

BLACK JACK ROUND UP

October 2009

4-9 Cav kicks off Junior Hero Program

**BLENDING IN: U.S. MARKSMAN
TEACHES IRAQI SNIPERS TO CAMOUFLAGE**

Soldier connects Iraqi, U.S. schoolchildren

NCOs showing Soldiers how to succeed

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Black Jack Round Up

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As we close in on the winter months, it's hard to not have thoughts of home. When we arrived here early in the year, the air was still cold and the days not much warmer. We have since gone through a very hot spring and summer, and it is now turning cool again. This time of year, as the holidays grow closer, we all tend to look toward home and friends and family.

That is especially true of this rotation. We all welcomed the news that most of us were going to be home by Christmas. I can't think of a better way to celebrate the return of the Black Jack Brigade than to spend a well-earned break over the holidays.

Even though we are closer to the end, you continue to lean forward every day, con-



tinuing to refine the way you operate to build partnerships and communities and continuing to find and disrupt the insurgents in our area.

The staff has managed to work the redeployment in the background so you can focus on your daily operations, and I commend them for their ability

to focus both on the near 50 meter and 300 targets simultaneously.

The storied 3rd Infantry Division is here and commanding Multi-National Division North, and we're well on our way to receiving our replacements, the 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division "Forerunners," who I'm sure will all be every bit as dedicated to Kirkuk as we have been. The leaders we have experienced so far are exceptional and are focusing on all the right areas.

So while we're all anticipating home, we still have miles to go. To the family members, it will only be a little longer. Stay strong as you always have, and we'll all be together again soon.

God bless you all.



FORMER STUDENTS GET A SECOND CHANCE IN IRAQ

Story and photos by Spc. Justin Naylor



Lt. Col. Hugh McNeely, the deputy commanding officer of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, speaks to students at the Oqba Bin Nafe'e School in Kirkuk, Iraq. This school provides students who have failed two consecutive terms, or dropped out, a second chance at getting an education.

With an almost thirty percent illiteracy rate, the evidence suggests many students in Kirkuk, Iraq, have fallen behind.

In an effort to correct this, organizations and programs within the province have been established to allow drop-out students and adults that had long given up on school a second chance at education.

One program allows students who have failed two consecutive terms, or who had dropped out of school, to return to school.

According to Aydhin Muhammed, the dean of the Oqba Bin Nafe'e School, this program is operating in at least six different locations within Kirkuk city.

"This is the second year for my school," said Aydhin. "It was the first in the province."

Aydhin's school teaches grades one through six at an accelerated pace, allowing students to graduate with an elementary diploma in only four years.

"It's so they can catch up to attend other schools," he said.

Students at this school range roughly from age 14 to 22.

According to Aydhin, students who graduate from this school will be able to move on to programs that teach higher levels of education.

During a recent visit to the school, Lt. Col. Hugh McNeely, the deputy commanding officer of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, had the op-

portunity to speak with the young students about their rejoining the education system.

“I appreciate what you’re doing,” he said. “It is very important. This is the key to your future. I hope you stay with it.”

In addition to this program, another program has recently begun in this province, this one aimed at allowing adults that have never attended school or have long since dropped out a chance to learn how to read and write.

According to McNeely, this adult literacy program began last year during a trial run conducted around the city of Hawijah, Iraq. 500 members of the Sons of Iraq were given the opportunity to participate in the program, and 486 of them graduated from it. Of these, 150 went on to attend the police academy, and 75 of those were hired as policemen.

Many different jobs in Kirkuk have an educational requirement for employment. “It is important that there are programs for adults who need this education to be able to find it.”

“This is helping people who have found themselves outside the education system to get back in,” said McNeely.

Adult illiteracy programs are held at night to allow students who have jobs during the day to attend.

Kirkuk city has suffered from a fairly high percentage of students dropping out of school and programs like this help to fix that, explained McNeely.

“One of the key components to a modern and economically viable society is having an educated populace,” he said.



Lt. Col. Hugh McNeely speaks with Aydhin Muhammed about his school. Aydhin's school runs a program for students who have failed two consecutive terms or have dropped out of school.

U.S. ARMY MECHANICS' TRAINING ENSURES IRAQI VEHICLES FIT TO FIGHT

Story by Staff Sgt. Jason Douglas
(Photos courtesy of 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment)

In any organization that relies on vehicles to perform its duties, maintaining those vehicles is of the utmost importance.

Mechanics from 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, with some assistance from the 506th Air Expeditionary Squadron's maintenance wing, have been providing maintenance classes to Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police mechanics on the civilian pickup trucks and military humvees used by the IA and IP.

