andrea Parris, paralegal NCO and a Lancaster, Pa., native; all with the 15th, did a dance routine incorporating several styles of Latin dance and music while wearing colorful, traditional, Latin dresses.

They were later joined by Alex Cruz, logistics warehouse contractor and a Honduran Los Angeles native.

Cruz teaches a free salsa dancing class 8:00 p.m. every Friday at the Morales, Welfare and Recreation building here.

The group took turns dancing to a wide array of music before picking senior officers and enlisted Soldiers from the audience to dance with.

Guest speaker Master Sgt. Francisco A. Morales, liaison officer with the 264th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 15th Sust. Bde., and a Dominican Republic native, spoke about “embracing the fierce urgency of now,” a Martin Luther King Jr. quote and the theme of this year’s celebration.

“This year’s theme recognizes the strength and hard work of Hispanic Americans and how their contributions make our nation more vibrant and diverse,” Morales said.

He gave a brief history of the observance, which he said started in 1968 as Hispanic heritage week and later became an annual 30-day celebra-

First Sgt. Jeanette Short, with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 15th Special Troops Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, dances with Alex Cruz, logistics warehouse contractor and salsa dance instructor, at a Hispanic heritage month luncheon Oct. 10 at the main dining facility at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.



Lt. Col. Paula Lodi, commander of 15th Special Troops Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, dances with Alex Cruz, logistics warehouse contractor and salsa dance instructor, at a Hispanic heritage month luncheon Oct. 10 at the main dining facility at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

by Spc. Gonzalo Medina, a laundry, shower and textile specialist with the 506th Quartermaster Company, 515th Sustainment Battalion, 15th Sust. Bde., during his free time, the dancers’ said.

Medina, a Bayamon, Puerto Rico, native, also managed the music and slideshow presentations for the event.

“I’m Hispanic,” he said. “I’ve got to represent wherever I go.”

Not all of the volunteers were Hispanic however. Parris said she volunteered because she knew how to dance.

Maj. John B. Herd, MWR director and a Florence, Miss., native, said he was pleased with the volunteer support.

“Having lived in South America for several years, my hope for the event was that it would bring forth all the rich aspects of the Hispanic culture that many may never experience; art, language, natural beauty and cuisine,” Herd said. “The event far exceeded my expectations thanks to the time and talent of many volunteers.”

tion beginning Sept. 15. Morales said this year’s theme was a call to action, to bring equity to Hispanics in federal government positions.

The event’s program had examples of Hispanic Americans who have broken barriers, including Sonia Sotomayor, the first Hispanic American Supreme Court justice, retired Lt. Gen. Edward Baca, former National Guard Bureau chief, Cesar Estrada Chavez, founder of the United Farm Workers of America, and Ellen Ochoa, the first Hispanic female astronaut.

“We are so close now to making history,” Morales said in closing. “Let us not look back at this moment and say we had the opportunity, but we did not act. Let us not, in years to come, say we acted – but too late. Let us instead, together, complete this task of generations, by embracing the ‘fierce urgency of now,’ today.”

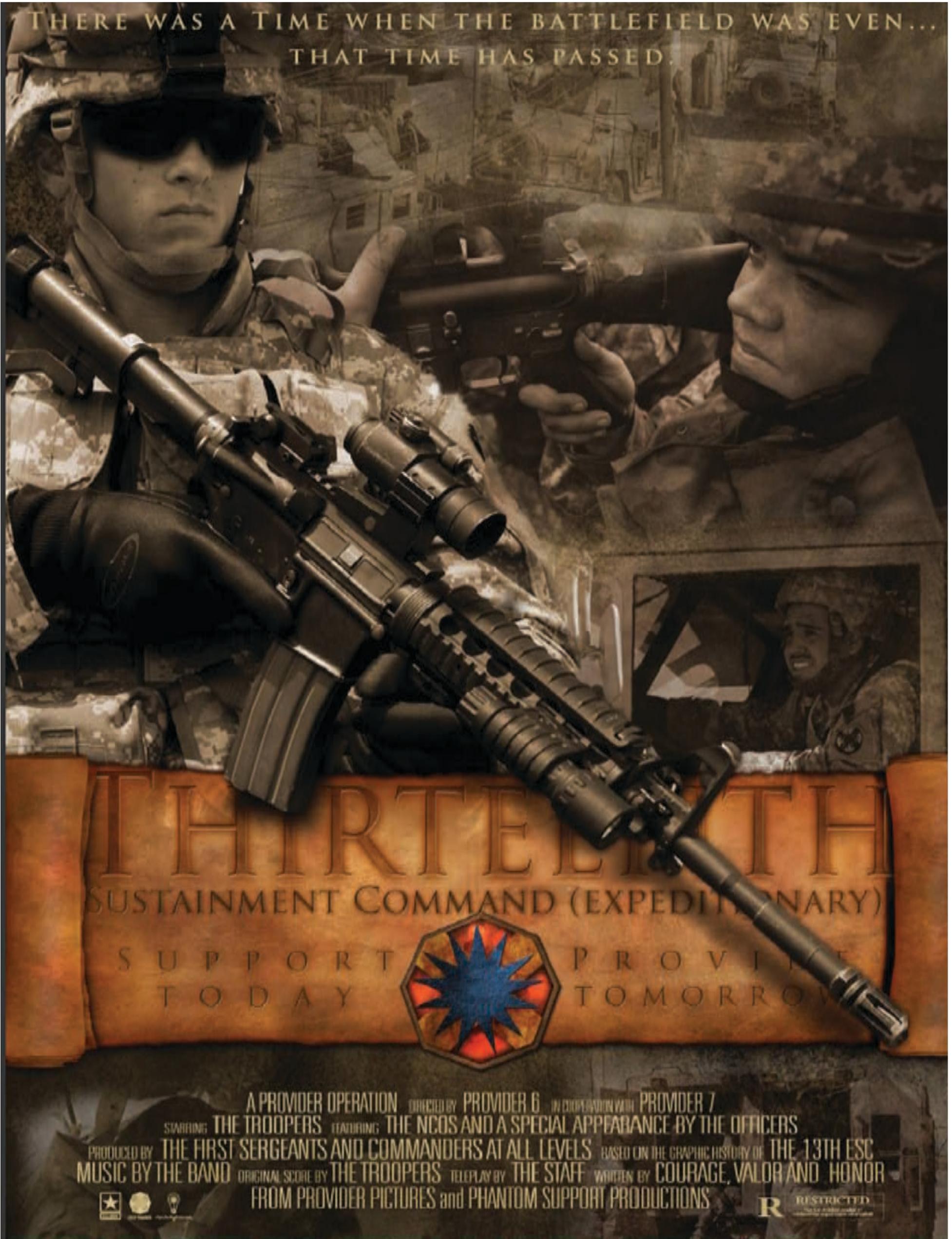
Soldiers and civilians alike volunteered to make the event possible.

