

EXPEDITIONARY TIMES

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Trek for treats



JBB holds Halloween 5k

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Train up



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Charity brings golf to Iraq

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US Army advises Iraqi Army Soldiers

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

CAMP UR, Iraq – The Ur Logistics and Technical Advisory Team with the 36th Sustainment Brigade out of Temple, Texas, works with Iraqi Soldiers at the Ur Iraqi Army Regional Maintenance Center to improve their skills in maintenance and supply.



Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael J. Hoover, the officer in charge of the 36th Sust. Bde. LTAT, is an automotive maintenance supervisor with the Gatesville Mobilization and Training Equipment Site in Gatesville, Texas, and said he has been working in automotive maintenance for roughly 30 years.

Hoover, a Gatesville, Texas, native, said the mission is not as much about actual maintenance as it is about the logistics and planning of maintenance.

“Their mechanics are good mechanics, but as far as how they maneuver different parts and different equipment to different places is a large issue for them,” he said.

One of the biggest problems the LTAT hopes to address in the maintenance center is the inefficiency of the parts ordering system, said Hoover. It can some-



Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael J. Hoover, the officer in charge of the Ur Logistics and Technical Advisory Team with the 36th Sustainment Brigade out of Temple, Texas, and a Gatesville, Texas, native, instructs Iraqi Army Soldiers with the Ur Iraqi Army Regional Maintenance Center on vehicle maintenance Nov. 3 at IA Camp Ur, Iraq.

times take more than a year to get the required parts to fix a vehicle, and while they wait, the vehicle just sits there unused and gathering dust, he said.

Another one of the LTAT's goals is to teach the IA Soldiers to cross-train on different jobs within the unit, said Hoover.

Iraqi Army Col. Muthana Sobyh AbdalGabar, commander of the Ur IA RMC, said through an

interpreter he is appreciative of the efforts of the 36th.

“In these days, the meeting and the cooperation between us and the advisers over there with the U.S. Army is very helpful for us,” said Muthana, a Basra, Iraq, native. “We gain a lot of things (that are) very useful ... They always support us.”

Muthana said the previous LTAT that worked with the main-

tenance center helped them to reorganize their center to make it more efficient and effective, but the 36th Sust. Bde. is teaching the Iraqi Soldiers more about safety, vehicle maintenance and using more up to date systems involving computers.

Master Sgt. Bennie E. Grubb, the noncommissioned officer in

SEE LTAT ON PAGE 4

Veterans serve, reflect on Veterans Day

STORY BY
STAFF SGT. JEFF LOWRY
TASK FORCE 38

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq - Servicemembers serving stateside and overseas will observe a day created in their honor Nov. 11.

Whether a new combat Veteran or one who served before, Task Force 38 Soldiers reflected on what the holiday meant to them.

“It means more now that I’m a Veteran,” said Staff Sgt. Harold Brantley, an information systems analyst for the task force and a New Whiteland, Ind., native.

The 2009 deployment was his second to Iraq, having first served in 2006 with the 38th Division Support Command in Baghdad. As he prepares to celebrate his second Veterans Day in Iraq, he said he thinks it is a special time for all Americans.

“I think it gives people recognition who deserve recognition,” he said. “It puts Veterans in the forefront.”

For Brantley, who has been in the Indiana National Guard for 13 years, the holiday is also a time to honor and remember his father, a Soldier who served two tours in Korea and two tours in Vietnam, he said.

“The military was his life; that’s what he did,” said Brantley.

“He always talked highly about the military.”

For fellow TF 38 Soldier and first-time combat Veteran, Sgt. Travis Lawler, the reasons to remember Veterans Day are much the same as Brantley’s.

“Veterans Day is so nobody forgets the sacrifices of those who deployed before us and those who will deploy after us,” said Lawler, administration sergeant with Task Force 38 and a Logansport, Ind., native.

He said it is inspiring to be deployed for the first time on such a momentous military holiday.

“It’s exciting just knowing you’re part of a long history of service members being overseas,” said Lawler, who has served in the

Indiana Guard for nine years.

Like Brantley, Lawler said he took inspiration from his father, a 20-year Indiana Guard Veteran, and one of his neighbors who was a World War II Veteran.

“You always want to remember their stories,” he said. “That’s one of the most important things is just being remembered.”

Lawler said he recalled the Veterans who attended his unit’s departure ceremony.

“I think it was important that they were there because they knew what we were getting ready to go through,” he said. “They lived it. We kind of had their blessing, like they were saying ‘we’ve done our job, now it’s time for them to do theirs.’”

Balad Blotter

October 28 - November 3

LARCENY OF UNSECURE PROPERTY:

A complainant entered the law enforcement desk and reported missing property. A patrol was dispatched and arrived on scene at the law enforcement desk, made contact with the complainant and assisted him in filing a written statement. The complainant said via statement of complainant at roughly 11:20 p.m. he departed the passenger terminal Green Bean Café, en route to the east Army and Air Force exchange service. The complainant departed the PX and drove back to his living quarters in the H-7 housing area. The complainant said upon his arrival at the housing area, he noticed property missing from his vehicle. The complainant said he did not secure his vehicle while parked at the PX. The complainant immediately drove to the law enforcement desk to report the incident.

STRAY ROUND:

A complainant telephoned the law enforcement desk and reported a stray round at his location. A patrol was briefed and dispatched to the complainant's location, arrived on scene, and made contact with the victim. The man said via statement of complainant he exited his room and was walking down the stairs when he felt something hit his left hand and below his calf. He then noticed his hand was bleeding. He said he went back into his room, wrapped his hand and went to the Air Force Theater Hospital. When he returned to his room he located the round by his stairs. The man suffered a grazing wound to the hand.

WRONGFUL SEXUAL CONTACT:

A complainant telephoned the law enforcement desk and reported a sexual assault occurring at her location. A patrol was briefed and dispatched to scene and made contact with the victim. The patrol assisted the woman in filling out the statement of complainant. She said while she was returning to her tent from showering an individual approached her and said, "hello." She responded with "what's up." After the initial greeting the suspect reached out and grabbed her breast and departed the area toward the female showers. She gave a brief description of the suspect. She was given a victim and witness of a crime form.

NIPR: 443-8602

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Uniformed Services Former Spouses' Protection Act

BY 1ST LT. MELVIN RAINES II
CLIENT SERVICES
CONSOLIDATED LEGAL CENTER



In 1981, the United States Supreme Court in *McCarty v. McCarty* prevented state courts from dividing military retired pay as a marital asset. Justice Harry Blackmun, writing the majority opinion, said authorizing state courts to divide a service members' retirement would threaten "grave harm to 'clear and substantial' federal interests."

Consequently, the Supremacy Clause of Article VI of the U.S. Constitution precluded the states' attempts to treat a service member's retired pay as a marital asset.

In 1982, Congress passed the Uniformed Services Former Spouses' Protection Act, authorizing state courts to treat a service member's retired pay as a marital asset capable of being divided between the spouses.

The most misrepresented fact about USFSPA is that former spouses are automatically entitled to 50 percent of the service member's retired pay. This is untrue.

USFSPA limits the amount of the service member's retired pay that can be paid to a former spouse to 50 percent of the member's disposable retired pay.

Another USFSPA myth is that spouses who were married at least 10 years while the service member performed 10 years of service creditable toward retirement eligibility is automatically entitled to payments under USFSPA. This is also untrue.

USFSPA requires spouses to have been married at least 10 years while the member performed at least 10 years of service creditable toward retirement eligibility to apply for direct payments by defense finance and accounting service under USFSPA.

This requirement does not apply to a court's authority to divide the retired military pay, but only the ability of the former spouse to receive direct payments from DFAS. This is a statutory requirement and not a personal right of the service member that can be waived.

Last, a court must have jurisdiction over the member to divide the member's retired pay.

Under USFSPA, there are three ways for a court to obtain jurisdiction: the member's consent; the member is a resident of the state other than because of his or her military assignment; or the court finds that the member was domiciled in the particular state.

The USFSPA can be found at 10 U.S.C. § 1408.



Brig. Gen. Heidi Brown, Multi-National Corps-Iraq deputy commanding general for sustainment, Lt. Gen. Charles H. Jacoby, commanding general of MNC-I, Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz, commanding general of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and Command Sgt. Maj. Mark D. Joseph, senior enlisted adviser to the commanding general, 13th ESC, prepare for a brief on the strategic reposturing of equipment and personnel during a Nov. 3 visit to Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

EXPEDITIONARY TIMES

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332nd Air Expeditionary Wing
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13th ESC Commanding General, Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz

Mission Statement: The Expeditionary Times staff publishes a weekly newspaper with the primary mission of providing command information to all service members, partners and Families of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) team, with a secondary mission of providing a means for units at Joint Base Balad to disseminate command information to their audiences.

Mental health: privacy, stigma

BY CAPT. STEVE BRASINGTON
COMBAT STRESS CONTROL PSYCHIATRIST



The vice chief of staff of the Army has zeroed in on the deadly impact of broken intimate relationships.

Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli said in 2008, more than 70 percent of the Soldiers who committed suicide were having relationship issues. He said nearly eight years of combat on two fronts and multiple deployments have taken a terrible toll on Soldiers and their families. He said relationship problems, substance abuse and alarming suicide rates have resulted, adding that many of these issues are interrelated.

He said, "This is not business as usual."

Next, he took aim at mental health stigma.

"There is no shame, no harm in getting help," Chiarelli said. "We need to make sure we're doing everything we can to identify and assist those individuals who are at-risk and need help quickly."

Chiarelli urged a culture of change across the ranks to seek help without shame.

"The stigma thing is just something we've got to get rid of," he said. "We've got to get Soldiers to understand if they need help to seek and get that help."

Understandably, Soldiers, Sailors and Marines have privacy concerns. Limits on confidentiality clearly do exist.

If your condition impacts the mission, then your commander needs to know.

Your health care provider puts your

safety first. If you are ill or injured, then the healthcare team will pull you out of the fight until your health improves.

If you plan to harm yourself or others, we have a duty to warn and remove the risk of injury or death.

The medical department sometimes must call your command to coordinate care.

A good assessment could take more than one visit or require repeated observation. To ensure you are available for medical department appointments, your provider may need to contact your command.

Information you have shared in confidence is not disclosed, unless you have made an explicit threat to kill or injure somebody.

When your condition could impact the

mission, your commander has a need to know the nature of the problem and your prognosis. For example, you are exhausted by 16-hour work days, yet you are still unable to sleep or function. Safety comes first.

The mission you have may leave your resources depleted.

Sometimes Soldiers needs rest. At times, a Soldier requires a new perspective and better coping skills.

Combat Stress offers a three-day restoration program. Obviously, scheduling for restoration requires coordination with your command. So yes, the mental health staff does talk to your command to protect the evaluation and treatment process.

The ultimate goal is to protect your life and promote your well being.

The Weekly Standard

BY MAJ. SCOTT PETERS
13TH ESC DEPUTY INSPECTOR GENERAL



Lately we have seen several company, battalion and brigade policy letters signed by someone other than the commander. The policy

letters are setting standards for the entire unit. Why are commanders allowing others to establish policy for their respective commands?

The commander is responsible for establishing the leadership climate of the unit and developing disciplined and cohesive units.

Command policies are one of the methods used to command.

Commanders certainly rely on the input and opinion of their senior non-commissioned officers but they alone are responsible for everything that occurs or fails to occur within their unit.

One would expect that the others help develop policies that affect Soldiers within the unit but it should not appear as if they are establishing policy.

Field Manual 6-22, Chapter 3 discusses leadership roles of officers and NCOs. Specifically, paragraph 3-8 states, "Commissioned officers are essential to the Army's organization to command units, establish policy, etc."

Chapter 3 also discusses the NCO vision, referencing the fact that the NCO corps maintains and enforces standards. FM 7-22.7, The Army Non-Commissioned Officer's Guide, further explains the role of the officer and NCO in the same manner.

The NCO corps is truly the backbone of the Army. NCOs conduct the Army's day-to-day business by supervising those executing activities within established policies and regulations.

It must be the commander who establishes the policy while the NCO maintains and enforces it. Allowing someone other than the commander to sign the policy is setting the command up for potential problems.

What recourse does the commander have when one of his or her officers fails to comply with a unit policy

signed by someone other than the commander?

Joint Base Balad: DSN 433-2125

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Sgt. 1st Class Tamera Wynn

Sexual Assault Response Coordinator

Be Sexual Assault Response Coordinator smart: Not stopping when someone is indicating that they want you to stop, be it with words, actions or both, is sexual assault. If a person seems hesitant, do not try to convince them to give in, just stop. Call the Joint Base Balad SARC 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: catch it for yourself

BY LT. COL. WILLIE AILSTOCK
13TH ESC DEPUTY COMMAND CHAPLAIN



I remember reading a quote long ago that has stuck with me through the years.

An unknown author once said, "The best vitamin to be a happy person is B-1."

The truth is, happiness is a choice that each of us has to make on a daily basis. To be or not to be, that is the question?

Ben Franklin put it this way, "The constitution only guarantees the Amer-

ican people the right to pursue happiness. You have to catch it yourself."