Sgt. 1st Class William Harbert, a Westminster, S.C. native, and Sgt. Nathan Hinojosa, a San Antonio, Texas native, both mechanics with 1st Bn., 8th Cav Regt., joined with Air Force mechanics to provide classes to IP from the Dibbis and Sargaron police stations on Forward Operating Base Warrior, Kirkuk, Iraq, Oct. 12.

"The Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police have been given classes to assist them in achieving a more self-reliant maintenance program," Harbert said. "The classes have been centered on teaching the basic principles of operation for the Ford F-250 trucks, in which we discuss common problems the IA and IP are having and then conduct hands-on training in that area."

Harbert said they have taught classes on the vehicle's suspension system, brake system, and have now begun on the electrical system.

"So far, the training has gone very well. The IA and IP seem very interested and eager to learn the system," Harbert said. "These classes have been conducted in cooperation with the U.S. Air Force here at FOB Warrior, but the training is not limited to the base."

Harbert said he and Hinojosa, and his maintenance crews have been on numerous missions to perform on-location training with IA and IP mechanics, as well as assist in troubleshooting the complicated vehicle systems.

"Hinojosa and I have always walked away from the training feeling the IA and IP were more capable of maintaining their fleet of [vehicles]," Harbert said.

In addition to the truck maintenance classes,



Mechanics from the 1st Bn, 8th Cav. Regt., instruct an Iraqi Army mechanic on maintenance of an IA High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle. U.S. Army mechanics have been instructing IA and Iraqi Police mechanics on the Ford F-250 pickup trucks and the HMMWVs, which are used by the IA and IP to patrol and conduct operations

Harbert and his mechanics have also been making sure the IA and IP humvees are fit to fight as well.

“In April, I began gathering information on the logistical status of the IA by talking with each IA battalion commander, executive officer, and maintenance officers,” Harbert said. “I found that vehicle part requests were not being submitted, so I began giving classes to the IA leadership on how to procure parts.”

Harbert said he began to attend the 12th IA Div. maintenance meetings to discuss possible solutions to fixing the problems with ordering replacement parts, and along with Hinojosa and his other mechanics, began conducting training on how to perform quality control and quality assurance inspections and service for the humvees.

“I broke down the QA and QC checklist and service packet and had it translated into Arabic and Kurdish to better assist the IA and IP in performing unit level maintenance,” Harbert said. “I also had my standard operating procedures booklet translated and gave it to IA and IP leadership to assist them with setting up their humvee maintenance operations.”

Harbert said he has also had the vehicle technical manuals translated into Kurdish and Arabic.

“All of this combined has led to a more established maintenance program for the Iraqi national defense,” he said.

According to Harbert, the training being conducted will greatly assist the IA and IP unit’s vehicle maintenance programs.

“Prior to the classes, [IA and IP] vehicles received very little to no maintenance because of a lack of knowledge,” Harbert explained. “Now, I am starting to see IA mechanics working on these vehicles and getting them back into the fight.”

Harbert explained there were still some limitations in ordering parts for foreign vehicles, but the technical ability of their mechanics has far exceeded what it was six months ago.

“The intent is to set these units up for success. I want the IA and IP to be able to stand alone and sustain their equipment after our presence is gone,” Harbert said.

With ISF mechanics increasing their skills, Harbert said they will be able to maintain their equipment and their units capable of doing independent patrols and operations.



A mechanic from the 1st Bn., 8th Cav. Regt., instructs an Iraqi Army mechanic on maintenance of an IA High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle.

BLENDING IN: U.S. MARKSMAN TEACHES IA SNIPERS TO CAMOUFLAGE

Story and photos by Spc. Justin Naylor



Dressed in a newly-made ghillie suit, the Iraqi sniper could have been half-man, half-plant; even his Dragunov sniper rifle was covered in frayed burlap to mask its outline.

Staff Sgt. Dean Hills, an infantryman with 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, calling on his previous experience as a designated marksman, made the ghillie suit to teach Iraqi snipers how to blend in to their environment, during a class Oct. 19.

“It is important for a sniper to know how to blend into his environment,” said Hills.

Ghillie suits are often handmade by snipers to help them blend into their surroundings. The suits are usually made using old camouflage uniforms, which are then covered in netting, frayed burlap, jagged cloth and other materials to imitate a more natural look. Plants are also collected from the area where the sniper will be performing his mission and attached to the suit in order to more accurately match the area.

“It’s my first time seeing one,” said Sgt. Kaseem Jamal Abass, the Iraqi Army sniper with the 3rd Battalion, 47th Brigade, 12th IA Division in Kirkuk province, Iraq. “It’s a pretty good idea. I am going to make one of my own.”