The dancers’ dresses were handmade largely



Sgt. Railin Isaac, orderly room noncommissioned officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 15th Special Troops Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, and Alex Cruz, logistics warehouse contractor and salsa dance instructor, dance at a Hispanic heritage month luncheon Oct. 10 at the main dining facility at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.





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Lt. Col. praises Guard, community relationships

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SPC. CORY E. GROGAN
41ST IBCT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

AL ASAD, Iraq – Lt. Col. Brian James said he believes a strong relationship between community members and their National Guard makes those communities a better place to live.

James, commander of Task Force Atlas with the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, worked with the businesses, universities and school districts in the Portland and Vancouver, Ore., communities as an Active Guard Reserve recruiter.

In his time working for the Oregon Army National Guard, he said he has seen civilians come into the Guard, putting some there himself.

James said “putting civilians in boots” has been good for the community. He said employers have learned they can trust citizen Soldiers.

As an AGR recruiter, James said he works with civilians to help Soldiers balance their civilian and military careers. He said he has a working relationship



Lt. Col. Bill James, commander of Task Force Atlas with the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team in Iraq, said he believes strong relationships between communities and National Guard components are imperative.

with employers and business people in his community.

“As an employer, you get a quality in-

dividual with a work ethic that is sometimes hard to find these days,” James said. “You get a citizen Soldier, who

has good base values; you don’t have to worry about people not being clean and ready to go to work. I think that’s one of the skills we give back to the community as a citizen Soldier.”

James said the relationship with the community is the best he has ever seen.

“After 9/11, people have really been able to see everything the Guard has done with multiple deployments, national and state missions,” said James. “We’ve come a long way.”

James said he believes it has been necessary and important for the Guard to play a larger role in protecting the nation. He said community support is a critical aspect of the Guard’s mission success.

Although everyone makes sacrifices, the support is essential to a stronger work force, better community and safer country, he said.

To be successful as a nation during times of conflict, it is important to have the Guard involved with federal missions as well as state missions, James said.

“We have to rally the families, schools, and churches, to get the community support needed to protect the country and our state,” he said.

First sergeant brings probation officer experience to Iraq

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SPC. CORY E. GROGAN
41ST IBCT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

AL ASAD, Iraq – First Sgt. Josh Paullus, a Pendleton, Ore., native, stands as an example of how Army National Guard Soldiers bring expertise from civilian careers to help accomplish military missions.

Paullus, the highest ranking noncommissioned officer in D Company, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, with the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team from the Oregon National Guard, is deployed in Iraq.

At home, Paullus is a juvenile probation officer. He said the skills and responsibilities from his job at home are transferable to his first sergeant duties.

As the unit’s senior NCO, his responsibilities include ensuring even the smallest tasks are not ignored, which sometimes includes dealing with Soldiers’ problems and giving them personal and professional advice, said Paullus.

“Back home, I work with individual medical, dental and mental health needs,

and here I do the same thing,” he said. “There really is a huge overlap.”

Paullus said the key to both jobs is finding a balance.

“As a probation officer, I ensure their needs are being met and they are meeting the needs of the court,” he said. “As first sergeant, I make sure Soldiers’ needs are being met and that they are meeting the needs of the Army.”

He said being a probation officer has provided him with a map for a lot of what he has done as a first sergeant.

“One of the things I learned in my civilian job, that I use here, is that it is easy to look at a problem as a problem rather than to see it as a solution,” he said. “A lot of times in life, we encounter problems and however they came about there is usually a reason for them. (I) have to do a lot of work with people so they can understand the problem—especially with younger Soldiers in my company.”

Paullus said in both jobs he has to be fair and consistent, while understanding the balance between rewards and punishment.

“It is hard to be a leader and a friend because the two don’t always match well,” he said.



First Sgt. Joshua Paullus, a Pendleton, Ore., native, who is serving in Iraq with D Company, 1st Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, with the Oregon National Guard’s 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, said his civilian job as a probation officer has helped him succeed as a first sergeant.

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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

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

Level: Hard

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

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. Who has starred in movies by Francis Ford Coppola, Brian De Palma, Sergio Leone and Martin Scorsese?
2. What actress scored a record 12 Oscar nominations, winning first for the year 1933 and last for 1981?
3. What statuesque actress earned a living by standing still in department store windows prior to her film debut in Tootsie?
4. What actor sighed: "If I had known Michael was going to be so successful, I would have been much nicer to him when he was young"?
5. What one city must a movie play in to be eligible for an Oscar?