I want to share with you what I think are four essentials to happiness.

First in your pursuit of happiness, let's realize that each of us will take different roads getting there. So often I hear people being critical of others because they don't agree with the road they have chosen for themselves. Rather than being critical, I think the road each of has chosen can be much more enjoyable and enriching if we choose to encourage each other along the way.

Second, to be happy, every one of us needs to have something to do. Some-

one has said idleness is the Devil's work shop.

As a chaplain here at Joint Base Balad, I have found that when people have nothing to do, their pursuit of happiness has hit a wall that spells trouble. We all know, being in the military, we are gainfully employed – sometimes putting in more hours than we would like.

Our jobs aren't the problem, it is what we do or don't do in our down time. Think about doing some constructive, life enriching activities with your off time. It's your choice ... do something.

Third, everyone needs something to

love. As you pursue happiness, consider what you love doing most of all. What is the one thing you enjoy most in life? It might be your family, your job, a relationship, a hobby or it could be your relationship with God.

Finally, we all need something to hope for.

I'm reminded of the words of Jesus when he said, "I have come so they might have life in all of its abundance."

For me, the road to happiness is the same as the road to abundant life. Happiness is there for the asking, or maybe I should say, for the taking. It is a gift offered to all who will request it.

Chaplain helps Soldiers strengthen marriages

STORY BY
STAFF SGT. ROB STRAIN
15TH SUST. BDE.

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq – The Special Troops Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) kicked off a weekly marriage enrichment class Nov. 3 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

The class, aimed at Soldiers who are either married or planning to get married, is led by Capt. Brent Crosswhite, the battalion's chaplain.

His wife is scheduled to lead a

similar bi-weekly class for spouses at Fort Hood, Texas, the unit's home station. Both classes will cover the same material in a six-week period, said Crosswhite, a Blanchard, Okla., native.

Crosswhite said the average brigade-sized unit, which consists of nearly 5,000 Soldiers, has between 20 and 30 divorces during the course of a deployment.

"I wanted to see if we could stop that at the battalion level," he said.

He said it is not the actual deployments that can break a marriage, but people. Deployments will not make a make a bad marriage better, just as they will not harm a strong one, said Crosswhite.

"I want to work on our people

skills," he said to the group. "Work on our marriages as a whole; strengthen them and strengthen our coping skills."

In addition to the statistics, Crosswhite said he noticed 80 percent of all counseling he does is related to marriage.

The class itself, however, is not just about marriage.

"I want to help people have healthy relationships," said Crosswhite.

He said by having healthy relationships, Soldiers will be able to focus on the mission without worrying about distractions at home.

Crosswhite said he plans to feature a video-teleconference with the spouses' class in Texas at the end of each session.

He encouraged each Soldier in the class to get something out of it.

"Have a goal to accomplish (in your relationship) during the deployment," Crosswhite said.

One Soldier, Spc. Tom Lauderdale, a fueller with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, said he looks forward to gaining from the class.

Lauderdale, a Bay Town, Texas, native, is on his first deployment since getting married in January. He said he hopes to improve long-distance communication skills with his wife over the course of the deployment.

Following the deployment, the participants will be able to take part in a marriage retreat, Crosswhite said.

The class meets every Tuesday during lunch at the STB headquarters.

Logistics, technical advisory team instructs IA

LTAT FROM PAGE 1

charge of the Ur LTAT, said he has been working with the Iraqi Soldiers at Camp Ur for roughly three months.

"The main thing about the (IA Soldiers) is they want to learn and they want to accomplish their job or mission, but they cannot do it because of lack of tools," he said.

Grubb, a Copperas Cove, Texas, native, said the IA Soldiers are good at adapting to their conditions, by fashioning makeshift tools to help them accomplish their mission.

"They may get a screwdriver that used to be a Phillips screwdriver, and they will flatten it off to make a flathead screwdriver," he said. "They make what they have to make."



Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael J. Hoover, the officer in charge of the Ur Logistics and Technical Advisory Team with the 36th Sustainment Brigade out of Temple, Texas, and a Gatesville, Texas, native, discusses future plans for the LTAT with Iraqi Army Col. Muthana Sobyh AbdalGabar, commander of the Ur Iraqi Army Regional Maintenance Center and a Basra, Iraq, native, Nov. 3 at the maintenance center at IA Camp Ur, Iraq.

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at 1930**

**Where: JBB MWR-East
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Who: YOU!!!

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All donations go to SPC Cote's family**



Mississippi Guardsmen, Iraqi Army partner to protect Q-West water supply

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq —

Members of A Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms Brigade out of Hernando, Miss., met with their Iraqi counterparts in 1st Company, 2nd Battalion, 26th Brigade to review the Iraqi Army's security measures for the Al-Qayyarah pump house on the Tigris River.

"The pump house is a critical facility in the province because it is the primary source of raw water to Al-Qayyarah and to Q-West," said Lt. Col. Kerry Goodman, commander of the 2/198th CAB and a Meridian, Miss., native. "The 26th Brigade, Iraqi Army, has worked closely with the Q-West force protection company to provide security."

First Lt. Salah Joad, commander of 1st Co., said the mission is vital, noting that his Soldiers enjoyed it.

"We have to protect the pump house because it helps sustain our operations and the local people in the region," Joad said through an interpreter. "My men like the mission because the pump house has plentiful water, reliable electricity and scenic landscapes. They also can visit Al-Qayyarah when they have time off."

Capt. Drew Clark, Q-West force protection company commander, said he

Sgt. Joshua Haycraft (left), a Brandon, Miss., native, and member of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms Brigade out of Senatobia, Miss., briefs 2nd Lt. Hassan Kalid with 1st Company, 2nd Battalion, 26th Brigade, Iraqi Army, on the workings of the lift station Oct. 26 at the Al-Qayyarah pump house, as Mark Crow, a civil general foreman from Louisville, Ky., listens. Leaders from A Company, 2/198th CAB from Hernando, Miss., and their counterparts in the 26th Brigade, reviewed the Iraqi Army's security measures for the Tigris River site.

was impressed with the 26th Brigade's performance.

"I've worked closely with the 26th Brigade element here since they took over the mission about a month ago," said Clark, a Madison, Miss., native. "The last Iraqi unit was not serious about this mission. There were times when I had to station my Soldiers here because there was no security element, and we always had to man the towers and entrance when we came to the pump house. The 26th Brigade committed four times the number of troops here and they are eager to do the job."

The senior noncommissioned officer of 1st Co., Sgt. Major Fadil Abbas, said he visits the pump house regularly to inspect his men and address any needs they might have.

"When I visit, I conduct a hygiene inspection of the area and living quarters,"



Abbas said through an interpreter. "I inspect the weapons, check the towers and see if my men need supplies. I tell them how important it is to protect the water supply for the Iraqi people, and they make sure terrorists cannot take over the pump house."

First Sgt. John L. Beasley, the senior noncommissioned officer in A Co. and a Hernando, Miss., native, said he respected the 26th Brigade's professionalism.

"The 26th is more engaged than the last unit," Beasley said. "They are more professional and enthusiastic about the mission. Their troops are always in uniform and alert, which is a huge improvement."

Second Lt. Hassan Kalid, a platoon

leader with 1st Co., said the Mississippians were good partners.

"I like working with the Soldiers from Mississippi," said Kalid. "They are friendly, hardworking Soldiers, and they welcomed us with a good meal."

The A Co. Soldiers celebrated the handover of defensive operations by hosting a cook out, said Clark.

"It was essential that we conducted a thorough battle handoff with the Iraqi Army to ensure that they understood the mission," said Clark. "The initial training took only a day. The next day, they were ready to assume responsibilities and we couldn't have been happier. That was worth celebrating with a Mississippi cook out."

Warehouse for food, water opens at Speicher

STORY BY
1ST LT. MARIA SCHMITZ
264TH CSSB

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION SPEICHER, Iraq —

The 264th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, a logistics battalion from Fort Bragg, N.C., opened a new warehouse Oct. 30 to store food and water at Contingency Operating Location Speicher, Iraq.

The 264th CSSB manages the Class I yard at COL Speicher, one of Iraq's main hubs for Class I supplies, which consist of sustenance items such as food and water.

Staff Sgt. Marvin Viney, noncommissioned officer in charge of Class I with the 264th and a Goldsboro, N.C., native, said this project has been in the works for more than two years and cost nearly \$500,000.

The project spanned three battalions in three rotations at COL Speicher, and was the brainchild of the 143rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, Viney said.



Courtesy Photo

Civilian contractors move some of the first pallets of food into the new Class I supply warehouse Oct. 31 at Contingency Operating Location Speicher, Iraq.

The majority of the work was completed by the 391st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion on the next rotation and the warehouse was finished by the 264th, he said.

"The climate controlled facility maximizes the shelf life of the Class I stored

in this facility by getting it out of the heat and other elements," said Maj. Jack Kredo, the battalion's support operations officer.

The yard supports all of COL Speicher as well as two smaller sites at COL Summerall and COL Bernstein, Kredo, a Colo-

rado Springs, Colo., native, said. "All of the Class I for Summerall and Bernstein comes through the (COL) Speicher Class I yard and supplies the dining facilities at these outlying (COLs) in order to sustain the force," he said.

Overall, Speicher's Class I yard supports more than 30,000 Soldiers in Multi-National Division-North, Viney said.

"There are (nearly 3,500) Soldiers outside of (COL) Speicher that rely solely on this yard for all of their food," he said. "Prior to the completion of the warehouse, food and beverages started going bad in the heat. Some of the food that was going bad included (meals, ready-to-eat) and (other rations) that are provided to Soldiers on convoys and patrols."

Kredo said the weather, primarily sandstorms, prevented the warehouse from being completed earlier.

"This has been a long time coming," he said.

Now that the warehouse is complete, Kredo said the 264th CSSB will be more capable of supporting Soldiers throughout the area of operations.

Tuskegee wounded warrior returns to JBB

STORY BY
STAFF SGT. JAKE RICHMOND
332ND AIR EXPEDITIONARY WING

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – It was April 15, 2007, and Staff Sgt. Scott Lilley was unconscious and dying.

The attending doctor, a U.S. military physician in the Baghdad-area medical facility, had a difficult decision to make. Violence in the area was still so widespread that sending a medical evacuation helicopter to the Air Force Theater Hospital, at what was then called Balad Air Base, was a high-risk endeavor.

An Army medic who pleaded with the doctor and Lilley eventually made it to the hospital – and he lived to tell his story. Oct. 29, 2009, he was back at the AFTH emergency department, telling that story to a group of hospital staff gathered around him.

His stop at the hospital was sched-



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Christopher Hubenthal

uled as part of the “Stars for Stripes” concert series, which included JBB and several other military installations in Iraq and Kuwait. Both Lilley and a fellow wounded warrior, Army Sgt. 1st Class Joe Bowser, accompanied country music artists Craig Mor-

gan and Chris Young on the tour.

Since the day Lilley’s security forces convoy was hit by an improvised explosive device and ambushed by insurgents, he has been recovering from trauma wounds and a serious brain injury. He said he does not re-

Staff Sgt. Scott Lilley, 343rd Training Squadron security forces instructor at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, tells the story of his combat injury to a group of Air Force Theater Hospital staff during a tour Oct. 29 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Lilley is a Tuskegee Airman who was wounded in Baghdad while deployed in 2007 with the 732nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron.

member anything about his first visit to JBB’s hospital, but he knows the people there helped save his life.

“Thanks for all your support, and thank you for all you guys do here,” he said at the hospital. “I wish I could hug everybody in the room.”

Lilley, now a security forces instructor at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, said he was happy for the opportunity to tour the hospital, but most of all, he was excited to leave – on his own terms.

“I got carried out of here (in 2007),” he said. “I’m looking forward to walking out on my own two feet this time.”

Violence prevention course addresses sexual violence

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. RYAN L. TWIST
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Soldiers participated in the Mentors in Violence Prevention course Oct. 31 to Nov. 1 at Joint Base

Balad, Iraq.

Soldiers spent the first day of the course in a classroom at Morale, Welfare and Recreation east and the second participating in practice scenarios at the Warrior Support Center.

Jeff O’Brien, an instructor with MVP Strategies out of Long Beach, Calif., and an Orlando, Fla., native, said the MVP course is a two-day leadership, train-the-trainer program, designed to motivate young men and women to play a central role in solving problems that have historically been considered women’s issues.

O’Brien said the course focuses on the prevention of sexual violence such as rape, battery, sexual harassment and sexual assault.

“All of us have been in many of these scenarios,” he said. “We try to bring that real-life perspective to the training. What you learn from what you did or didn’t do in that situation.”

He said the course was introduced to sports in 1993 and to the U.S. Marines in 1997. The

Army implemented it roughly a year ago and this is the program’s first stint in Iraq, he said.

“This trip really marks our first training of Soldiers,” said O’Brien.

Master Sgt. Rita Cossio, a deployed sexual assault coordinator and equal opportunity adviser with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) out of Fort Hood, Texas, said the course gives Soldiers the skills and incentives to mentor and talk to their peers about the subject of sexual violence.