This was the first time that Hills has had the chance to train with an IA sniper, and he hopes they will pass this knowledge on to future IA snipers.

The initial training the IA snipers get isn’t as comprehensive as what we can offer, so



Staff Sgt. Dean Hills, shows Iraqi Army soldiers how they can use burlap as part of Ghillie suit during a training class at their compound in Kirkuk province, Iraq.

they really benefit from additional training events, Hills explained. "If I can give them a little extra training, it helps."

Using his own ghillie suit as a model, Hills showed Kaseem how to add camouflage using frayed burlap to distort the outline of not only his body but also his weapon.

Hills, who is the designated marksman for his unit, has a lot of experience with camouflage and shooting.

His training first began in the Marine Corps as an infantryman. At his first duty station, he received in-depth training from his non-commissioned officer in-charge on scouting and reconnaissance. He also honed his skills as a marksman during his time in the Marines.

"It's something I've always loved, ever since my dad gave me my first rifle," he said.

Hills later joined the U.S. Army and worked



Sgt. Kaseem Jamal Abass demonstrates how a ghillie suit does not blend with rocks during training that taught Kaseem how to make a ghillie suit of his own that he can use on his sniper missions.



Sgt. Kaseem Jamal Abass, the sniper for 3rd Bn., 47th IA Bde., watches as Staff Sgt. Dean Hills wraps his Dragunov sniper rifle in frayed burlap to break up its outline during a training event at the IA compound in Kirkuk province.

in various scout units. Hill also worked with a few special operations units that helped him learn more about marksmanship and camouflage

"I've always been intrigued with the idea of being a sniper," he said.

Hill hopes to attend the sniper school at Fort Benning, Ga., when he returns to the U.S.

During the rest of his deployment in Iraq, Hill plans to continue working with Kaseem, helping him improve his skills as a sniper.

"We've worked with these guys so long," he said about the IA soldiers in the 3rd Bn., 47th IA Bde., "we start to get a little close to them. They are always willing to help us. This is something I can do for them."

Soldier connects Iraqi, U.S. schoolchildren

Story by Staff Sgt. Jason Douglas
(Photos courtesy of 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment)



Sgt. Jonathon Chambers, a Streator, Ill. native with 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, helps separate school supplies during a school supply delivery to the Baghara Elementary School in Hawijah.

Seeing a disparity in the quantity and quality of school supplies in many Iraqi primary schools, one U.S. Soldier decided to do something about it.

Staff Sgt. Jared Wiegand, a Fort Wayne, Ind. native with 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, was home last March on leave during his deployment to Kirkuk province, Iraq and decided to visit J.E. Ober Elementary School in Garrett, Ind., where his sister-in-law teaches.

After spending roughly an hour speaking with the children and showing them photos of Iraq, Wiegand mentioned how Iraqi children were less fortunate and did not have the same opportunities to achieve the same levels of education as children in the U.S. In response, Mrs. Alecia Pfefferkorn created a competition at the school to gather school supplies such as pencils, notebooks and markers, for the Iraqi children.

Following the competition, the school supplies were sent with the assistance of the local Garrett, Ind. American Legion chapter to Wiegand.

Wiegand said his scout platoon waited until after the Muslim holiday of Ramadan and the start of the school year to begin and then distributed the supplies Oct. 18 to the Baghara Elementary School in Hawijah, Iraq.

According to Capt. Scott Akerley, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Bn., 8th Cav Regt., it wasn't just U.S. Soldiers who

participated in the school delivery.

The Hawijah Emergency Services Unit was on hand for the occasion as well.

“The ESU has always gone out of its way to support [our] missions inside the city of Hawijah,” Akerley said.

“We wanted to thank them for their continued support by having them assist in the school supply distribution, which will not only serve to improve our relationship with the ESU but also bolster their position within the community.”

For Wiegand, the delivery of school supplies goes beyond relationship building; it means the future of Iraq.

“Iraq will succeed based on the success of the Iraqi children, they are the future of Iraq,” Wiegand said. “Their memories won’t include memories of a dictator and personal achievements limited to your family name and tribal affiliation.”

Wiegand said it’s critical to the long-term success of the country

for the children to receive an education and improve themselves.

“This school supply delivery was just a very small attempt to help steer them in the right direction and provide them some tools they will need to get there,” he said.

And as far as the Hawijah ESU, Wiegand says they have always assisted his unit whenever they’ve asked for anything.

“We wanted to give them an opportunity to positively impact the children of Baghara, while at the same time build respect and trust in the local community.”