1. Robert De Niro 2. Katharine Hepburn 3. Geena Davis 4. Kirk Douglas 5. Los Angeles

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)

PAGAN/WICCAN FELLOWSHIP - Thursday

1900 The Shack

Saturday

1900 The Shack

GREEK ORTHODOX - Sunday

0900 Provider Annex

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CALL:

Gilbert Chapel: 443-7703

Provider Chapel: 433-2430

Freedom Chapel: 443-6303

JB BALAD ACTIVITIES

INDOOR POOL Swim Lessons: Mon., Wed.- 6 p.m. Tue., Thu., Sat.- 6:30 p.m. Aqua Training: Tue., Thu.- 7:30 p.m., 8:30 p.m.	a.m., 5-6 p.m. Edge Weapons & Stick Fighting Training: Tue., Thur., Sat.- 8-10 p.m.	p.m. Caribbean Night: Friday- 8 p.m. Chess & Dominoes Tourney: Friday- 8 p.m. Salsa Class: Saturday- 8:30 p.m. Poker: Saturday- 7:30 p.m.	CC Cross Fit: Monday- Saturday- 10:30 p.m. Cross Fit: Mon., Wed., Fri.- 5:45 a.m., 7 a.m., 3 p.m., 6 p.m. Tue., Thu.- 7 a.m., 3 p.m.	Hold'em: Mon., Fri.- 2 p.m., 8:30 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Tuesday- 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Ping-pong tourney: Tuesday- 8:30 p.m. Spades: Wednesday- 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Salsa: Wednesday- 8:30 p.m. 9-ball: Thursday- 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Karaoke: Thursday- 8:30 p.m. Yoga: Wednesday- 8 p.m. MACP Level 1: Friday- 8 p.m. 5 on 5 Basketball: Saturday- 8 p.m.	Ping-pong tourney: Tuesday- 8 p.m. Foosball tourney: Tuesday- 8 p.m. Jam Session: Tuesday- 7:30 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Wednesday- 8 p.m. Guitar Lessons: Thursday- 7:30 p.m. Game tourney: Thursday- 1 p.m., 8 p.m. Enlisted Poker: Friday- 1 p.m., 8 p.m. Officer Poker: Saturday- 1 p.m., 8 p.m. Squat Competition: Saturday- 8 p.m. Darts: Saturday- 8:30 p.m.	Friday- 7 p.m. Aerobics: Monday, Wednesday, Friday- 7 p.m. Body by Midget Toning Class: Tue., Thu.- 7 p.m. Dodge ball Game: Tuesday- 7:30 p.m. Furman's Martial Arts: Mon., Wed., Sun.- 1 p.m. Gaston's Self-Defense Class: Fri., Sat.- 7 p.m. Open court basketball: Thursday- 7 p.m. Open court soccer: Mon., Wed., - 7 p.m. Zingano Brazilian Jui Jitsu: Tue., Thu.- 8:30 p.m.
EAST FIT-NESS CENTER Open Court Volleyball: Sunday- 6 p.m. Aerobics: Mon., Wed., Fri.- 5:30-6:30 a.m. Yoga Class: Mon., Fri.- 6-7 a.m. Step Aerobics: Mon., Wed., Fri.- 5:30 p.m. Conditioning Training Class: Mon., Wed., Fri.- 7:15-8 p.m. Brazilian Jui-Jitsu: Mon., Wed., Fri.- 8-9 p.m. Abs-Aerobics: Tue., Thu., 6-7	4-ball tourney: Sunday- 8 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Monday- 8 p.m. Karaoke: Monday- 8 p.m. Aerobics: Mon., Wed., Fri.- 2 a.m., 8 a.m. 2 p.m., 7 p.m., 9 p.m. Table Tennis: Tuesday- 8 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Tuesday- 8 p.m. Plastic Models Club: Wednesday 7 p.m. 9-ball tourney: Wednesday- 8 p.m. Dungeons & Dragons: Thursday- 7:30 p.m. Poetry Night: Thursday- 8 p.m. 6-ball tourney: Thursday- 8	EAST RECREATION CENTER 4-ball tourney: Sunday- 8 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Monday- 8 p.m. Karaoke: Monday- 8 p.m. Aerobics: Mon., Wed., Fri.- 2 a.m., 8 a.m. 2 p.m., 7 p.m., 9 p.m. Table Tennis: Tuesday- 8 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Tuesday- 8 p.m. Plastic Models Club: Wednesday 7 p.m. 9-ball tourney: Wednesday- 8 p.m. Dungeons & Dragons: Thursday- 7:30 p.m. Poetry Night: Thursday- 8 p.m. 6-ball tourney: Thursday- 8	H6 FITNESS CENTER 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., 9 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Saturday- 9 a.m., 7 p.m. Boxing: Sunday- 4 p.m. Tue., Thu.- 2 p.m. Boot Camp: Sunday- 8:45 a.m. Tue., Thu.- 7 p.m. Power Abs: Mon., Tue., Thu., - 8 p.m. Friday- 9 p.m.	Monday- Saturday- 4:30 a.m., 4 p.m., 10 p.m., 12 a.m. Soccer: Tue., Thu.- 8 p.m. Wednesday- 8 p.m. MACP Level 1: Friday- 8 p.m. Saturday- 8 p.m. H6 RECREATION CENTER Bingo: Sunday- 8 p.m. Texas	Monday- Friday- 2 p.m., 8:30 p.m. Tuesday- 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Wednesday- 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Thursday- 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Friday- 8 p.m. Saturday- 8 p.m. Sunday- 8:30 p.m. WEST RECREATION CENTER Karaoke: Sun., Wed., 7:30pm 9-ball tourney: Monday- 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.