This is a program implemented by the Army’s I. A.M. Strong campaign, Cossio said. It empowers Soldiers, ranking private through staff sergeant, to talk and mentor their peers to be proactive and intervene in various issues instead of being bystanders, she said.

Cossio, an Arcadia, Calif., native, said the program uses “playbooks,” with scenarios that show Soldiers various solutions they can implement to intervene in a given situation.

She said she wants Soldiers to have the ability to talk to their peers, utilize the skills the MVP training has given them and educate each other and their units on the options available to them, to help minimize the incidents of sexual violence in the military.

“When faced with a situation of sexual assault or harassment, we often find ourselves in diffi-

cult decisions with an opportunity to act but don’t know how to act or how to properly handle the situation,” said Sgt. Matthew F. Carpenter, a chaplain assistant with the 90th Sustainment Brigade out of Little Rock, Ark., and a Portales, N.M., native.

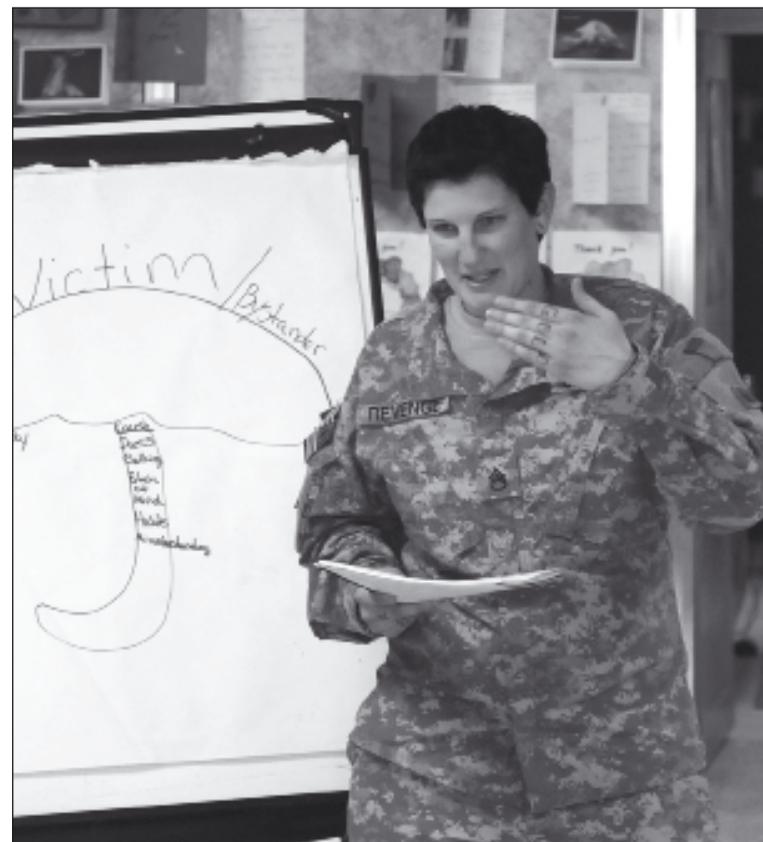
Carpenter said the class focused on finding ways to intervene in these difficult situations and educate the Soldiers on resources that will help them choose the best course of action.

“We tend to walk away from situations that need to be brought to someone’s attention,” said Staff Sgt. Amber J. Lewis, movement noncommissioned officer with the 90th Sustainment Brigade out of Little Rock, Ark., and a Claymont, Del., native.

Lewis said she took a positive outlook from the class and can now take the information she learned and teach fellow Soldiers about preventing sexual or domestic violence.

Shannon R. Spriggs, an instructor with the program for four years and a Houston native, said they ultimately want Soldiers to be empowered to train each other.

“The whole point of this class was to teach us ways of challenging and educating fellow Soldiers on the areas of sexual assault and harassment,” said Carpenter. “There are many classes that do educate Soldiers on this subject. However, this



Staff Sgt. Chatch L. Revenge, a battle plans assistant noncommissioned officer with Headquarter and Headquarters Troop, 1st Cavalry, 82nd Squadron out of Bend, Ore., and a Portland, Ore., native, participates in a practice scenario during the Mentors in Violence Prevention course Nov. 1 at the Warrior Support Center at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

class went beyond that.

“This class is designed to allow role playing, debate and group discussion to give Soldiers real tools and resources for everyday life, to intervene and do the right thing.”

Cossio said the training should be given at all levels of the military, as sexual violence

can occur at any rank and is found within family structures as well.

“The tools and skills that are taught and shared could have enormous impact, and if given at all levels would ensure that all Soldiers have options that will allow them to be bystanders that make a difference,” she said.

Soldiers inspect incoming convoys at Marez

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. RYAN L. TWIST
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION MAREZ, Mosul, Iraq – Convoys, which regularly travel throughout Iraq, visit the inspection yard when they enter Contingency Operation Location Marez, Mosul, Iraq, for an inspection that keeps the COL safe.

Capt. Dwight O. Smith, commander of the 506th Quartermaster Company out of Fort Lee, Va., said the inspection yard has a significant role in the protection of Marez.

“We’re the first line of defense, a safety net before we allow vehicles on to the COL,” said Smith, a San Francisco native.

The Soldiers at the inspection yard have an in-depth knowledge of their equipment, the confiscation of items, checking passports and

making sure no contraband or anything detrimental gets onto the base, he said.

Spc. Ralph A. Pabon, a food service specialist with the 506th who inspects trucks at the yard and a Virginia Beach, Va., native, said after vehicles come through the gate, Soldiers inspect them inside and out for items that look like remotes, cell phones, drugs and alcohol.

Sgt. Akeem J. McQueen, the sergeant of the guard for the inspection yard with the 506th and a Montgomery, Ala., native, said complacency can be an issue for Soldiers when convoys of 50 to 200 trucks come through.

The sergeant of the guard oversees paperwork inside the office, as well as the inspection of the trucks and their passengers, he said. He moves around and checks the inspection yard to maintain accountability of all Soldiers and their equipment, he said.

“Expect the unexpected,” he said.

Pabon said the Soldiers

should be on their best behavior when the civilians are present. No matter the situation or how well Soldiers know the civilians, the proper checks need to be performed. If a Soldier fails to do his job, the safety of the COL is directly affected, he said.

He said Soldiers do not want to disrespect anyone’s culture, which is why he always has an interpreter present.

“You don’t want them to hate you when they come through,” said Pabon.

After leaving the inspection yard, vehicles go to the Mobile Control Team, which inspects the convoy and moves the cargo to its proper destination, said McQueen.

Spc. Ralph A Pabon, a food service specialist with the 506th Quartermaster Company out of Fort Lee, Va., and a Virginia Beach, Va., native, inspects inside a truck after a convoy came through the inspection yard Oct. 3 at Contingency Operation Location Marez, Mosul, Iraq.



Airman, working dog team up in Iraq

STORY BY
SENIOR AIRMAN ALYSSA C. MILES
U.S.A.F. CENTRAL PUBLIC AFFAIRS

VICTORY BASE COMPLEX, Iraq – Growing up in Chicago in a house with nine children, Senior Airman Mark Bush was not permitted to have pets as a child.

“We weren’t allowed to have pets,” he said. “My mom said she had enough animals in the house to take care of.”

Now, Bush, a 732nd Air Expeditionary Group military working dog handler assigned to Multinational Division Baghdad-Iraq, has an animal to care for – his Belgian Malinois named Chukky, who returns the favor.

Bush joined the Air Force as a security forces Airman in March 2004 and went on his first deployment to Camp Bucca, Iraq, in November of that year. While there, he encountered a Navy K9 handler and was amazed by the capabilities of his dog and the relationship and work ethic the two shared, he said.

After Bush redeployed, his base kennel master’s retirement speech inspired him to pursue becoming a dog handler, he said.

“Back then, you had to have the kennel master’s approval to attend K9 training,” he said. “Being a handler takes a lot of initiative and work outside of your regular duty day. He wanted to make sure we knew that K9 was hard work.”



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Johnny L. Saldivar

Before receiving approval, Bush said he had to volunteer at the kennel for 80 hours outside of his regular duty day.

“Three or four people wanted to go K9 at the same time as me,” he said. “We started out mopping floors and scrubbing baseboards. It was hard work and by the end of the week I, was the only one who stayed with it. The handlers would move the dogs out of their kennels and I’d have to clean up after them – it’s a constant job. After I did that for a few weeks I ended up getting to go out to training and different sights with the K9 department - it made me really excited about going to school.”

After completing K9 training and moving to Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Bush met his battle buddy, Chukky. Quickly

Air Force Senior Airman Mark Bush, military working dog handler assigned to Multinational Division Baghdad - Iraq, and his partner, Chukky, search for explosives during a training session Oct. 28. The pair trains regularly to maintain their proficiency in locating explosives. Bush, a Dallas native, and Chukky are deployed from Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.

dubbed “Team Chukky,” the duo has been together for two and a half years, he said.

They are deployed to Camp Victory, Iraq, posting security at gates throughout the Victory Base Complex and performing missions outside the wire with the Army and Navy, all the while focusing on safety, he said.

“One thing as a handler, you have to develop skills to keep you safe,” he said. “You have to allow the dog to be independent and I’ve worked with Chukky to make him comfortable to go out from me and search.”

The 5-year-old dog’s independence and obedience skills allow his teammate to be at the ready for any issue that may arise while on a mission, Bush said.

“He knows the task at hand without me presenting areas for him,” Bush said. “I’ve incorporated snapping for him to sniff upwards and signals for him to search left and right, so as we’re walking, I can have both hands on my weapon and a 360 leash on my belt buckle. He can pattern on his own. I can say ‘back’ and he’ll go deeper into a field. It allows me to stay vigilant. I

had to incorporate these skills to build his proficiency.”

Staff Sgt. Victor Sanez, MNDB-I military working dog trainer, said he believes vigilance is key, especially in a deployed environment, thus making training crucial.

“Several types of dogs are trained throughout the military,” said Sanez, a Rowland Heights, Calif., native. “On the Air Force side, our dogs are specialized in detection or patrol or both. Chukky specializes in detection. He helps prevent explosives and bombing materials from coming on the base. As far as outside the wire, we try to find weapons caches, improvised explosive devices – anything the dog can hit on.”

In a training environment, the dog’s capabilities should be at 95 percent, meaning if there were 100 bombs in a field, the dog should be able to sniff out 95, he said.

“You can’t compare their capabilities to anything we have technology-wise, as far as finding explosives,” said Sanez, who is deployed from Beale Air Force Base, Calif. “If we don’t keep up with their training, their proficiency will go down. Training builds confidence between the handler and the dog. They’re part of the team, just like an Airman.”

Bush said he agrees.

“I have to be able to read his body language from nose to tail and know that something isn’t right before he even gives me a final response,” he said. “I don’t take my job lightly. I know when I do my job to the best of my abilities, I save lives.”

JBB hosts medical logistics conference

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. JOHN STIMAC
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – A medical logistician's conference Nov. 3 through Nov. 5 at Joint Base Balad featured representatives from contingency operating locations throughout Iraq.

Col. Gerard P. Curran, commander of Task Force 118th Medical Battalion, said the battalion consists of 13 sub commands in 30 locations throughout the country.

"We are responsible for the logistics, maintenance and Class VIII medical supplies," he said.

Curran, a Madison, Conn., native, said this is his second deployment to Iraq and many of the same Soldiers came with him on both deployments.

"We have a lot of continuity in the unit because of this," he said.

Curran said this conference gave the logisticians a chance to talk to the other members of their community.

"It allows us to get to know each other, in order to coordinate this very daunting mission," he said. "Because we are spread out all over, it allows us to build teamwork throughout our medical community."

Col. Gust W. Pagonis, support operations officer with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and the keynote speaker at the medical logistics conference, spoke with representatives Nov. 3 to let them know the 13th ESC is here to help in any way possible.



"Ask us for help," he said. "We have the ability and resources to help sort through equipment and supplies for everybody."

Pagonis, a Pittsburgh native, said logisticians need to identify each unit's excess first and foremost.

"The excess items first go to any units that may need the supplies throughout Iraq, then Afghanistan, then to other U.S. agencies," he said. "At that point, the agencies determine if it is cost effective to bring back (excess items) to the U.S. If not, a statement will be given to the units to dispose of them."

Pagonis said this process can take anywhere from 14 to 28 days.

"Now is the time to start getting rid of excess items," said Pagonis. "If we wait until May this process isn't going to be pretty. This will ensure that the

items we do not need get back in the system to be used in future endeavors."

Another topic discussed was the distribution of the H1N1 flu vaccine.

Lt. Col Ronald S. Foley, theater pharmacy consultant for United States Forces-Iraq, Task Force 1 Medical Battalion, Baghdad, said 1.35 million doses were issued to Department of Defense personnel.

Foley said this vaccination is mandatory for all DOD personnel and they should expect to receive it one to three weeks from Nov. 5.

"The vaccines will be flown into Joint Base Balad and Baghdad first due to the fact those are theater (supply support areas)," he said. "The outlying COL's may get the vaccine closer to three weeks, but that depends on the

Staff Sgt. Chukwuemeka Echeozo, non-commissioned officer in charge of the Class VIII receiving section, 8th Medical Logistics Company and a Dallas native, briefs the medical logistics conference members at the medical logistics warehouse Nov. 4 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

location or remoteness of the COL and the weather is also an important factor."