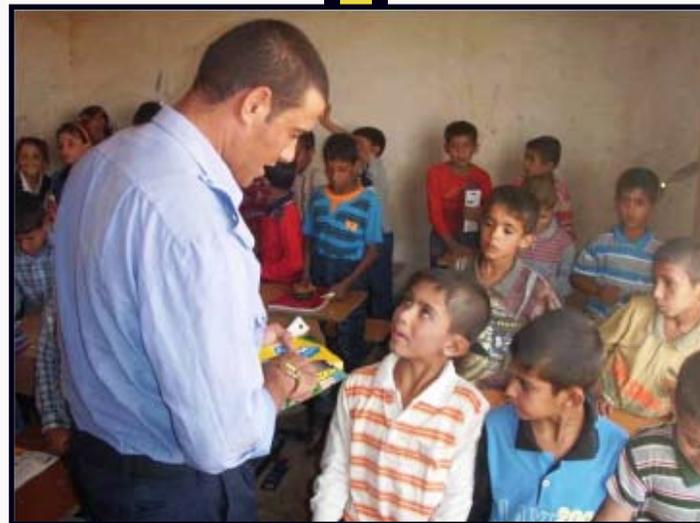
For Abu Naji, the Baghara village mukhtar or leader, visits to the village are

a welcome sight, especially when combined with Iraqi forces.

“The people of Baghara like it when U.S. and Iraqi forces come to their village,” Abu said. “These children will remember this as a good day and they will remember you [U.S. forces] and the Iraqi Police made it possible for them.”



Iraqi schoolchildren from Baghara Elementary School in Hawijah, Kirkuk province, Iraq, smile excitedly after receiving school supplies during a school supply delivery by 1st Bn., 8th Cav. Regt.



An Iraqi police officer assists Soldiers from the 1st Bn., 8th Cav. Regt., to distribute school supplies to the Baghara Elementary School in Hawijah, Kirkuk province.

Training the heroes of tomorrow

Story and photos by Pfc. Justin Naylor



The 150 or so school children stood together in rows in their school courtyard. In front of them stood an Iraqi policeman, and as they raised their right hands, he read to them an oath, which they recited back.

Line after line he read, pledging them to obey their parents, report crimes to Iraqi Policemen or Iraqi Army, listen to their teachers and honor their country.

But of all the lines, the one spoke with the most gusto read "I am a Junior Hero and the future of Iraq!"

This elaborate oath was only a small part of an event held by Iraqi policemen at a school in Taza, Iraq, Oct. 13 where school children had a chance to get new school supplies and meet real heroes in the IP.

"The important thing between the Taza Police and the students is to make a relationship," said Col. Jangeez, the Taza Chief of Police.

By holding events like this, it creates a place where the children can see IP and all they do and even talk with them, explained Jangeez.

"If these children have respect for IPs, it will help change Iraq for the better," he said.

During the event, the IP also gave out backpacks and school supplies provided by 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division.

"The purpose for the backpacks is to help them have trust for the IPs," said Jangeez.

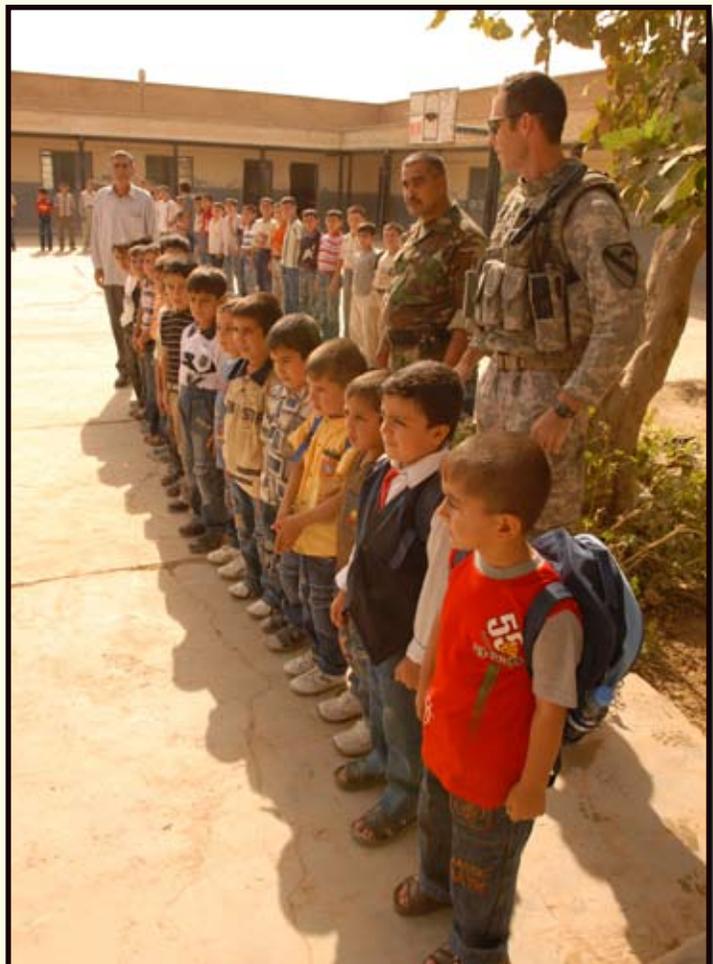
Students also received a junior hero badge to wear on the left side of their chest, and paper, pencils and crayons.