UPCOMING SPORTS ON AFN



Wednesday 10/21/09

NHL on VERSUS: St. Louis Blues @ Pittsburgh Penguins, Live 2 a.m. AFN/xtra
 2009 American League Championship Series - Game 4: Teams TBD, Live 3 a.m. AFN/sports
 Columbus Blue Jackets @ Calgary Flames Live 4:30 p.m. AFN/xtra

Thursday 10/22/09

2009 National League Championship Series - Game 5 (If Necessary): Teams TBD, Live 3 a.m. AFN/sports
 ESPN College Football Primetime: Tulsa @ UTEP, Live 3 a.m. AFN/xtra
 MotoGP World Championship: Czech Grand Prix, Tape Delayed 7 a.m. AFN/xtra
 PGA Grand Slam of Golf: Final Round (Port Royal Golf Course, Southampton Parish, Bermuda), Tape Delayed 10 p.m. AFN/sports

Friday 10/23/09

2009 American League Championship Series - Game 5 (If Necessary): Teams TBD, Live 3 a.m. AFN/sports
 ESPN College Football Primetime: Florida State @ North Carolina, Live 3 a.m. AFN/xtra
 NBA on TNT Preseason: Denver Nuggets @ Los Angeles Lakers, Tape Delayed 3 p.m. AFN/sports

Saturday 10/24/09

2009 National League Championship Series - Game 6 (If Necessary): Teams TBD, Live 3 a.m. AFN/sports
 ESPN2 College Football Primetime: Rutgers @ Army, Live 3 a.m. AFN/prime pacific
 NBA Preseason: Atlanta Hawks @ Orlando Magic, Live 5:30 a.m. AFN/xtra
 College Football Gameday (Location TBD), Live 5 p.m. AFN/sports

Sunday 10/25/09

2009 American League Championship Series - Game 6 (If Necessary): Teams TBD, Live 12 a.m. AFN/sports
 2009 National League Championship Series - Game 7 (If Necessary): Teams TBD, Live 3:30 a.m. AFN/sports
 UFC 104: Machida vs Shogun (Staples Center, Los Angeles, CA), Live 5 a.m. AFN/xtra
 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series: TBD (Martinsville Speedway, Martinsville, VA), Live 8:30 p.m. AFN/xtra

Monday 10/26/09

San Jose Sharks @ Philadelphia Flyers, Live 2 a.m. AFN/prime atlantic
 2009 American League Championship Series - Game 7 (If Necessary): Teams TBD, Live 3 a.m. AFN/sports
 UFC 104: Machida vs Shogun (Staples Center, Los Angeles, CA), Tape Delayed 10 a.m. AFN/xtra

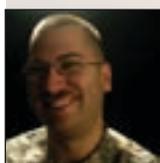
Tuesday 10/27/09

Monday Night Football: Philadelphia Eagles @ Washington Redskins, Live 3:30 a.m. AFN/sports
 NHL on Versus: Minnesota Wild @ Chicago Blackhawks, Tape Delayed 10 a.m. AFN/sports
 2009 American League Championship Series - Game 4: Teams TBD, Live 5 p.m. AFN/sports

Arts & Entertainment

Finally, a console flight sim worth playing

BY STAFF SGT. JOEL F. GIBSON
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



I've been playing flight simulators since Microprose released "Knights of the Sky," in 1991.

Personal computers have always held the edge over consoles in flight simulation. This is a fact, plain and simple, beyond debate.

My everlasting impression of console gaming flight simulation is Konami's "Top Gun," released in 1989. The literal glass ceiling, phenomenally bad physics and arcade action set the precedent for the next 20 years.

For years, software companies pandered to a perception of the console gaming crowd, providing action-packed, easy to play flight simulators that were all abominable wastes of code.

"IL-2 Sturmovik: Birds of Prey," broke the mold. Don't get me wrong, it definitely has its downsides, chief among them being forced to play the game through on arcade mode difficulty before moving to simulation or realistic difficulty.

Flight simulation fans should immediately recognize the IL-2 brand from the wildly popular PC game produced in 2001. "Birds of Prey" takes the spirit of its namesake and runs wild, mixing an excellent flight model with decent artificial intelligence and excellent graphics.

As a gamer, I have come to expect a certain level of graphics from all new PlayStation 3 games, but the little details in "Birds of Prey" stand out. Aircraft damage, clouds, water and city scenes bring you directly into the action, over the cliffs of Dover or the streets of Stalingrad.

As positive as I feel about this game,

a true flight sim for console systems, I do have to say arcade mode difficulty is beyond the pale ridiculous. Flying a Spitfire Mk II at 1,100 mph while knocking down German bombers with two or three bullets is a bit much. However, you can't skip arcade difficulty, much to the detriment of the experienced flight sim player.

Simulation mode is definitely a lot better and more closely resembles PC flight sims than anything that has ever touched a console video gaming system. Realistic difficulty is like flying a World War II aircraft with very little training ... I'm still working on keeping the aircraft flying on that setting.

Campaign mode could take a hint from previous PC games and include a random mission generator and career progression, rather than set missions independent from the results of the last mission, but it's still decent.

Based on my single-player experience, and past experience playing multiplayer with the IL-2 franchise, I can imagine the insane possibilities available for online multiplayer with "Birds of Prey."

I am a bit annoyed there is no split-screen multiplayer available in the game, it seems a rather easy option to add, and would be nice for those of us with limited Internet connectivity.

You can play "Birds of Prey" with the standard PS3 controller, but I strongly urge anyone serious about this game to invest \$30 in a USB joystick for ease of play.

Overall, I give "IL-2 Sturmovik: Birds of Prey" for the PS3 an 8.5 out of 10. The game, as is, could receive a 10 with a better campaign mode and single system multiplayer, but it's still a huge step in the right direction for flight simulators in console gaming.

'Away We Go' on a funny love story

BY SGT. JAYSON A. HOFFMAN
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



"Away We Go" has a heart, laughs, a great soundtrack and a great cast. It's "Garden State" for people figuring out how to start their

families in their early 30s.