Curran discussed the challenges the medical team will face in the coming months.

"We are facing an operation that we have never done before," he said. "The U.S. has not done a logistical drawdown like this since Vietnam. We are reducing the medical footprint based on the intelligence of predominately people in this room."

Pagonis said the challenge is that as long as there are Soldiers still in Iraq, there needs to be a medical facility up and running. As long as the logistics drawdown is well planned, however, it will work, he said.

"What we are doing right now will affect our Army 10 to 20 years from now," he said. "This is a big mission and we have a lot of work cut out for us, but we can do it."

Curran told the members of the conference he needed the help of everyone present to finish the mission.

"Medical logisticians are the foundation of the team, and I couldn't be a doctor or do my job without you," he said.

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1218th Transportation Co. arrives in Iraq

STORY AND PHOTO BY
CAPT. SCOTT PETERSON
96TH SUST. BDE.

AL ASAD AIRBASE, Iraq – Roughly 12 months ago, the 1218th Transportation Company was a shell of what it is now.



The unit, now attached to the 751st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), was re-flagged as a truck company in September 2007, said Sgt. Julia Norberg, human resources sergeant and a West Palm Beach, Fla., native. Consequently, the unit's personnel capacity was at less than 50 percent, said Norberg.

To complicate matters, the clock had started ticking toward mobilization day. The unit's mission: provide transportation support to the western part of Iraq.

In the fall of 2008, the unit devised a training plan that maxed out all of its available training time and resources, said 1st Sgt. Bobby Parlor, a Wellington, Fla., native. A normal, two-day weekend drill period, typical for an Army National Guard unit, was often stretched to four or five days to accommodate the extra training required for deployment, he said. The normal, two-week annual training period was stretched to a month, he said.

Staff Sgt. Traci Caicedo, the company's training noncommissioned officer and a Lake Worth, Fla., native, said the average Soldier with the 1218th logged roughly 45 extra training days during the 2008 to 2009 training year, prior to being mobilized and placed on active duty status.

"All the extra training put a strain on the Soldiers and their families," Caicedo said. "Especially since they knew they were heading overseas for a year."

The first big challenge at hand was



First Lt. Garret Paladino, a platoon leader and an Orlando, Fla., native, supervises Soldiers with 2nd Platoon, 1218th Transportation Company, 751st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) as they load an M1114 enhanced capability Humvee during a mission readiness exercise in late August at Camp Atterbury, Ind.

licensing 170 Soldiers on the heavy equipment transporter system, the light equipment transporter system and the palletized loading system, said Sgt. 1st Class Robert Tallent, the 1218th Trans. Co. truck master and a West Palm Beach, Fla., native.

The State of Florida transferred and signed out vehicles from Missouri, Kansas, Georgia and South Carolina to assemble a fleet of vehicles for the 1218th Soldiers to use in training, said Parlor.

"It wasn't easy – Florida having to scrounge up the trucks – but they did and set us up for success," Tallent said.

During the 32-day annual training period, the unit focused on driver's training and finalizing required pre-mobilization training, Parlor said.

"We spent the first two weeks just driving," said Tallent. "That was all we did, day in and day out, was drive."

The unit had only been required to license 50 Soldiers on each system, he said.

The 1218th exceeded projected licensing goals by a wide margin – most Soldiers in the unit qualified on all three trucks, said Caicedo. The unit was integrated completely, with Soldiers from the 144th Trans. Co. and the 1218th in all platoons, said Parlor.

"The 144th Soldiers knew a lot about driving and brought a lot of experience to the table," he said. "The 1218th Soldiers were eager to learn and were highly motivated. That combination proved to be completely invaluable. We learned a lot from each other and we really started to come together as a unit."

Parlor said he attributes the success to the synergistic effect of merging two truck units together.

"It was rough at first, a lot of grow-

ing pains, but we emerged from annual training as one unit," he said.

July 5, the unit was mobilized and deployed to Camp Atterbury, Ind. There it spent the next 45 days training on collective skills and tasks, and preparing for its mission readiness exercise, Parlor said.

"Atterbury really set up the Soldiers for success by taking care of a lot of their readiness and administrative needs," said Caicedo.

The real test, however, came toward the end of the mobilization period at Camp Atterbury. The unit spent six days in the field performing the mission readiness exercise, during which the 1218th put all the skills it had learned to the test, Parlor said.

It was the first time the 1218th had conducted continuous 24-hour truck operations as a group, he said. For the six-day event, the unit ran roughly four missions a day, reacting to numerous changes and tactical situations.

Tallent said, "The MRE was probably the best training we have ever had as a unit."

The hardships and challenges of pre-mobilization set a strong foundation and established a shared experience for a diverse group of Soldiers. Within a year the unit filled its ranks, trained on equipment and merged two separate groups of Soldiers into one effective company, said Parlor.

"There were a lot of long days and short nights, a lot of training and a lot driving," he said. "We made it happen, and the lessons we learned along the way are helping us tremendously today."

The 1218th has transported nearly 300 tons of supplies and 150,000 gallons of fuel throughout western Iraq within its first 30 days, he said.

Class I yard accepts Iraq-wide food turn in

STORY AND PHOTO BY
1ST LT. ERIK OBERG
96TH SUST. BDE.

CAMP STRYKER, Iraq – In addition to their usual duties, service members at the Camp Stryker, Iraq, Class I yard manage the mass turn in of food rations from all corners of Iraq as the drawdown of U.S. troops and equipment progresses.

The yard accepts expired food rations that service members organize and sort, allowing inspectors to extend the food's shelf life and issue it to units, or condemn and burn it.

"The Class I yard receives food operational rations from areas such as

(Contingency Operating Locations) Falcon, Hammer, Prosperity, Al Asad, Mahmudiya, even from the camps located on the Victory Base Complex," said Sgt. Jacqueline Hopkins, an administrative noncommissioned officer at the Class I yard. "This will be a project that is so big, it will continue beyond our unit's deployment to our replacements."

The 10th Sustainment Brigade began the operational rations turn-in mission, which is being continued by its replacement, the 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

Staff Sgt. Nicholas Bedwell, NCO in charge of the yard, said, "The collection of the expired operational rations (began) in June of 2009 and

has no ending date in sight."

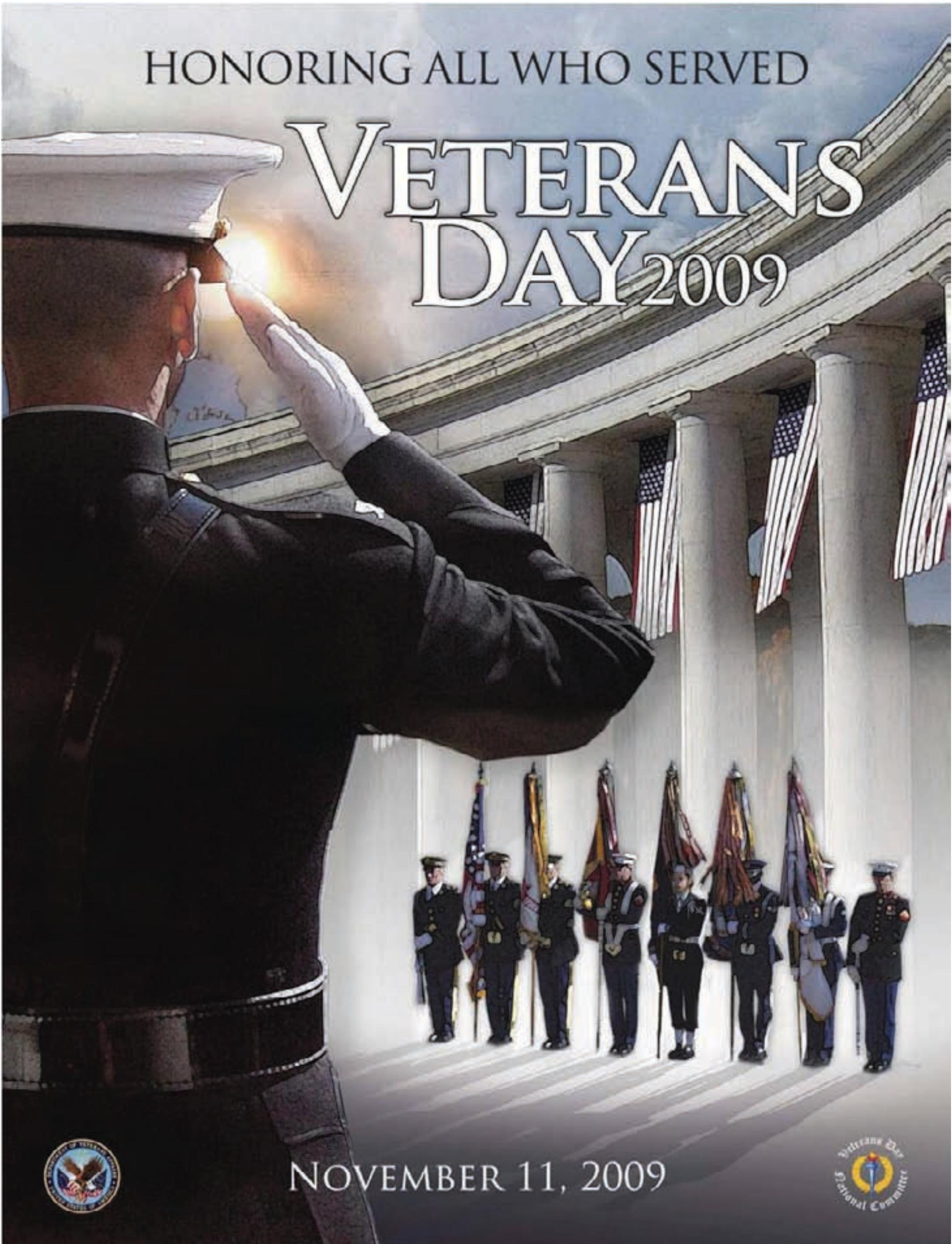
The Class I yard has handled more than \$3.2 million of expired rations, and has saved the government more than \$1.8 million by re-issuing expired rations cleared by the food inspectors, said Capt. Jeremy Hedges, commander of the 639th Combat Sustainment Support Company.

Spc. Matthew Joy and Pfc. Justin Long, both Kalispell, Mont., natives, and order specialists with the 639th Combat Sustainment Support Company, 620th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), organize and account for meals, ready-to-eat to prepare them for pickup by another unit.



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NOVEMBER 11, 2009



Paralegal Soldiers compete in Army skills competition

STORY AND PHOTO BY
2ND LT. THERESA FOUDA
80TH ORD. BN.

VICTORY BASE COMPLEX, Iraq – During the 2009 Multi-national Corps-Iraq Paralegal Specialist of the Year Competition Oct. 16 at Victory Base Complex, Iraq, eight paralegal specialists touted their Soldier skills to a panel of judges.

The specialists, who came from bases throughout Iraq, gathered at Camp Victory to test their warrior tasks and battle drill proficiency.

After a grueling day, Spc. Dalani Harmon, a paralegal with the 80th Ordnance Battalion, was named the winner of the competition.

Originally from Tacoma,

Wash., Harmon has been in the Army for nearly three years. She serves at the Consolidated Legal Center on Joint Base Balad, where she is the administrative law noncommissioned officer and the foreign claims NCO.

In addition to these two duties, Harmon serves as the 80th Ordnance Battalion paralegal.

Nominated to attend the competition by the brigade paralegal, she said she eagerly accepted the challenge and began studying.

“The competition only had one MOS-specific question – all other areas were warrior tasks,” she said.

The Army’s adage: “Soldier first, MOS second” compelled her to study hard to prove her competency as a Soldier at the competition, she said.

The day-long competition began at 5:30 a.m. with

an Army physical fitness test, and continued with weapons qualification, a written exam for paralegals, evaluating a casualty, providing a size, activity, location, unit, time, equipment report, map reading, the assembly and disassembly of a .50-caliber machine gun and an oral board.

“(The competition) was tiring, but well worth it,” said Harmon.

She was awarded an Army Commendation Medal, certificate of achievement, Soldier’s Creed plaque and a coin of excellence by the MNC-I Command Sgt. Maj. Frank Grippe.

The opportunity to compete in the competition strengthened Harmon’s resolve in her career as a Soldier and paralegal specialist, she said.

“(In this MOS), career growth and advancement are great,”



Spc. Dalani Harmon, a paralegal specialist with the 80th Ordnance Battalion and a Tacoma, Wash., native, receives a coin of excellence from Multi-National Corps – Iraq Command Sgt. Maj. Frank Grippe after being named the 2009 MNC-I Paralegal of the Year Oct. 16 at Victory Base Complex, Iraq.

she said. “I joined the Army and chose to focus on law because it is either right or wrong and that is what I like. As a paralegal, I

work really hard for 80th Ordnance Battalion so we can keep good order and discipline in the battalion.”