"We are very happy," said Abass Sadiq, 12, who was one of the students that received a backpack.

"They are very good," he said about the IPs. "They help keep me and my family safe."

Abass also said he would feel comfortable going up and talking to the IPs if something was wrong in his neighborhood.

The idea behind this program was to build a favorable view of the Iraqi Security Forces in the eyes of the children in their community, according to Staff Sgt. Kurt Hausamann, a Hughesville, Penn., native and a mem-



Capt. Brennan Mulaney poses with Iraqi schoolchildren during a Junior Hero Program event.

ber of the tactical team attached to 4th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd BCT.

This program helps show the students that they can become an IP someday instead of joining an insurgent organization, he explained. "They can be a junior hero and grow up to be an IP."

Besides reciting the pledge, IP in attendance also spoke to the children about what their job, and how they work to keep the community safe.

"My job entails me to help our country of Iraq," said Jangeez. "We are here to protect you and your families from evildoers. The IA and IP work together to make sure your community are safe and secure. The Iraqi Security Forces are patrolling the streets everyday so that you are able to get an education."

"When you see your Iraqi Security Forces, do not be afraid, but have faith that we are out there to be your protectors," he said.

Students also received a junior hero badge to wear on the left side of their chest, and paper, pencils and crayons.



1st Lt. Sean Grevious, a platoon leader with 4th Sqdn., 9th Cav. Regt., assists Iraqi Police in distributing backpacks to Iraqi schoolchildren in Taza.



Iraqi Police, Soldiers Capt. Mulaney, Lt. Grevious, and Iraqi schoolchildren pose for a photo during a Junior Heroes Program event.

Black Hawk Soldier receives Purple Heart.

By Spc. Jared Sollars, 145th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



Cpl. Adam Seiffert, a gunner for 1st Platoon, Black Hawk Troop, 4th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, was the recipient of the Purple Heart on Oct. 2, an award given to U.S. troops who have been injured or killed in combat.

Seiffert was injured by a grenade thrown by an insurgent near his vehicle while his platoon was on a dismounted patrol in Mosul on June 6.

The attacker was shot by Staff Sgt. Homero Bazaldua and Spc. Ethan Wagner in response to the attack. Sgt. Andrew McConico, the senior medic for 2nd Platoon, Black Hawk Troop, 4th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, treated the attacker's wounds, who survived and was turned over to the Iraqi Security Forces.

"All their training paid off, it immediately kicked in at a fast pace," said Lt. Col. Andrew Shoffner, the commander of the 4th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, "They each did their jobs well securing the area and evacuating their injured comrades."

Also injured during the attack were 1st Sgt. Brian Allen and Pfc. Thaddeus Hewitt.

"If I could sum this whole thing up, I would say that there is not a better bunch of guys to get blown up with," said 1st Sgt. Brian Allen, the 1st Sgt. for Black Hawk Troop, 4th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment.