Burt (John Krasinski) and Verona (Maya Rudolph) are having their first child and trying to figure out where to settle the family. They make a decent wage, but they are comfortable living their lives as poor college kids. After getting pregnant, they go on a trip around North America

to find a place to live where they will be near family and friends. Each location shows them their family and friends from the past are not the type of people they really care to be around. They eventually realize as long as they have each other, their family will make it.

The soundtrack, which consists mainly of Alexi Murdoch songs, compliments the movie perfectly. The acoustic folk rock has the right amount happiness and laid-back attitude to supplement the two main characters attitudes throughout the film.

The story was solid and familiar to many people. Life goes by fast and figuring it out sometimes takes a major event,

such as getting pregnant. It's easy to feel the young couple's frustration with finding a place to settle their family and with the people around them. They take each stop on their trip with hope, only to find something wrong with it, but it also helps them grow. A coming-of-age story for 30-somethings is a new and fresh story showing adults in their 20's aren't the only people learning about life.

Krasinski (The Office) and Rudolph (Saturday Night Live) were great. He played a laidback, goofball who was madly in love and completely ready to start raising their child, no matter the situation. She was nervous about their future, but was confident in the love the

two shared. She knew their love would get them through hard times. The supporting roles were great too. They all had an interesting amount of idiosyncrasies about them that made them quite entertaining and a great element for the two leads to work with.

It was nice to see characters who genuinely seemed in love, but not movie love, real life love. They each had different stresses and one was always there to console the other.

This film is a love story that dealt with real couples issues intertwined with quirky side characters providing a funny, uplifting comedy. This is a date movie that both guys and girls will love.

OFFICER SPACE



Sustainer Reel Time Theater

Wednesday, Oct. 21

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

Thursday, Oct. 22

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

Friday, Oct. 23

2 p.m. Where The Wild Things Are
5 p.m. I Can Do Bad All By Myself
8:30 p.m. Inglorious Basterds

Saturday, Oct. 24

2 p.m. Extract
5 p.m. Inglorious Basterds
8 p.m. I Can Do Bad All By Myself

Sunday, Oct. 25

2 p.m. Julie & Julia
5 p.m. I Can Do Bad All By Myself
8 p.m. Inglorious Basterds

Monday, Oct. 26

5 p.m. Where The Wild Things Are
8 p.m. Extract

Tuesday, Oct. 27

5 p.m. Inglorious Basterds
8 p.m. I Can Do Bad All By Myself

Wednesday, Oct. 28

5 p.m. Extract
8 p.m. Funny People



PHOTOS AROUND IRAQ



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

U.S. Soldiers with B. Company, 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery, 1st Cavalry Division, of Fort Hood, Texas, fire a round from an M109A6 Howitzer, during a demonstration for their guest, Iraqi Army Brig. Gen. Fouad Ayad, chief of staff, 11th Infantry, Oct. 8 at Camp Taji, Iraq.



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

Maj. Gen. Robert L. Caslen, Jr., Commanding General, Multi-National Division - North, shares a laugh with Iraqi Army Maj. Gen. Kamal Mustafa Salahdeen, commander of 4th Iraqi Army Division, during an MND-N Iraqi Security Forces Seminar on Contingency Operating Location Speicher, Oct. 6 in northern Iraq. The seminar was designed to improve relationships between Arabic and Kurdish military forces.



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Chrissy Best

U.S. Soldiers, along with Iraqi soldiers, conduct a joint patrol to gather information about the local area and nearby bridge traffic, at Najibiyah, near Basra, Iraq, Sept. 29.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Benjamin Boren

Iraqi Soldiers pass out food to a local child during a humanitarian-aid meal handout mission with U.S. Soldiers from the 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, Oct. 1 in Baghdad. The missions are intended to help the most impoverished families in the area.



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

A U.S. Soldier observes a controlled detonation from inside a bus during an explosive ordnance disposal demonstration for key leaders of the Iraqi Security Forces, Kurdish Peshmerga and U.S. Army, on Contingency Operating Location Speicher, in Northern Iraq, Oct. 6. The demonstration showed the techniques and equipment used by EOD personnel to secure, process and investigate blast sites.

NEWS AROUND IRAQ

Bucca completes first phase of Umm Qasar water distribution project

CAMP VICTORY, Iraq – A delegation of officials from Basrah and Umm Qasar visited Contingency Operating Location Bucca, Iraq, Oct. 9 to celebrate completion of the first phase of the water distribution project at the base.

Oct. 1, contractors and Soldiers completed the first phase of the water and waste water treatment plants distribution systems, which allow tanker trucks to transport treated water back to the local communities.

"The water distribution is wonderful and a benefit for Basrah's people and, if transferred through up high, that water will be delivered to most houses," said Zuhair Abraham, assistant governor for Basrah province. "Right now it is good because it provides clean water when it is most scarce."

Marine Col. Daniel Lund, COL Bucca's commander, said southern Iraq is experiencing a severe drought.

"The result is a lowering of the water table and greater intrusion of brackish water from the gulf into the existing aquifers," he said.

The plants are designed to allow roughly 50,000 people per day to use the facilities. The estimated population of Umm Qasar is 45,000.

"We are using a gravity fed, U.S. forces-erected, expeditionary water tower to fill local government designated water tankers," Lund said.

The waste water treatment plant is used for dumping waste and distributing gray water, which may be used for irrigation purposes. It has a holding capacity of 1.5 million gallons per day and a production rate of roughly 1.2 million gallons per day.

"The grey water can be used for agriculture, fire suppression and truck/container wash racks at the Port of Umm Qasar," Lund said.

The water treatment plant, along with an existing plant already operating on COL Bucca, will have a storage capacity of 5.8 million gallons and will be able to produce roughly 2.8 million gallons per day.