Troops trek 5K for treats

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. JOHN STIMAC
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The 699th Maintenance Company out of Fort Irwin, Calif., sponsored a Halloween 5K fun run at Holt Memorial Stadium Oct. 31 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Coming in first place was Dennis Opacan, a Ugandan Army Soldier with a time of roughly 16 minutes, 30 seconds.

First Lt. Douglas Pelletier, company executive officer with the 887th Engineer Support Company, 37th Engineer Battalion, finished close behind with a time of roughly 16 minutes, 45 seconds.

These first few runners’ times were approximate because the runners turned the wrong way into Holt Stadium, causing them to have to turn around and go the other way.

Pelletier, a Wells, Maine, native, said he was confused when nobody was at the gate’s entrance to direct the runners. Nonetheless, he said

he was pleased with his run time.

Sgt. Moises Herrera, armament repair specialist with the 699th Maint. Co., said he has run almost all of the 5 km runs since arriving here.

“I had a lot of fun this morning,” said Herrera. “I wish we could’ve worn costumes, but we did get candy and water at the end of the race.”

Herrera, a Fresno, Calif., native, said he set a goal to finish in less than 20 minutes.

“My time was 19 minutes, 55 seconds, so I achieved my goal,” he said.

Spc. James D. Gregory, wheeled vehicle mechanic with the 699th, said he runs the races on JBB to boost his morale.

“It also helps me max out my run time for my (Army physical fitness test),” he said.

Gregory, a Kansas City, Mo., native, said he also ran the race to show support for his company, which is scheduled to leave Iraq in less than 50 days.

Sgt. 1st Class Joseph A. Eckley, technical inspector with the 699th, was the co-



Participants begin the Halloween 5K fun run at Holt Stadium Oct. 31 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. All finishers received a treat bag upon completion of the run.

ordinator for the event. He said it was a lot of work, but it received a lot of external support.

“All the external assets were provided by (Morale, Welfare and Recreation),” said Eckley. “They basically had all the speakers and sound system set up; we just had to worry about the last minute things.”

Racers received candy as they crossed the finish line.

“The candy came from our rear-detachment Family Readiness Group,” said Eckley. “We had a small detail to fill the bags with candy and distribute them to the participants.”

Roughly 500 shirts were also given to the runners who finished the race, he said.

Eckley said it would have been nice for all the participants to be able to wear cos-

tumes for the event.

“That was something that came from higher, whether it is safety or force protection,” he said. “I totally understood though, and I respect that decision.”

Eckley said the event was an overall success.

“The weather held up, everybody looked like they had a good time and everything worked out,” he said.

Q-West conducts mass ca

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq



Rain water caused small puddles of simulated blood to stream across the pavement, under the boots of men wearing silver suits.

Red and blue flashing lights reflected off of yellow uniforms and the

chrome-like surfaces of fire trucks.

Medics with the 15th Sustainment Brigade, with firefighters and medical contractors, conducted a mass casualty exercise Oct. 29 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq, simulating a downed helicopter.

Drexel Garland, the Q-West Fire Department's chief of operations, said this was the first exercise of its type incorporating all of these services.

"The main thing is working together," he said.

The exercise used a small bus to simulate a crashed helicopter, and Soldiers role played victims with fake blood and injuries. Dummies were also used to simulate the dead.

"We drill every other day out here," said Drexel, a San Angelo, Texas, native. "When you got a person actually in front of you bleeding (or with) broken legs ... it's a lot different."

Firefighters wearing silver, flame-resistant suits and protective masks faced a twist when arriving on scene to discover a role-player, simulating a civilian who happened to

be in the area at the time of the crash. The role player ran around, as if delusional, forcing the firefighters to give chase.

Drexel said communication between the organizations while conducting triage was challenging.

"(It) was a new experience for a lot of people, but it went well," said Master Sgt. Stanley Dyches, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the surgeon cell, with the 15th and a Copperas Cove, Texas, native.

Drexel also said he did not mind the weather either.

A Q-West firefighter gives directions while another holds a man who role played a fleeing, delusional victim of a simulated helicopter crash, during a mass casualty exercise Oct. 28 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.



Capt. John Balman, a surgeon with the 15th Sustainment Brigade and a Temple, Texas, native, examines a role player patient during a mass casualty exercise Oct. 28 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.



Q-West firefighters wearing protective gear react to a simulated helicopter crash during a mass casualty exercise.

casualty training exercise

“If it ain’t raining, we ain’t training,” he said.

After the exercise, the personnel involved participated in an after action review.

“How can we make that better? How can we make that more efficient?” John Petrovic, Q-West’s fire chief asked of his firefighters.

He also stressed the importance of being able to handle any emergency situation that might arise, due to the remote location of the base.

“We’re it,” he said. “We’re not only the A team, but the B team too.”



Role player Sgt. Josh Tharpe, a tank crewmember with C Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms Brigade and a Grenada, Miss., native, watches as Q-West firefighters examine him during a mass casualty exercise Oct. 28 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.



Mass casualty exercise Oct. 28 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.



James Snyder, a Q-West firefighter and San Antonio native, checks the pulse of role player Sgt. Joseph Page, a supply specialist with A Company, 106th Support Battalion and a Hattiesburg, Miss., native, as part of a mass casualty exercise Oct. 28 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

Service members tee off in Iraq

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SPC. CORY GROGAN
41st IBCT

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION ADDER, Iraq - Members of the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team

teed off Oct. 12 at the Caddy Shack Driving Range at Camp Adder, Iraq, using equipment they received from a program called Bunkers in Baghdad.

Joe Hanna founded Bunkers in Baghdad, a non-profit organization that provides golf equipment for deployed service members in Iraq and Afghanistan and wounded service members in the United States, in 2008, according to the organization's Web site.

The driving range is a great way to get away from stress while on a deployment, said Sgt. Maj. Edward Carlson, operations sergeant major with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 41st IBCT, 13th

Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Vancouver, Wash., native.

Capt. Sara Leaky, the operations officer with the 41st IBCT who arranged for the brigade to receive the golf balls and clubs, said some people looked at her like she was crazy when she first started receiving all the equipment. She said now people love it and request to use the equipment all the time.

From day one, when the shipment arrived, people at the more remote locations asked for the golf equipment, said Leaky, a Chicago native. The brigade is looking to set up a net for Soldiers stationed at the small outpost named Scania, she said.

These days, it is more common to see service members relieving stress by hitting golf balls at designated locations throughout Iraq and Afghanistan, but Leaky said golfing can be quite different on a deployment.

"The driving range actually had to be closed down for a

A Soldier tees off at the Caddy Shack driving range at Contingency Operating Location Adder, Iraq, using equipment donated by a non-profit organization called Bunkers in Baghdad.

while because a golf ball hit and set off an unexploded ordnance, Servi" she said.

Leaky said practicing golf allows service members of all ranks and types to have fun.

"I love this," said Carlson. "It is a good stress release and it takes your mind off things for a while by breaking up the monotony."

In a letter on the organization's Web site, Hanna said he started Bunkers in Baghdad after watching a television show and reading a news article about Soldiers hitting golf balls in Baghdad. He said he knew he could help a little and a short time later, more than 638,000 golf balls and 17,800 clubs had shipped to Iraq, Afghanistan and Wounded Warrior veterans recovering at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington.



God's Grounds provides Soldiers free coffee

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION ADDER, Iraq - Soldiers at Contingency Operating Location Adder, Iraq, have a steady supply of caffeine, courtesy of God's Grounds, a café run by the chapel

here.

God's Grounds offers free coffee, snacks and a place to relax from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., every day.

Since July, Sgt. Carlos A. Bourne, an ammunitions specialist with the 664th Ordnance Company out of Fort Hood, Texas, has volunteered full-time at God's Grounds. The café was founded as a respite for Soldiers, somewhere to get away from the daily stressors of deployed life, said Bourne, a Miami native.

Some of the snacks are ordered through the Army supply system, but the café is primarily kept stocked with donations made by individuals, units that are leaving or care packages sent as donations from back home, he said.

Although the café is supported by the chapel, it is not a religious facility, said Bourne.

"It says God's Grounds ... it is God's coffee grounds," he said. "That is just the name. They are not going to have a Bible thrown at them just because they come in here."



Sgt. Carlos A. Bourne, an ammunitions specialist with the 664th Ordnance Company out of Fort Hood, Texas, and Miami native, hands a slushie to Sgt. Manuel J. Romo, a battle noncommissioned officer with the 229th Field Artillery, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery out of Fort Bliss, Texas, and a Melbourne, Fla., native, Nov. 1 at God's Grounds, a coffee shop at Contingency Operating Location Adder, Iraq.

Maj. Stephen Broadus, the chaplain with the 401st Armor Brigade out of Fort Bliss, Texas, and the installation chaplain at COL Adder, said God's Grounds gives the chaplains a chance to interact with Soldiers in a relaxed environment.

"Part of the chaplain's job is morale, to assess the morale of the unit," said Broadus, a Biloxi, Miss., native. "I think it is a good morale builder, where Soldiers can come and get a free cup of coffee, or espresso, or something to

begin their day, or (something) during the afternoon.

"We have chaplains come in and out, just at odd times, and you never know what kind of conversation you can strike up to help a Soldier who may be in need."

Broadus said the café receives no shortage of supplies, but struggles to find volunteers.

"We are coming up on a time when some of our key volunteers are leaving," he said.

God's Grounds has two full-time volunteers - Bourne and Spc. Leti T. Togia, a human resource specialist and administrator with the 664th Ord. Co., and a Pago Pago, Samoa, native, both of whom are redeploying in the near future. They said they are nervous about leaving with no replacement volunteers to take their place.

"If we run out of volunteers, then this place will get shut down," Bourne said.

Togia has volunteered at God's Grounds for about six months. She said the café is a peaceful reminder of home, and she sometimes comes to the café even when she is not working to relax and reduce stress, she said.

"When my roommate gets on my nerves, I come here," she said.

Broadus said chaplains have a job that is difficult to measure with numbers or statistics, but he believes that God's Grounds is a facility that helps him accomplish his mission.

"Sometimes what we do as chaplains, and even here at God's Grounds, is an intangible thing," he said. "How many Soldiers have we touched? How many days have we made a little bit better? It is kind of hard to put a number on that, but I would say more than we know."

Company supports CrossFit with new gym

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. MATTHEW C. COOLEY
15TH SUST. BDE.

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq – The Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 15th Special Troops Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, completed a gym, specifically designed for CrossFit, at the company area in mid-October at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

CrossFit is a physical training program founded by Coach Greg Glassman, CEO, that combines metabolic conditioning, gymnastics and weightlifting to encourage unpredictability and variance, and therefore, an effective combatant or athlete, according to a February 2003 article by Glassman.

Master Sgt. Marcus Woody, noncommissioned officer in charge of maintenance and a Moody, Texas, native, with Sgt. Mike Martin, ammo supply sergeant with the 15th Sust. Bde. and a Las Vegas native, built the gym. They are the company's CrossFit instructors and said they planned to create the gym long before either arrived in Iraq.

"It's actually better than I thought it was going to be," Woody said.

Woody said the company supported the idea from the beginning and the room

was larger than what they had hoped for. They would have settled for something outside, he said.

The gym contains floor mats, dumbbells, a barbell and bench, two treadmills, a dip and pull-up station, medicine balls and kettle bells. Before receiving new medicine balls, they used a soccer ball filled with sand, said Woody.

Woody said he plans to hang a rope from the ceiling and get rings to hang from the pull-up bars to create dip rings. He also said he plans to have an outside area for flipping tires and carrying full buckets.

"No money has changed hands at this point," he said.

Woody said everything was donated, improvised or brought from the U.S.

"We can do about 80 percent of the workouts with what we got here," he said.

Martin praised CrossFit for its high intensity.

"It works," he said. "When you (lift weights), all you're doing is building muscle, nothing else."

CrossFit is designed to make athletes healthier all around, and includes nutrition and lifestyle choices, Martin said.

Martin said CrossFit has two main categories of workouts: Heroes and Nasty Girls, named after service members who have died while deployed and women. Hero workouts are the most challenging, he said.

"Force multiplied by distance over



Soldiers and civilian employees with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 15th Special Troops Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), work out in the company's new CrossFit gym Oct. 28 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

time equals power," said Martin, explaining the CrossFit formula. "We want maximum power of output."

Both Soldiers and Army-employed civilians work out in the new gym with Woody and Martin.

"It's very intense," Staff Sgt. Sabrina Barragan, ammo supply sergeant with the 15th Sust. Bde. and a Brownsville, Texas, native, said. "It's crazy. It's a good workout."

Barragan said she started CrossFit at an NCO school and praised it as the primary reason she scored roughly 270 out of a possible 300 on an Army physical fitness test, four months after having a child.

Ken Patterson, a field support engineer with the 15th and a Baltimore native, said CrossFit offers him variety.

"Every day is different," he said. "You never get bored."

Hobbies help time fly for deployed Soldiers

STORY AND PHOTO BY
2ND LT. VINCENT L. LEWIS
96TH SUST. BDE.

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Whatever the mission facing deployed Soldiers at Camp Liberty, they are still able to enjoy some downtime.