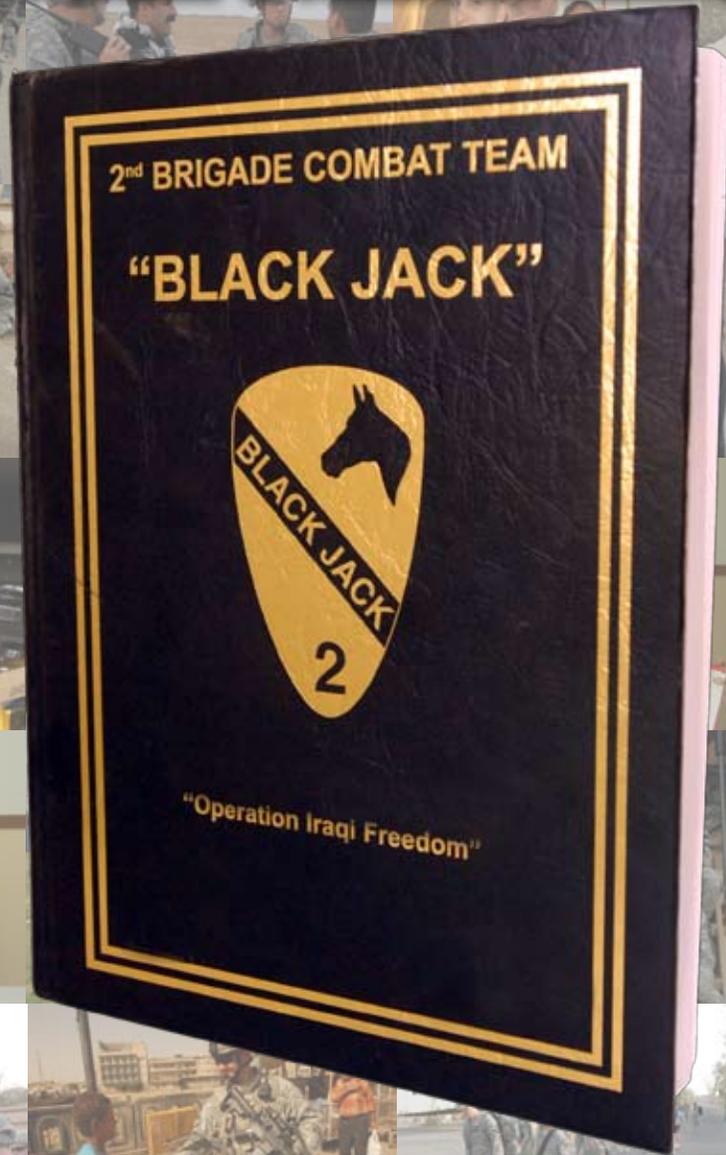
The Purple Heart is the oldest medal still being given to U.S. military personnel. It was originally named the Badge of Military Merit by President George Washington in 1782.

"It's important for the Soldiers to receive their awards in front of their peers," said Shoffner, "It's part of the Army's tradition. It's good for their peers to get to see them awarded for their actions."



Col. Ryan Gonsalves, the brigade commander of the 2nd "Black Jack" Brigade Combat Team, pins Cpl. Adam Seiffert,

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'Red Dragon' troops give aid to "Lost City"

By Spc. Jared Sollars, 145th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

In the small impoverished neighborhood of Huzzeran near Kirkuk, Iraq, jobs are few and far between. Drinkable water is not readily available for consumption and the school in the area does not have running water.

A week after a clearing operation led by Iraqi Emergency Service Unit and Iraqi Police in the neighborhood, Bravo Battery, 3rd Battalion 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, delivered essential supplies in this area often referred to by the locals as the "Lost City."

"Things are bad here, people here don't have work or anything really," said Mohammed Sadek, a teacher at the neighborhood's school, "It's very good that Coalition Forces are helping the people here who are without jobs."

One of the goals of this mission was to assess the civil issues of the area and gather information about immediate needs.

"We need good water here in the school," said Mohammed Sadek, "The children like coming to the school, but there are certain things it needs."

The Soldiers were able to pinpoint 100 families in the area that were most in need with the assistance of Brig. Gen. Hijran, commander of the Iraqi Emergency Service Unit in the area, and Col. Adnan, the chief of the Adallah Iraqi Police district.

"Today was a great success," said Capt. Tyler Donnell, the commander of Bravo Battery,



Soldiers from Bravo Battery, 3rd Bn., 92nd FA Regt., unload and carry 100 bags of food and cooking supplies into the Hamza Bin Ab Al Mutlik School where the bags were distributed to 100 families in the neighborhood of Huzzeran near Kirkuk, Iraq, also called the "Lost City" by the locals.

3rd Battalion 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, "Coalition Forces have been doing this for years, but with the help of Col. Adnan and Gen. Hijran, we were able to help the people that need it most."

The delivery presented an opportunity for the Adallah Iraqi Police, Emergency Service Unit and Coalition Forces to open lines of communication between the community, its civil leaders and local security forces.

"It is a great thing the Coalition Forces have done for the people of Adallah," said Col. Adnan, the chief of the Adallah Iraqi Police in the area, "It is a way of reassuring the people that they are not forgotten by anyone."

The humanitarian assistance drop was preformed at the Hamza Bin Ab Al Mutlik School as a central and strategic point in the neighborhood.

"The school gave us a semi-secure location to do the delivery," said Donnell. "We chose to do it on a Saturday because school would be out."

Bravo Battery, 3rd Battalion 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, has tentatively planned future assistance drops and evaluations to further assist the people of this neighborhood.