"Bucca currently has the capacity to produce nearly 900,000 gallons of water per day with its existing water plant," Lund said. "Our current demand is approximately 350,000 gallons per day. Within the next 30 to 60 days, an additional water treatment plant will come online."

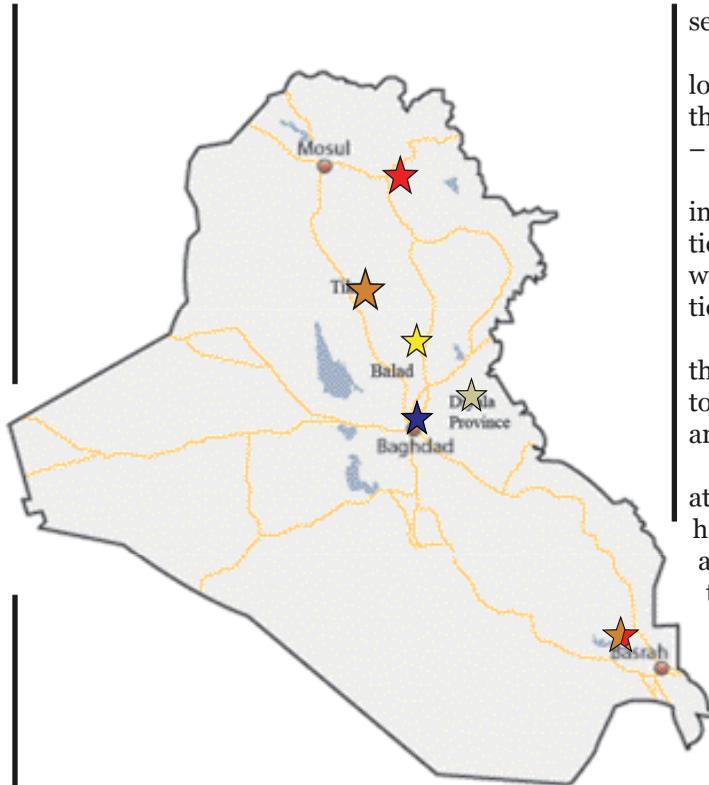
The development of the plants is broken up into a three phase process.

Phase one is the building of the perimeters at each plant. At the water treatment plant a water bladder and pipes are also being installed.

"We have created a segregated black water drop station for local trucks to dump their black water. In addition, the existing grey water ponds we have developed are now available for the Iraqis to use."

Phase two, which is set to begin sometime in November, consists of the overall construction for the distribution points for irrigation use at the waste water treatment plants and local use at the water treatment plants.

"Phase two will create a hardened water distribu-



tion point and is expected to be completed in four months," Lund said.

In its conceptual stage, phase three calls for direct lines from the plants to Umm Qasar, which is roughly two miles away.

"In phase three we will construct a water line to the existing municipal water distribution point in Umm Qasar," Lund said.

"That project is slated to be completed late next summer," he said. "We will build a similar black water pipe to tap into Umm Qasar's existing sewerage system and pump the black water to the waste water treatment plant."

Both of the state-of-the-art water treatment plants will ultimately be turned over to the Iraqi government.

"We will begin training Iraqi's to operate these facilities and our waste water treatment and ice manufacturing plants in January 2010," Lund said.

The project is more than just providing people water; it could provide Iraqis with a better standard of living while leaving a good impression amongst the country's people, Lund said.

"The outcome is that the Iraqi people in the region will enjoy the benefits of modern water and wastewater infrastructure," Lund said. "Through our joint efforts, we will significantly raise the day-to-day living standard for the local population."

"These projects will leave a very positive legacy of our country's support and dedication to greatly assisting the Iraqis in creating a thriving and prosperous economic and political system while greatly increasing the standard of living for the average Iraqi citizen."

Future Iraqi pilots learn to speak English

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – U.S. Airmen continue lessons to help Iraqi officers learn English during classes Oct. 8 at the Iraqi Air Force training school at Camp Taji, Iraq.

October marks the eighth-consecutive month into an initiative for U.S. Airmen to help Iraqi officers master the English language. They do this by

serving as English class instructors and advisers.

Before an Iraqi Air Force lieutenant can begin pilot training at Kirkuk Air Base, they must first prove they have achieved one of their air force's core values – learning to comprehend and speak English.

Capt. Brian Ravak, chief of English language training, said when the future pilots begin flying internationally, being able to communicate in this language will be a necessity as the worldwide language for aviation is English.

"The English language training program is helping them establish a foundation, primarily for their aviators," said Ravak. "Pilots, gunners, flight engineers and crew chiefs are all required to learn English."

This training is step two on the road to undergraduate pilot training. Before arriving here, students must have graduated from Rustamiyah where the lieutenants are introduced to the English language during their initial officer training course.

The Iraqis have progressed to teaching their classes. In the eight months Ravak has been here, he said there have been many transitions – most importantly the Iraqis running this program independently – teaching their students and maintaining student records and transcripts via electronic data management.

Emad was an electrician in Iraq before becoming an English instructor, he said. Having learned English at an early age, he said he sees teaching the lieutenants as a way to pay it forward to his fellow Iraqis.

"I want to teach them," said Emad. "English is a wonderful language."

Largest class starts Iraqi infantry officer basic course

KIRKUSH, Iraq – The new Iraqi Army continues to expand and professionalize its forces with 383 new lieutenants starting the infantry officer basic course Oct. 4 at the Kirkush Military Training Base here.

This is the largest class ever to go through training in the Iraqi Army.

The infantry school commander, Iraqi Army Staff Col. Mahamood, was the keynote speaker for the opening ceremony. He said discipline would be the cornerstone of the class and every officer would be held accountable for his actions.