After a long day of work, social networking Web sites, phone calls home and video game systems allow service members to free themselves from workplace stressors.

However, some Soldiers choose to partake in more unconventional activities – rock climbing, playing basketball and racing remote control cars.

Spc. Erik Schoof, a test, measurement and diagnostic equipment repair specialist with 1st Maintenance Company and a Milwaukee, Wis., native, said he uses

the base Remote Control Racing Park as much as possible.

"This has been a passion I have had for a long time," he said.

This is Schoof's first deployment and he said he had mixed emotions initially about deploying.

When he discovered the park, however, these emotions quickly turned to excitement, he said.

He said he tries to get to the park at least three times a week, testing the limits of not only his vehicle but his skills. He wishes there were more people interested in the hobby, he said.

"This hobby can get expensive and I would advise anyone interested in purchasing a RC vehicle to do your homework," he said.

Spc. Alshawn Magee, a supply sergeant with 1st Maint. Co. and a Flint, Mich., native, said he loves to go outside and unwind on the basketball court.

"When I get stressed or just need a break, I will go and shoot a few jump shots," said Magee. "This is my stress reliever. Whatever problems I may have are nonexistent while I am on the basketball court, and for a brief moment I am free."

Spc. Jeffrey Kennedy, a communications specialist also with the 1st and a Knoxville, Tenn., native, said he unwinds outside as well, escaping the stressors of work on the rock-climbing wall he built.

The wall, which is made from wood and rubber, spans roughly 10 feet in height and roughly 40 feet in length.

"I wanted something different to do during my down time while deployed," he said.

When he scales the wall, he said he envisions himself back in Tennessee, maneuvering Eagle Mountain. He said the rock climbing gives him the sensation of pitting himself against the wilderness.



Spc. Erik Schoof, a test, measurement and diagnostic equipment repair specialist with 1st Maintenance Company, 260th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), frequently visits the Remote Control Racing Park to test the limits of his vehicle and his skills.

Check out the 96th Sust. Bde. online

See the Web site at:
www.96thsbde.com

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN THE BATTLEFIELD WAS EVEN...
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R RESTRICTED

Combat strategies at the Burnout Battlefield pt. 1



"The Stress Doc"
Mark Gorkin

Today's world is 24/7, wired, always on and often cycling between upgrading and reorganizing – if not outsourcing and downsizing. As company mantras become "do more with less," it's no surprise that more and more people are struggling with job stress and burnout.

The erosive spiral

The classic set-up for burnout is a professional or personal

situation that places high ongoing demands and responsibilities upon you while restricting your sense of control, autonomy and/or authority. Inflexibly high expectations and elusive goals only add fuel to the fire. Consider this: If, no matter what you do or how hard you try, results, rewards, recognition and relief are not forthcoming and you can't say and mean "no" or won't let go, trouble awaits. The groundwork is laid for apathy, callousness and despair.

Burnout is a gradual process by which a person detaches from work and other significant roles and relationships in response to excessive and prolonged stress and mental, physical and emotional strain. The result is lowered productivity, cynicism and confusion – a feeling of being drained and having nothing more to give.

The four stages of burnout

Physical, mental and emotional exhaustion is the first stage of burnout. Do you recognize this sequence? Maybe you are still holding it together at work, but as soon as you get home you go right for the fridge, turn on the TV, hit the sofa and are comatose for the rest of the evening. Normally, you pride yourself on doing a thorough job, but budget cuts have you looking for shortcuts, if not cutting corners. This gnaws at your self-esteem. A case of the "brain strain" is developing, accompanied by an energy shortage and feelings of exhaustion.

Shame and doubt manifest themselves in the second stage of burnout. For example, if your supervisor asks you to take on a new assignment your first reaction is to be helpful, but suddenly a voice inside screams, "Are you kidding?" You're feeling shaky in the present and losing confidence about managing the future – you

can even start discounting past accomplishments. Remember, this is not a logical process but a psychological one.

Cynicism and callousness are how people often respond to feeling vulnerable. They put their guard up and look out for No. 1. In the short run, this strategy may work but, in time, this hard exterior can become a heavy burden. Remember, burnout is less a sign of failure and more a sign that you gave yourself away. Not surprisingly, you can become resentful and feel that people are taking advantage of you. Sensitive individuals begin developing calloused skin for self-protection.

This stage of burnout does not just facilitate a hardening of the psyche. When your stress starts to smolder and turns to frustration and anger, it can lead to a hardening of the arteries. High blood pressure, hypertension, cardiovascular complications, even heart attacks and strokes are potential health risks.

Failure, helplessness and crisis are symptoms of the fourth stage of burnout. And while it sounds terrible, consider this: hitting bottom means there's no more downward spiral. And if you can reach out, there's nowhere to go but up. Being caught in a career catch-22 often signals the final stage. Burnout is like trying to run a marathon at full speed. Without pacing, body parts wear out and the mental apparatus breaks down. In fact, one reason the fourth stage is so disorienting psychologically is that there are cracks in your defensive armor.

Fourth-stage burnout is the crisis point. Are you ready to reach out for the help and resources you need? A person recovers and expands his or her strengths and possibilities by:

- getting proper support from a professional trained in crisis intervention and loss;
- confronting denial, false hopes, cynicism and helplessness;
- grieving past and present losses, while turning guilt, anxiety and aggression into focused energy; and
- acquiring skills and technology for transforming new awareness and motivation.

Rehabilitation and rejuvenation

While the erosive spiral of burnout is dangerous, it also provides opportunity for growth. I know from personal experience.

Back in the 1980s, I was an unrealistic doctoral student. Low self-esteem and determination to silence critics and doubters had me trying to turn a mystic experience in psychoanalysis into a doctoral dissertation. For the sake of brevity, let's just say I was definitely off the ivy-covered wall. And for several months, I was sidelined by exhaustion, existential emptiness and frightening, stress-induced dizzy spells. Fortunately, a silver lining emerged from the academic ashes. I became an expert on stress and burnout eventually evolving a self-care, recovery and prevention process.

It took several months of grieving and tending to mind-body wounds to recover. I needed to know that significant others still loved and respected me despite my feelings of academic failure. You may need a mentor or a counselor to reconfirm your pre-crisis identity; to help you see strengths when you are fixated on your weaknesses. The earlier one can begin grieving and letting go, the easier for emotional catharsis to become a tool for rebuilding healthy purpose and passion.

Mark Gorkin, LICSW, "The Stress Doc"™, is an acclaimed keynote and kickoff speaker, training/OD & team building consultant, psychotherapist and "Motivational Humorist." He is the author "Practice Safe Stress: Healing and Laughing in the Face of Stress, Burnout & Depression" and "The Four Faces of Anger: Transforming Anger, Rage, and Conflict into Inspiring Attitude & Behavior." A kickoff speaker for Estrin Legal Education Conferences, the Doc is America Online's online psychohumorist™ and pioneer of a USA Today Online "HotSite" – <http://www.stressdoc.com> – recognized as a workplace resource by National Public Radio. For more info on the Doc's speaking and training programs and products, email stressdoc@aol.com or call 301-875-2567.

This issue of the Expeditionary Times contains a reader submitted article written by Mark Gorkin, also known as "The Stress Doc." Mr. Gorkin's views are not necessarily those of the Department of Defense and the inclusion of his submission is not meant in any way as an endorsement of his services.

Telling the Providers Story from all across Iraq



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Provider Soldiers get promoted, re-enlist

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Continuing a tradition of excellence, Provider Soldiers earned promotions and re-enlisted in the Army, all while continuing to prepare for the drawdown of U.S. equipment and personnel from Iraq.

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

“The secretary of the Army has espoused special trust and confidence in the fidelity, valor and personal courage of...” read Master Sgt. Dorothea Goodson, noncommissioned officer in charge of the support operations administrative section, HHC, 13th ESC, while Brig Gen. Paul L. Wentz, commanding general of the 13th ESC, watched as she named the Soldiers and stepped forward to pin on their new rank.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Crystal Davis, the mobility officer for the support operations land section, 13th ESC, was promoted to chief warrant officer 3 after 14 years in the Army.

“It’s exciting,” said Davis. “I didn’t think I would stay this

long, but here I am.”

Davis said she has chosen to stay in the Army because it provides a perspective on life not found in the civilian world.

“It’s like being a foreign exchange student for your entire life,” said the Antigua and Barbuda native. “I’ve met people from every state in the U.S. and I’m just making the best of this experience.”

Master Sgt. Tanisha Geter, the supply and services NCOIC with the 13th, was promoted to the grade of E-8 after 17 years in the Army.

“My first year in college was basically going nowhere and my dad, who had been in the military, suggested I join,” she said.

Initially, Geter said she expected to serve for four years, earn her Montgomery G.I. Bill benefits and leave the service. But 17 years later, she chose to continue to serve.

“The camaraderie, meeting different people, traveling; I have all these great reasons to stay; why would I want to leave?” said Geter, a Brooklyn, N.Y., native, who had never left the Big Apple until she joined the military.

If that was not enough, she said her children, Todd Geter and Miles Geter, are enough of a reason to stay in the Army.

In addition to these promotions, three Provider Soldiers also re-enlisted to continue serving their country during war time.

Cpl. Mariah Robins, supply clerk, said she re-enlisted to see the world.

“I originally enlisted to serve after 9/11, to help my country,” she said. “Also, for my daughter, I wanted to go to school to give her a good life.”

Robins said her family was very supportive of her decision to re-enlist. She said she choose to re-enlist for an assignment to Japan, a dream destination for her.

“I always wanted to go there and now I have the opportunity available and I took it,” she said.

Staff Sgt. Michelle Batiste, a material supply NCO with the 13th, said she chose to re-enlist for the stability provided by the military.

“I want to take care of my kids, Myron and Dyron,” said Batiste, an Opelousas, La., native. “When I told them I was going to enlist, at first they didn’t believe me, but now they’re glad I’m staying with it.”

Sgt. Jose Graulau, executive assistant with the 13th ESC, said he was not going to re-enlist but a talk with his brother, who is also deployed in support of contingency operations here in Iraq, changed his mind.

“My brother was in the Army,” said Graulau, a Bayamon, Puerto Rico, native. “Seeing how well he was doing made me decide to enlist, too.



Brig Gen. Paul L. Wentz, commanding general of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), administers the oath of enlistment to Sgt. Jose Graulau, executive assistant with the 13th ESC. Graulau said he was not going to re-enlist but a talk with his brother, who is also deployed in support of contingency operations here in Iraq, changed his mind.

Talking to him once more recently made me decide to do it again.”

Wentz said, “As the strategic reposturing continues, 13th

ESC Soldiers will maintain the high standards and excellent service which makes the 13th ESC synonymous with world class sustainment support.”

Iraqi water pump workers visit Q-West

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. MATTHEW COOLEY
15TH SUST. BDE.

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq – A group of Iraqis who work at the Al-Qayyarah pump house attended a luncheon in their honor Nov. 2 at the dining facility at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

Col. Larry Phelps, the 15th Sustainment Brigade commander and a Greenville, Ala., native, presented a plaque to the workers and said it was a small “thank you.”

U.S. Soldiers and the Iraqi workers got to know one another speaking through an interpreter.

“Our goal is to bring water to Q-West,” said pump foreman Abdullah Ahmed.

The Al-Qayyarah pump house recently averaged 800,000 gallons of water pumped daily, said Capt. John Sutterfield, a Midway, Ga., native and public works



Col. Larry Phelps, commander of the 15th Sustainment Brigade, and Command Sgt. Maj. Nathaniel Bartee, the 15th Sust. Bde. senior noncommissioned officer, thank the Al-Qayyarah pump house workers with a plaque presented to Naif Dhahy, the pump house manager, Nov. 3 at the dining facility at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq, during a luncheon held in the workers’ honor.

“(When someone does a good job), you invite them to eat bread with you,” said Subaa Khamees, an assistant manager for an Iraqi engineering company. Phelps told the workers he would have preferred to cook for them himself.

“There are many folks who think our cultures are different, but really they’re not,” he said.

Phelps said the two cultures were alike, in that meal invitations at home are reserved for friends and those people are fond of.

Naif Dhahy, the pump house manager, told Phelps, “We really appreciate you guys today and hope you come down to the pump house.”

director. He said the directorate of public works oversees major repairs using contractors, while the workers take care of day-to-day operations and maintenance.

“No pump house – no Q-West,” Phelps said. “That’s the truth.”

Phelps said he was not impressed by the greatness of the pump house.

“It impressed me because it works well with what you’ve got,” he said.

Some of the workers said they were grateful to be invited to the luncheon.

Sudoku

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

Last week's answers

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

Level: Hard

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

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. Who twice lost presidential elections to Dwight Eisenhower in the 50s?
2. What would Diane Keaton's last name have been if she had used her father's name instead of her mother's?
3. What part of his body did Keith Richards insure for a million pounds?
4. Who first gave Buster Keaton the nickname Buster?
5. Which Soviet was swapped for Gary Powers who was shot down over the USSR?