An Iraqi Police officer helps unload and carry 100 bags of food and cooking supplies into the Hamza Bin Ab Al Mutlik School.



Soldiers from Bravo Battery, 3rd Bn., 82nd FA Regt., unload and carry 100 bags of food and cooking supplies into the Hamza Bin Ab Al Mutlik School where the bags were distributed in Huzzeran called the "Lost City" by the locals.

Iraqi village celebrates opening of first primary school

Photos and story by Spc. Justin Naylor



Residents, city councilmen, Iraqi Police and U.S. Forces gather during the ribbon cutting ceremony signifying the opening of a new school in the village of Mort in Kirkuk province, Iraq, Oct. 29.

Parents and children in the village of Mort in Kirkuk province, Iraq, had something to celebrate as a new school opened in their community.

Although children have been attending the school for roughly the past 20 days, the official ribbon cutting ceremony was held Oct. 29 with residents, Iraqi Police and U.S. Military all present to take part.

"This helps the people a lot," said Rizgar Abdulla Latif, the district council chairman for Schawn, the district responsible for this village. "In the past, parents had to bring their children into the city for them to go to school. This makes it a lot easier on the families here."

This school was constructed using funds from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, and was the second school to open in the Schwan District since the 2nd BCT began operating here earlier this year.

According to 1st Lt. Jeff Uhlig, an Everett, Penn., native and a platoon leader with 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd BCT, the city council of Schwan made it clear to the brigade that it is in need of additional schools, and that it would like the brigade to focus projects on that issue.

"This village is 300 years old, but they never had a school here," said Rizgar.

Some families in the community were even considering moving because they were upset they had to take their children so far for school, he explained.

"I'm so glad," said Hamzah Khalil, 10, about the new school. "My friends and I are very



Children wait in line to receive new backpacks during the new primary school opening in Mort village.

excited.”

This school is better than the one I used to go to, according to Hamzah.

Hamzah said he hopes to one day become a project engineer, and he feels having a school so close to his home will give him more time to study and do better.

“This gives them a chance to grow up and learn and improve this area,” said Rizgar about the village’s children.

During the school opening, the children also received backpacks, crayons and various other school supplies.



Students stand in front of their new school in the village of Mort in Kirkuk province. Now that this school is open families living in this village will no longer have to worry about transporting their children to a bigger village to go to school.

Support facility gets troops to the fight

By 1st. Lt. Thomas Martinez, Golf Battery, 3-82 FA,



Every day, Iraqi Security Forces conduct operations in Kirkuk that contribute to the safety of the population. Their mission is difficult, complex and dangerous.

Support for those dangerous operations is vital to success. Without necessary maintenance and supplies, the deployment of security forces can put them in unnecessary danger.

The Kirkuk Maintenance Facility, a logistics facility designed to maintain the aging fleet of Iraqi Police vehicles, was validated Sunday in Kirkuk by Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division in concert with senior Iraqi Security Forces leadership. The event recognized the maintainers who work at the facility as fully equipped and manned to meet the maintenance requirements of the Kirkuk police.

The KMF maintains a fleet of over 900 vehicles. Their mechanical expertise enables the Iraqi Police to stay connected with the communities in Kirkuk city.

"The real credit goes to the men working behind the scenes," said Col. Jamal, the KMF commander, who is responsible for the facility.

Budgetary restrictions necessitated a more efficient means of maintaining the fleet of vehicles. As an example of the facility's flexibility, Jamal was ordered to repaint the Emergency Service Unit fleet with available resources. An estimate for contracting the work came in at over \$26,000 per day, according to Jamal, far beyond the budgetary limits of the KMF. In order to meet the requirement within the budgetary limitations, the KMF took

Maj. Gen. Jamal Tahir Bakr (left), the Kirkuk Provincial Director of Police, observes Lt. Col. Terry Cook (center), the commander of 3rd Bn. 82nd FA Regt. and Col. Jamal, the commander of the Kirkuk Maintenance Facility place the validation streamer on the KMF guidon. The facility was validated as the logistics hub for Iraqi Police in Kirkuk.



the project on themselves.

“The vehicles look good, too,” said Jamal.

“These guys are on point and show amazing initiative to take an idea to the next level to make themselves better”, said Capt. Chuck Costello, the commander of Golf Battery, 3rd Bn., 82nd FA. The KMF works regularly with the Soldiers of 3rd Bn., 82nd FA, which is the unit responsible for support of the U.S. battalion.

The KMF maintains 900 vehicles, over 90-percent of which must be ready at any one time.

“This is no easy task,” said Costello.