Mahamood challenged the students to do their best, to strive to be honor graduates and to learn as much as possible so they can wisely lead their Soldiers during times of peace and war.

The 383 students are divided into eight platoons. Each platoon is assigned two instructors with an Iraqi lieutenant colonel as the senior platoon instructor.

The infantry school cadre is made up of 27 officer instructors and eight non-commissioned officers as weapons instructors. The cadre is supported by a headquarters section with the command and control group and a support section with more than 100 personnel.

The infantry school cadre supports the IOBC courses and the other courses in the curriculum.

The IOBC core curriculum covers all aspects of small unit leadership and war fighting at the platoon level.

The course consists of classroom lectures utiliz-

ing slide shows and practical applications on live-fire courses and ranges.

IOBC training also includes ethics, values, counter-insurgency operations, offensive and defensive operations and a platoon/squad live fire maneuver courses.

The course will culminate with mounted combat patrol live-fire exercises and traffic control points.

Graduation for this course is slated for mid-November.

Soldiers return critical grain silo to Iraqi people

TIKRIT, Iraq – A small ceremony marked the return of Salah ad Din province's most important grain storage site to the Government of Iraq Oct. 6 at Tikrit, Iraq.

The Samarra Silo, formerly known as Forward Operating Base Brassfield-Mora, had been occupied by U.S. military forces for several years as U.S. Soldiers first fought an insurgency and later supported reconstruction efforts in the central Iraqi province.

As the security situation in the province improved and reconstruction efforts turned to agriculture, Soldiers realized the importance of their base to the province's farmers.

"We've been putting so much effort into rebuilding the agricultural infrastructure and yet here we were, sitting on the most important storage facility in the province," said Col. Walt Piatt, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division commander.

A serious drought in Iraq and the unstable security situation negated the need for a provincial storage site for wheat in recent years.

An improved security situation and agricultural advancements meant the province had an unusually large wheat crop this year. The achievement revealed a problem: the Iraqis did not have a place to store the wheat.

"If you were to drive around the province about eight weeks ago you would see a lot of the wheat crop was piled outside and in various local refineries because they had no place to store and refine the wheat," said Maj. Kareem Montague, the executive officer of 2nd Bn., 35th Inf. Regt., the battalion stationed at the Silo. "By returning this silo to the Iraqi government, we are returning Samarra's wheat storage and refining capability."

Leaders from the brigade and the battalion met with provincial agricultural officials in June and July to discuss the base's return.

"We decided to return this facility to the Iraqi government as soon as possible. We wanted to make sure we did it before we left the province, so the incoming unit wouldn't have to worry about it," said Piatt.

Soldiers from the 2nd Bn., 35th Inf. Regiment started tearing down hundreds of thousands of sandbags and clearing out the base in early August.

Soldiers from the 95th Engineer Company, 65th Engineer Battalion joined the de-construction effort in mid-August and moved housing trailers, sandbags, concrete barriers and leveled the ground to prepare the base for agricultural use again.

The mammoth task of removing all the equipment and returning the base in pristine condition to the Iraqi government in just more than two months showed the dedication of the Soldiers and civilian contractors stationed at the silo.

More than 400 housing trailers, nearly 200 concrete bunkers, 65 shipping containers, 1,600 concrete barriers and 200,000 sandbags had to be removed from the base, Montague said. It took more than 200 convoys to transport all of the equipment off the base, he said.

Soldiers from the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, the 3rd Brigade's replacement unit, will oversee reconstruction projects to renovate the seed separator, scales, warehouses and administrative building to return the silo to operational capacity in time for the 2010 wheat harvest.

Stable security allows market to re-open in Mosul

MOSUL, Iraq – Local vendors and key leaders from the Mosul city council, Ninawa Provincial Reconstruction Team, and 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, gathered on Contingency Operating Location Diamondback Oct. 3 to announce the reopening of Al Baraka Market in east Mosul.

The Ninawa PRT leader, Patrick Murphy, provided opening remarks at the celebration and recognized the agencies that helped revitalize the market.

"The Iraqi Army and 3rd Brigade Combat Team, in particular the (2nd Battalion, 82 Field Artillery Regiment) under the leadership of Lt. Col. Benjamin Matthews, were responsible for engaging vendors, assisting them in the economic revitalization of the neighborhood and taking on the role of being responsible community leaders," said Murphy.

The 130th Engineer Brigade and its Mosul Reconstruction Cell also provided materials and technical expertise to help in the rebuilding of the market area.

The Ninawa Provincial Reconstruction Team disbursed micro-grants to 41 vendors to help re-establish their businesses. The market provides products and services ranging from a bakery to automotive repair.

"With nearly 50 individual businesses encompassed in this market, this project is a huge win that provides enduring employment for over 100 individuals and returns a sense of normalcy to the community," said Capt. Joe Himpelmann, commander for B Battery, 2/82 FA.

In the last four years, businesses have closed due to security concerns and a car bomb attack in 2007. Change began with a casual conversation between Himpelmann and his Iraqi Army counterpart, Lt. Col. Hussein, the commander of 1st Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 1st Iraqi Army Division, about a shopping center within the boundary of Joint Security Station Sukar.

JSS Sukar was established a few years ago, initially around a single building that housed the small garrison of IA soldiers. However, due to car bomb threats and small arms fire, the boundaries and check points surrounding the JSS pushed further out, eventually choking out the business flow of the market place.

Col. Gary Volesky, commander of 3rd BCT, and Brig. Gen. Bah'a, Iraqi Army 3rd Quick Reaction Force Brigade Commander, discussed civil affairs projects during a joint patrol and the subject of the market came up.

Neither commander had given it much thought before that time, they said. However, with security improving throughout Mosul, they said it was time to begin to revitalize the economy.