1. Adlai Stevenson 2. Hall 3. Third finger, left hand 4. Houdini 5. Rudolf Abel

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)

1700 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

ISLAMIC PRAYER - Friday

1230 Provider Chapel

PAGAN/WICCAN FELLOWSHIP - Thursday

1900 The Shack

Saturday

1900 The Shack

GREEK ORTHODOX - Sunday

0900 Provider Annex

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CALL:

Gilbert Chapel: 443-7703

Provider Chapel: 433-2430

Freedom Chapel: 443-6303

JB BALAD ACTIVITIES

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

UPCOMING SPORTS ON AFN



Wednesday 11/11/09

College Football Primetime: Ohio @ Buffalom Live 3 a.m. AFN/sports
 NHL Pittsburgh Penguins @ Boston Bruins, Live 3 a.m. AFN/xtra
 NHL Nashville Predators @ San Jose Sharks, Live 6:30 a.m. AFN/xtra

Thursday 11/12/09

NHL New York Islanders @ Washington Capitals, Live 3 a.m. AFN/ xtra
 NBA Wednesday: Cleveland Cavaliers @ Orlando Magic, Live 4 a.m. AFN/sports
 Oklahoma City Thunder @ Los Angeles Clippers Live 6:30 a.m. AFN/xtra
 NBA Wednesday: New Orleans Hornets @ Phoenix Suns, Live 6:30 a.m. AFN/sports

Friday 11/13/09

College Football Primetime: South Florida @ Rutgers, Live 3:30 a.m. AFN/xtra
 Thursday Night Football: Chicago Bears @ San Francisco 49ers, Live 4 a.m. AFN/sports
 Phoenix Suns @ Los Angeles Lakers, Live 6:30 a.m. AFN/xtra

Saturday 11/14/09

NHL Anaheim Ducks @ Columbus Blue Jackets, Live 3 a.m. AFN/xtra
 NBA Friday: Atlanta Hawks @ Boston Celtics Live 4 a.m. AFN/sports
 ESPN2 College Football Primetime: West Virginia @ Cincinnati, Live 4 a.m. AFN/prime pacific
 NBA Friday: Los Angeles Lakers @ Denver Nuggets, Live 6:30 a.m. AFN/sports

Sunday 11/15/09

UFC 105 Couture vs Vera, Live 4 a.m. AFN/xtra
 NASCAR Nationwide Series: Arizona 200, Tape Delayed 11 a.m. AFN/xtra

Monday 11/16/09

NASCAR Sprint Cup Series: Checker O'Reilly Auto Parts 500, Live 12 a.m. AFN/xtra
 San Jose Sharks @ Chicago Blackhawks, Live 3 a.m. AFN/xtra
 Sunday Night Football: New England Patriots @ Indianapolis Colts, Live 4:15 a.m. AFN/sports
 College Football Primetime: East Carolina @ Tulsa, Live 4:30 AFN/xtra
 PBA Viper Championship, Tape Delayed 5:30 a.m. AFN/prime atlantic

Tuesday 11/17/09

NHL New Jersey Devils @ Philadelphia Flyers, live 3 a.m. AFN/xtra
 Monday Night Football: Baltimore Ravens @ Cleveland Browns, Live 4:30 a.m. AFN/sports
 NHL Tampa Bay Lightning @ Phoenix Coyotes, Live 5:30 a.m. AFN/xtra

Arts & Entertainment

Nick Swardson: 'Seriously, Who Farted?'

BY STAFF SGT. JOEL F. GIBSON
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



If you enjoy crass, unapologetic humor, you'll enjoy this Comedy Central presentation, now available at the PX.

Nick Swardson, the man child with a car bed in "Grandma's Boy," and the gay, roller-skating prostitute from "Reno 911," put together an impressive standup comedy performance in "Seriously, Who Farted?"

Most of the humor is observation-

al and in the words of the comedian, from 100 percent true stories. If the stories are true, the guy leads the funniest life ever ... I'm guessing slightly embellished.

While watching "Seriously, Who Farted?" I kept track of physical reactions I had to the comedy routine. I totaled 63 reactions comprised of smiles, chuckles and laughs, with 20 genuine loud laughs, so it was pretty funny.

My primary criticism is that most of the jokes went on too long, running 15 to 20 seconds after the original crowd reaction. Occasionally, the joke

would run into a new one, but most of the time Swardson just didn't seem to know when to end his joke or he was nervous about material for an hour-long comedy special and padded his jokes.

A lot of the humor centers around the use and well, overuse, of alcohol. Substance abuse jokes tend to be comedic crutches because anything is believable, and usually hilarious, when someone starts an anecdote with the caveat that they were drinking at the time.

Swardson offsets the substance abuse jokes with some ridiculous sto-

ries from the making of "Grandma's Boy," and an alternate universe scenario that made me think, "What if everybody grew up to be the first thing they said they wanted to be?"

When the comedian remarked there would be ninjas and princesses, and quarterbacks throwing footballs to pirates, I nearly fell out of my chair.

The bonus features are free, so their lameness is forgivable.

If you're easily offended, stay far, far away from this DVD. If you enjoy standup comedy, and you don't mind adult language, give this one a shot. I rate it 7 out of 10.

Literature, through peace, war at West Point

BY SPC. NAVEED ALI SHAH
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



The poetry of war is alive and well.

In "Soldier's Heart," Elizabeth D. Samet, a literature professor at the United States Military Academy at West Point, writes of teaching cadets the complexities of war, not in a field exercise or school of tactics, but rather an English class.

In the process, she learns a little bit herself, as well.

Samet chronicles her time at West Point from her start there in 1997 as an assistant professor of English, to the abrupt changes brought on by the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, and her students' transformation during the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Her writing is exquisite; she is,

after all, an English professor. "Soldier's Heart" is a lesson in literature in itself. Samet constantly alludes to poets and authors, even when not using their work to illustrate a point. Despite this, the book is not choppy or broken up as one would expect. Rather, Samet seamlessly flows from one subject to the next, making this text difficult to put down.

Undeniably, I found myself frequently far too engrossed in its pages and I soon realized the reason. I am not the first, and I will not be the last, to compare this wonderful work of prose to "Reading Lolita in Tehran" by Azar Nafisi.

Both authors capture the timeless battle in which the reader attempts to interpret and understand the text, while the meaning itself is shaped by readers' experiences.

While "Soldier's Heart" is not a picture book, it's fully illustrated

by her vocabulary. She uses a broad paintbrush to capture the imagination and a slim brush to draw the details which captivate the mind.

Her grand literary skill aside, Samet was an outsider to the cult of military life when she joined the staff at USMA. She writes of getting used to the military-style acronyms and slang she had to learn, as well as the customs and courtesies of rank structure. She learns quickly, though.

Speaking of military courtesy and the endless "Yes, ma'am," she heard, Samet said:

"Those ubiquitous 'Yes, ma'ams' that seem to the outsider like hyper-courtesy can in truth mean anything ..."

When Samet teaches a class of Plebes Thomas Hardy's "The Man He Killed," I was reminded of what a U.S. commander and West Point graduate said to an Iraqi general:

"I looked at him and I asked: 'If you had seen me in March 2003, would you have shot me? Would I have shot you?'" said Brig. Gen. Heidi Brown, commander of Multi-National Corps-Iraq's Strategic Reposturing of Equipment and Personnel, in a recent Washington Post article, upon meeting an Iraqi Army general who was once part of Saddam Hussein's military machine.

In an example of life imitating art, just as the speaker of Hardy's poem might have, in peace, sat down for a drink with the man he killed in war, Brown relays the same feelings to the Iraqi general.

The relationship between literature and reality, art and life, is ever-evolving and forever the same. Elizabeth Samet's "Soldier's Heart" will open a window into this connection for the military mind to contemplate and deliberate for generations to come.

OFFICER SPACE



Sustainer Reel Time Theater

Wednesday, Nov. 11

5 p.m. The Informant
8 p.m. All About Steve

Sunday, Nov. 15

2 p.m. A Christmas Carol
5 p.m. Surrogates
8 p.m. Zombieland

Thursday, Nov. 12

5 p.m. Halloween 2
8 p.m. This Is It

Monday, Nov. 16

5 p.m. Love Happens
8 p.m. Surrogates

Friday, Nov. 13

2 p.m. Zombieland
5 p.m. Love Happens
8:30 p.m. A Christmas Carol

Tuesday, Nov. 17

5 p.m. Zombieland
8 p.m. A Christmas Carol

Saturday, Nov. 14

2 p.m. Surrogates
5 p.m. A Christmas Carol
8 p.m. Love Happens

Wednesday, Nov. 18

5 p.m. A Christmas Carol
8 p.m. Zombieland



PHOTOS AROUND IRAQ

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Ernest E. Sivia III



Iraqi Soldiers, assigned to Commando Battalion, 10th Iraqi Army Division, provide a demonstration of their training from the War Fighter Exercise during their graduation ceremony Oct. 28 at Camp Ur, Dhi Qar, Iraq. The War Fighter Exercise was a four-week field training event for more than 400 Soldiers.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Ernest E. Sivia III

Iraqi Soldiers, assigned to Commando Battalion, 10th Iraqi Army Division, proudly hoist their country's colors for a pass in review during their graduation ceremony from the War Fighter Exercise Camp Oct. 28 at Ur, Dhi Qar, Iraq.



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Edwin L. Wriston

Iraqi Soldiers hand out Iraqi flags to school children as U.S. Soldiers from the 6th Iraqi Army Division Civil Affairs Military Transition Team, and other Iraqi Soldiers, distribute school supplies to students at the Al Walla'a Elementary School in Al Hurriyah Oct. 25 near Baghdad.

Iraqi Soldiers, assigned to Commando Battalion, 10th Iraqi Army Division, take cover after receiving indirect fire during a cordon and search exercise Oct. 24 at Camp Ur, Dhi Qar, Iraq. The commandos participated in the War Fighter Exercise, a four-week field training event designed to refresh Soldiers on basic combat tasks and skills.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Ernest E. Sivia III



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Benjamin Boren

An Iraqi Soldier uses a metal detector to search for hidden munitions during a joint cache search with U.S. Soldiers of the 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, Oct. 25 in Baghdad. The joint missions are conducted routinely to help stem the flow of improvised explosive devices in the area.

NEWS AROUND IRAQ

New Iraqi International Academy partners with British Council

★ BAGHDAD – The British Council has agreed to support the design and development phase of the Iraqi International Academy, which will be a home for instruction in advanced English language and cultural training for the government of Iraq.

Advisers from Multi-National Security Transition Command – Iraq and the Iraqi Ministerial Training and Development Center are developing the IIA.

Tony Reilly, director of the British Council in Iraq, called the Iraqi International Academy “a bold and visionary initiative to establish a centre of excellence in English language teaching, cultural awareness and professional development.”

He said the British Council is delighted to play a modest but meaningful role, alongside the Government of Iraq, and U.S. allies, as a strategic partner in the ambitious undertaking.

U.S. Army Lt. Col. Leven Pressley-Sanders, academic team leader, and David King, academy senior consultant with Iraq Training and Advisory Mission – Ministry of Defence, welcomed the British Council’s commitment to the IIA. They said discussions were underway with other international partners needed to help deliver the excellence and quality that is required across the whole IIA curriculum.

The British Council, which serves as Britain’s international cultural relations body, has supported the IIA project in recent years by conducting a fact-finding visit and holding an English language curricula workshop with U.S. advisers.

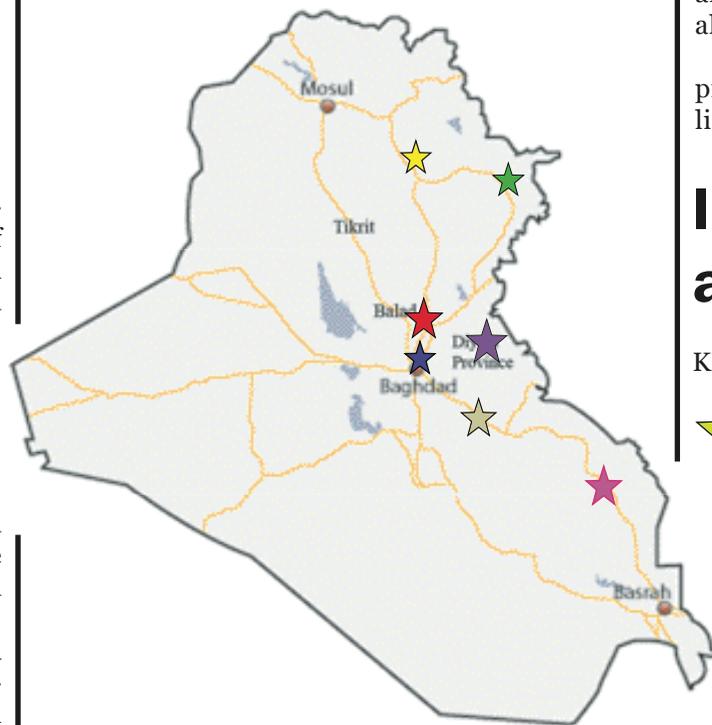
Iraqi administration affairs school holds joint graduation

★ TAJI, Iraq – One hundred twenty-eight Soldiers graduated from supply and warehouse, pay and personnel courses at the administration affairs school Oct. 21 here.