“Do not determine your self-worth solely based on your proximity to the target. That is, just because you are a ‘trigger-puller’,” said Lt. Col. Terry Cook, the Commander of 3rd Bn. 82nd FA during his commemoration of the facility. “It doesn’t mean that you are vastly more important than the guy in the motor pool turning the wrench on a truck. If he is terrible at his job, you don’t even get to the fight.”



Senior Iraqi Police officers salute during the playing of the Iraqi national anthem during a validation ceremony at the Kirkuk Maintenance Facility.



Lt. Col. Terry Cook, the commander of 3rd Bn. 82nd. Field Artillery Regt. and Col. Jamal, the commander of the Kirkuk Maintenance Facility, addressed the senior officials attending the validation ceremony of the KMF. The facility was validated as the logistics hub for Iraqi Police in Kirkuk.

NCOs showing Soldiers how to succeed

Story and photos by Pfc. Justin Naylor



Between mentoring Soldiers, carrying out missions, instructing classes, assisting officers and performing specialized jobs, the responsibilities of a non-commissioned officer in the U.S. Army are seemingly endless. But of all their duties, one of the most important is setting a positive example for other Soldiers.

Setting the example is a daily undertaking, but for some, it is more than that. This is particularly true for NCOs that competed in the NCO of the Quarter competition on Forward Operating Base Warrior, Kirkuk, Iraq, Oct. 23.

“You owe it them to perform at your best level,” said Sgt. Randall Williams, a Round Rock, Texas, native and a convoy commander with 15th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, and the winner of the competition.

If Soldiers see their NCOs competing in these competitions, it takes away any excuse they might have to not do their best. They have been provided a positive example and shown how to perform at a higher level, and it encourages them to try and follow that lead, according to Williams.

“You take from other leaders throughout your career,” he added. “Somewhere down the line you hope they remember something you taught them.”

For the junior Soldier who won Soldier of the Quarter competition that same day, NCOs played a huge role in getting him to where he is now.



Sgt. Randall Williams, a Round Rock, Texas, native and a convoy commander with 15th BSB, inserts a nasopharyngeal into a dummy as part of a first aid test during the Non-Commissioned Officer of the Quarter competition.

“They’ve taught me everything I’ve needed to know,” said Spc. Levi Bannigan, a Cincinnati, Ohio, native and a cavalry scout with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd BCT.

“That’s an NCO’s job... to train Soldiers,” explained Bannigan.

According to Bannigan, his NCOs helped prepare him for the competition by training him thoroughly on basic Soldier skills including land navigation, operating a radio, firing his weapon, functions check on the M203 grenade launcher and performing first aid, all of which were tested during both the NCO and Soldier of the Quarter competitions.

“I wouldn’t be where I am today without my NCOs.

It is very rewarding for a NCO to see his Soldiers perform well in a competition like this because they are actually seeing the outcome of their coaching, teaching and mentoring, explained Sgt. Maj. Christopher Frediani, a Pflugerville, Texas, native and an operations sergeant major for 2nd BCT.

By actually taking part in a competition such as the NCO of the Quarter, the NCOs are also showing their Soldiers that they have the courage, competence, commitment and drive to bring the best out of themselves, according to Frediani. “They set the example for their Soldiers.”



Sgt. Randall Williams waits as his target is graded after the marksmanship portion of the Non-Commissioned Officer of the Quarter competition.



NCOs and junior Soldiers fire their weapons during a marksmanship event that was part of both the NCO and Soldier of the Quarter competitions.



SGT TROY A. McGILL

**G Troop, 5th Cavalry Regiment
4 Mar 1944
Posthumous Award**

Rank and organization: Sergeant, U.S. Army, Troop G, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division. Place and date: Los Negros Islands, Admiralty Group, 4 March 1944. Entered service at: Ada, Okla. Birth: Knoxville, Tenn. G.O. No.: 74, 11 September 1944. Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty in action with the enemy at Los Negros Island, Admiralty Group, on 4 March 1944. In the early morning hours SGT McGill, with a squad of 8 men, occupied a revetment which bore the brunt of a furious attack by approximately 200 drink crazed enemy troops. Although covered by crossfire from machineguns on the right and left flank he could receive no support from the remainder of our troops stationed at his rear. All members of the squad were killed or wounded except SGT McGill and another man, whom he ordered to return to the next revetment. Courageously resolved to hold his position at all cost, he fired his weapon until it ceased to function. Then, with the enemy only 5 yards away, he charged from his foxhole in the face of certain death and clubbed the enemy with his rifle in hand to hand combat until he was killed. At dawn 105 enemy dead were found around his position. SGT McGill's intrepid stand was an inspiration to his comrades and a decisive factor in the defeat of a fanatical enemy.