Himpelmann said they started with quick-win projects such as trash and sewage. He said there is still some hard work ahead for the business owners

and the Iraqi Army who secure the neighborhood, but everyone is eager to see progress.

"Now it's time to take it to the next level and look for opportunities to stimulate the economy and focus on job creation," said Himpelmann.

Lt. Col. Hussein, said he was very glad to see this market reopen. He and his Soldiers partnered with 2/82 FA to help make the market opening possible.

Hussein said, "God willing, the market opens; the people can reopen their business and make a living. They have not had this in many years and it will make many people in the neighborhood very happy."

US signs letter of intent to transfer Correctional Training Center to the Ministry of Justice

CAMP VICTORY, Iraq – U.S. authorities signed a letter of intent Oct. 10 at Contingency Operating Location Future to transfer control of a \$28 million Iraqi correctional training facility to the Ministry of Justice in mid-December.

"We worked very closely with Minister Dara (Nor al-Dean Baha al-Dean) and the entire Ministry of Justice team to build this facility," said Brig. Gen. David Quantock, Task Force 134's commanding general.

The promise to transfer control of the facility is another milestone in the cooperative efforts between the U.S. and the Government of Iraq.

"In the past, we didn't have the experience on how to run detention facilities, but the Americans started to help us a lot on how to train our Iraqi Correctional Officers," said Dara Nor al-Dean Baha al-Dean, the minister of justice.

Each student is taught by a cadre of senior Iraqi Correction Officers in the course of the six-week program.

The training academy at COL Future is built to closely resemble a real correctional facility. It also includes several modern classrooms and four computer labs.

The training program is run almost entirely by Iraqi instructors with minimal involvement by U.S. forces.

"U.S. advisers (are) working side by side with their Iraqi partners, and we look forward to a long-term relationship and partnership with the Iraqi corrections system," Quantock said.

When the final transfer occurs, the facility will be completely run by the Ministry of Justice. The U.S. will only take a small advisory role in the operations of the training academy.

"We appreciate what the American forces in Iraq are doing for our ministry by training all the ICOs," the minister said. "Our ICOs are very proficient because of the training, and we appreciate the Americans building a facility that will be a great help for our correctional system."

Al-Dean said he was also considering creating a refresher course for existing correctional officers.

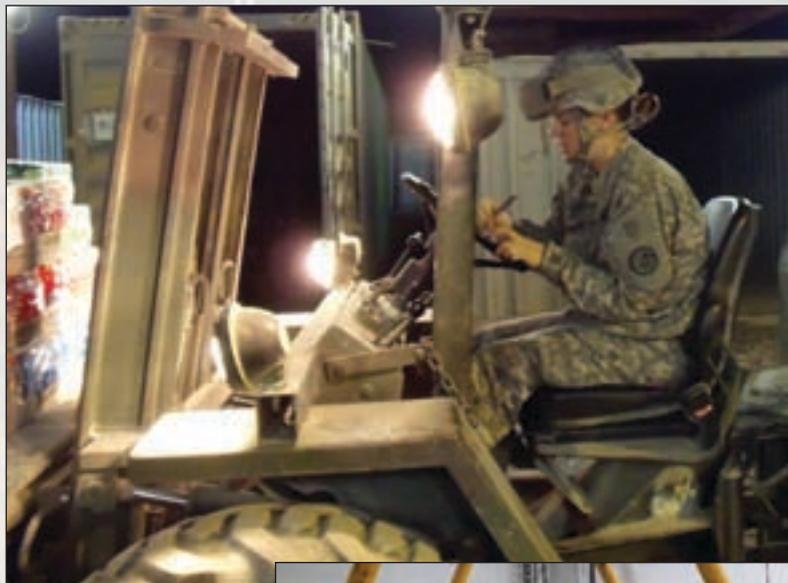
"We are thinking of bringing a lot of our correctional officers to this facility to refresh them and train them to have more experience, especially in respecting human rights of the detainees," he said.

The letter signing followed a graduation ceremony for more than 500 ICOs – the largest class of graduates from the training academy at COL Future. The newest graduates will work in Ministry of Justice prisons as well as the U.S. detention facilities at Camps Cropper and Taji.

Phantom Support



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Scott Henry



Spc. Michelle Prichard, a night inventory specialist and forklift operator with the 639th Combat Sustainment Support Company and Missoula, Mont., native, attached to the 620th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, double-checks an order sheet to make sure the unit receives all requested items. A pick night can involve more than 50 orders and more than 3,000 cases of food and drink.



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

Sgt. Rueben Gastelum, from Selma, Calif., Spc. Joshua Martin, from Harrisonburg, Va. and Pfc. Anthony Webber from El Paso, Texas, all from 1st Maintenance Company, 260th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, receive the Army Achievement Medal, recognizing them for their achievements of being distinguished at the Soldier of the Quarter board and their efforts in remodeling the "Fuel Master Tent."



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

Col. Gust W. Pagonis, the support operations officer for the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), discusses the supply support area operations and drawdown requirements with Pfc. Ryan Gikiere, an automated logistical specialist with the 639th Combat Sustainment Support Company, 620th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, and Kalispell, Mont., native, at the East Liberty SSA Oct. 15.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. John Stimac



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Keith S. VanKlompberg

Sgt. Tracy Braeme, a crew chief with C Company, 7th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment and a Sublimity, Ore., native, gears up for a medical evacuation mission Oct. 8 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Master Sgt. Michael Thomas, the first sergeant with the military transition team, 1st Cavalry, 36th Iraqi Army Brigade, out of Fort Hood, Texas, helps an Iraqi boy put on his backpack Oct. 7 at Al Anbar Primary School. Thomas along with other U.S. Soldiers and members of the Iraqi Army distributed backpacks and school supplies in support of Operation Back to School.