These Soldiers are from 11 separate Iraqi Army divisions as well as the Iraqi Federal Police and Diyala regional battalions.

The supply and warehouse course is an introduction to basic logistics and administration, which trains students in the areas of storage, supply procedures, maintenance, ration requests, management and safety. The pay and personnel course is designed to prepare the students for advanced administrative duties, report writing and an introduction to computers.

The culminating event for this course was the graduation ceremony hosted by the school’s executive officer, Lt. Col. Mohammed. After receiving their diplomas, student leader Naseer Fahad, with the IA 8th Division and originally from Diwaniyah, led the students in a traditional song and dance celebration. These students will now return to their respective units to continue their efforts in building a safe and secure Iraq.



Kurdish kids receive backpacks, school supplies, new school

★ SULAYMANIAH, Iraq – Engineers and Soldiers with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Kirkuk Resident Office served up backpacks and school supplies to elementary students at the Shalaw School in Sulaymaniyah.

However, the students are in for a bigger surprise after the first of the year, when they move into their new school, courtesy of the efforts of the USACE Gulf Region District.

The school supply giveaway was orchestrated by Army Sgt. 1st Class Donna Sendelbech, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the Kirkuk office.

Sendelbech made contact with two organizations in the United States that send packages to Soldiers deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan and, rather than receive goodie bags for her Soldiers, Sendelbech requested that the organizations send backpacks and school supplies to school children in Iraq.

“There were two organizations, ‘Winning Hearts and Minds’ and ‘Any Solider,’ that donated the gifts for the giveaway,” Sendelbech said.

“These school children are an important part of our mission here. I believe that they deserve the same opportunity at an education as my little girl back in the states. I know our efforts can’t solve all the problems here but, as a parent, we have to do whatever we can to make their lives better.”

The demand for schools throughout Iraq has outweighed the supply and financial resources.

The Shalaw elementary students attend school in a converted house void of electricity.

After Jan. 1, students are scheduled to move into a new 12-classroom school house. The new school will serve more than 1,000 elementary and middle school students in morning and afternoon sessions; a common practice in high-density urban areas in Iraq.

In addition to the 12 classrooms, the new school

will have an administration building, bathrooms and a backup generator to ensure the electricity will always be on.

The \$380,000 school project’s financing was provided through the Commander’s Emergency Relief Fund.

Iraqi Air Force acquires advanced radar system

★ KIRKUK REGIONAL AIR BASE, Iraq – The Iraqi Air Force advanced its monitoring capabilities for air defense with its acceptance of a digital air surveillance radar system Oct. 26 in a ceremony here.

The DASR system, which includes the radar and the radar control facility, gives Iraqi air traffic controllers the capability to monitor aircraft up to 120 nautical miles away. This permits them to detect aircraft along their borders with Syria, Turkey and Iran.

“Today, another historical day added to our brothers and the Iraqi air force,” said Brig. Gen. Ahmed Ghani, communications director with the Iraqi Air Force. “Through that system, we will identify more ... aircraft entering our sovereignty.”

“We started this process by installing over \$53 million of air traffic control and navigation capabilities for the Iraqi Air Force more than three years ago,” said U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Robert Kane, director of Iraq Training and Advisory Mission – Air Force.

The Air Force plans to extend the DASR signal to be remotely accessible from Baghdad International Airport so air traffic controllers can see all the airspace in Iraq.

The system brings the Kirkuk airfield up to international civil aviation and surveillance standards, giving it the potential for future commercial airline use.

“Beginning in August of 2006, our governments, air forces and civilian contractors cooperated to not only fund the purchase of this highly technical equipment, but to train the Iraqi air force personnel how to use it and maintain it,” Kane said. “I’m very proud to say that the Iraqi air force now possesses these capabilities.”

Mortar course graduates 106 Iraqi Soldiers

★ AN NUMANIYAH, Iraq – One hundred and six Soldiers with the 6th and 8th Iraq Army divisions combined to conduct a live-fire exercise Oct. 22 at the An Numaniyah Multi-Purpose Range Complex.

The live-fire exercise is the culminating event of a 21-week course in mortar training.

The mortar course has the personal attention of the Iraqi Minister of Defence. In recognition of the effectiveness of this course, enrollment has tripled from 40 Soldiers per cycle to 120 Soldiers per cycle.

Training in the course is comprised of three functional areas; Fire Direction Center, Forward Observer, and Mechanical (Gunnery). The FO transmits target data to the FDC. The FDC converts target data into gunner data. Gunnery receive the gun data, sight the weapon system and engage targets.

The live-fire exercise allowed the students to see

how indirect fires can effectively conceal troop movement, suppress enemy forces, and destroy targets.

Student platoon leader, 1st Lt. Mulaazem Awwal Nabeil Fakhry, who commanded a four-gun mortar section, said his men were becoming more proficient in conducting mortar training with each passing day of the live-fire exercise.

SWAT class graduates train for Iraqi Police emergency response

 MAYSAN, Iraq – Thirty Iraqi policemen assigned to Al-Amarah-based emergency response units graduated in mid-October from a two-week basic Special Weapons and Tactics School.

This course is the first of several specialized training courses requested by the Maysan Governance and Iraqi Police Service Command.

It is designed to assist in preparation for the upcoming Iraqi-wide elections in January 2010.

Other scheduled pre-election courses include: civil disorder management; election security; personal protection details; critical incident management; suicide bombers and countermeasures; and facility protection services.

The basic SWAT school, conducted at Combat Outpost Station Gary Owen, consisted of classroom instruction and practical skills training in reflexive fire, including live fire drills; urban movement; breach and hallways; room clearing; sensitive site exploitation and evidence collection; land navigation and map reading; cordon and search; raids; and a capstone practical exercise.

The class is presented by trainers from Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq and the police transition team from U.S. Department of State's International Police Advisor-Maysan, stationed at COS Gary Owen.

Class graduation at COS Gary Owen was attended by U.S. Army Lt. Col. Robert Menist, commander of Multi-National Division-South Task Force 4th Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment; Iraqi Staff Maj. Gen. Sa'ad, provincial chief of police; Iraqi Lt. Col. Gazi, Maysan Police Training Center dean; Iraqi Col. Mohammed, 4th ERU commander; and U.S. Army Capt. Allen Trujillo, 4/6 Inf. Bn. – Comanche Company commander.

Mohammed said he believed the training to be a beneficial tool that would assist the Iraqi police in taking control of their future. He said he looks forward to sending additional Iraqi policemen to future SWAT training.

Iraqi, US working group addresses logistics needs

 BAGHDAD – A joint U.S., Iraq logistics working group held a conference sponsored by the Ministry of Interior Oct. 28 here to highlight successes and address concerns with future logistics support for Iraqi Security Forces.

The conference, mandated by the U.S.-Iraq Strategic Framework Agreement, was the first one of its kind, hosted by Iraqis, and was the first time the conference was held outside of U.S. bases and contingency operating locations.

The conference, hosted by Iraqi Maj. Gen. Abdul Ameer, the assistant deputy minister for infrastructure, was attended by Iraqi field commanders and

senior U.S. Army personnel dedicated to helping Iraq develop a workable and sustainable logistics system.

The conference highlighted successes in the U.S.-Iraq logistics partnership, such as the establishment of new logistics databases and the addition of new hand-held scanners that keep track of vehicles, weapons, ammunition and spare parts.

The scanners help Iraqi logisticians ensure vital equipment is distributed to the commanders who need it most.

U.S. Army Col. David Fox, an adviser to ISF-Federal Police, said the working group has made progress.

"There are problems to work through, but these are good problems to have," said Fox. "You have the equipment you need, but now you need a program to distribute it correctly and ensure that you have proper accountability procedures in place."

Iraqi commanders said committees have been formed to deal with most of the issues identified at the meeting, but highlighted the groups' achievements, including accounting for more than 2,000 vehicles, which they entered into a new database.

Company commanders graduate from Kirkush Infantry Officer School

 KIRKUSH, Iraq – Twenty-four Iraqi army captains graduated from the first company commanders course at the infantry officer school at Kirkush Training Center Oct. 21.

These officers, representing nearly every Iraqi army division, participated in the six-week course, which covered a core curriculum stressing all aspects of company-level and small-unit leadership and battlefield skills.

The course was comprised of classroom lectures covering diverse subjects, such as human rights; values and ethics; and communications training. Practical exercises included live-fire courses and ranges; counter-insurgency; first aid and medical evacuation; marksmanship instruction; and offensive/defensive operations.

Iraqi Staff Col. Mahamood, commander of the infantry officer school, was the principle speaker at the graduation ceremony. He challenged the graduates to be wise leaders as they train-up and mentor the junior officers in their units.

One graduating company commander said, "It is truly an honor to graduate from this course and this training is not something that I will take lightly when I return to my home unit."

These company commanders will now return to their respective units and continue their efforts in maintaining a safe and secure country.

Wrecked plane parts used for Iraqi Air Force training aids

 SATHER AIR FORCE BASE, Iraq – American and Iraqi Airmen moved parts of a wrecked Lockheed C-130 Hercules aircraft from Sather Air Force Base to New Al Muthana Air Force Base Oct. 27 where they will be used as training aids for Iraqi aircraft maintainers. The parts were moved by elements of the 447th

Expeditionary Air Group, the 321st Air Expeditionary Advisory Group and Iraqi Airmen.

"This is something they'll have here for many years to come and they'll be able to train like we do in our Air Force," said U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Dellet Weaver, NAMAB productions superintendent.

Some of the parts removed were the left wing, a dry bay and fuel cell sections, landing gear struts and electrical components. The parts will be modified to render them nonoperational before they are deployed as training aids.

U.S. Air Force Capt. Martin Hagg, NAMAB maintenance adviser, said he expects the training aids to be ready for use within the next three months.

"It's always better to get hands-on training than it is to get just theory training," said Hagg, "You can always look at a picture or take them out to an actual aircraft and point to the parts out and say 'this is how what we talked about works.' But if you can actually get your hands on it, if you can cut wires and rework wires, crawl inside a fuel cell – that always gives you a higher fidelity of training."

"I believe the benefits will become apparent very soon after we get the parts done and are able to set up the training aids. I believe everyone is going to benefit from it. The Americans will benefit on a personal level by working with the Iraqi Air Force and getting to know them. The main beneficiary will be the Iraqi Air Force who will get to continue on with their training."

Ministry of Defence Bank offers housing loans to employees

 BAGHDAD – Oct. 10, the Iraqi Ministry of Defence Bank, at Contingency Operating Location Honor, began offering individual housing loans to MoD service members and civilian employees.

To date, 140 loans have been approved and additional loan requests are pending

The housing loans assist MoD employees with their housing plans and positively impact the Iraqi economy through the banking multiplier factor.

The Iraqi Training and Advisory Mission-MoD, Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq led in the conceptualization of the banking operation expansion plan at MoD.

The interim goal is the institutionalization of pay by creating a banking infrastructure. This will enable the MoD to pay salaries to Soldiers promptly, enhance payroll control and transition from the current cash payment methodology to one that uses direct deposit and other electronic transfer methods.

ITAM-MoD's business operations/banking team assisted in the construction of a MoD banking facility to handle MoD's banking and financial needs.

The bank offers checking accounts, savings opportunities, and teller services to thousands of Soldiers in the local area.

MoD's banking expansion plan also includes the opening of additional banks at major military bases throughout the country.

"Our success during this three-year period (of preparation) was clearly due to the shared vision and engagement of the Iraqis and the MNSTC-I team," said Al-Alawi, an adviser from ITAM-MoD's business operations/banking.

He also praised the professionalism and dedication of his Iraqi partners.

Phantom Support



U.S. Army photo



First Lt. Danielle Pappas, military intelligence officer with the 541st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion and a member of Operation Back to School, passes out candy to children after a group photo during the group's second delivery of school supply kits November 1.



U.S. Army photo by 2nd Lt. William O. Horton II

Sgt. Ryan Gandolfo, a truck driver with the 396th Transportation Company, 260th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion out of Fort Stewart, Ga., and a Los Angeles native, guides a Palletized Load System truck through a serpentine course during a training day at Victory Base Complex, Iraq.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Rob Strain

Col. Larry Phelps, the commander of the 15th Sustainment Brigade, and Dr. Mohammad, a local doctor and friend of coalition forces, listen as member of the brigade staff introduce themselves during a dinner together Oct. 24 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

Spc. Jaime Velastegui, a commercial vendor pay technician and a Houston native, with Detachment A, 125th Financial Management Company, 96th Special Troops Battalion, 96th Sustainment Brigade, takes the oath of re-enlistment from 1st Lt. Charryse Bass, executive officer of the 208th Financial Management Company and a Brooklyn, N.Y., native. Velastegui reenlisted Oct. 12 for three years.



US Army photo by Staff Sgt. Terrence Hurt



US Army photo by Sgt. Matthew C. Cooley

A jack-o-lantern carved to look like the 15th Sustainment Brigade patch sits on a table Oct 30. at the 15th Special Troops Battalion, 15th Sus. Bde., headquarters at Contingency Operating Location Q-West.