

# The Expeditionary Times

*Proudly serving the finest Expeditionary service members throughout Iraq*

Vol. 3 Issue 3

December 9, 2009

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

## Holiday gifts



Soldiers give supplies to Taji children during holidays

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## Rock out



Brokedown Cadillac, Hooters calendar girls visit JBB

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## Born to run



Service members bring Minneapolis race to Iraq

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## Battalion commander leads from front

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Sgt. Maxey Parish, a gunner with 1st Platoon, B Company, 198th Combined Arms out of Greenwood, Miss., and a Rolling Fork, Miss., native, chats with Lt. Col. Kerry Goodman, commander of 2/198th CAB out of Senatobia, Miss., and a Meridian, Miss., native, atop Parish's Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle at the Convoy Readiness Center yard Nov. 25 at Contingency Operating Location Warrior, Iraq. Goodman accompanied the platoon on a convoy security mission Nov. 24 and Nov. 25 from Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq to Warrior.

## Soldiers give supplies to children of Iraqi contractors at JBB

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq - The beginning of a typical American school year demands a trip to the store to buy the essentials - pencils, crayons, notebooks, folders, pencil cases and backpacks.

In Iraq, however, those trips are not the norm and school children often go without.

In an effort to provide school supplies to the children of the Iraqi Container Repair Yard employees at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, members of the 80th Ordnance Battalion support operations office, out of



Capt. Jason Vivian, support operations officer with the 80th Ordnance Battalion and a South Fork, Pa., native, distributes backpacks to the employees of the Container Repair Yard Nov. 15 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Fort Lewis, Wash., spearheaded the collection of more than 140 backpacks full of school supplies.

Every day, more than 150 CRY workers travel to JBB

and work to restore damaged containers to seaworthy status, said Capt. Jason Vivian, transportation officer with the 80th Ord. Bn. SPO and a South Fork, Pa., native.

The CRY workers continue to assist in the U.S. military's goal of withdrawal from Iraq, he said.

In an effort to give back to the employees of the CRY and to positively impact the future of Iraq's younger generation, Vivian and Maj. Michelle Donahue, support operations officer with the 80th Ord. Bn. and a Washington native, coordinated the collection of donations.

"(As a) gesture of friendship for everything they do for (the US military) on a daily basis, we wanted to provide school supplies for the children to start their school year," said Vivian.

The families and friends of the 80th service members do-

SEE SUPPLY ON PAGE 4

## Balad Blotter

November 26 - December 5

### SEXUAL ASSAULT

At roughly 12 p.m. Nov. 30, an unknown individual entered a female KBR Inc., employee's room and assaulted her. The suspect remains at large but is believed to be at Joint Base Balad. The 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces (Police) Squadron in concert with Army Criminal Investigations Division continues a comprehensive investigation and search for the suspect.

The suspect is roughly 5 feet, 10 inches (1.6 meters) to 6 feet tall (1.82 meters), slender build, darker skinned, possibly of Indian/Pakistani origin, and believed to be in his early to mid 20s. The suspect most likely has fresh, recent scratch marks or cuts on his face and neck, along with injuries to one or both hands.

Anyone who sees this individual or has knowledge of the crime should contact Air Force Security Forces by dialing 911 or the tip line at DSN 443-6181. Contractors can contact the Base Fire Department cell phone at 07-800-036-0613. If you see anyone who matches the above description, security forces request that you do not attempt to make contact with the individual. Call the above numbers immediately.

Security forces do not believe the individual poses an immediate threat to others at this time, but recommend all JBB residents practice proactive force protection measures that include locking housing doors and vehicles, avoiding remote, dark and not well traveled areas or pathways. When in doubt, travel with a companion or notify a roommate of your plans and whereabouts.

\*Note from PMO: Personnel need to maintain positive control of their ID cards. There has been a sharp increase in Lost ID Forms, and these items are considered sensitive material. Leaders, please disseminate this information to your troops.

NIPR: 443-8602

SIPR: 241-1171

Email: PMOdesk@iraq.centcom.mil

# Mental Health: got spiritual strength?

By CAPT. STEVE BRASINGTON  
COMBAT STRESS CONTROL PSYCHIATRIST



**H**ow do you build your spirit? What do you do to give your spirit more endurance? Where can you go to practice lifting your spirit?

If you want to build stronger muscles, then you know what to do and where to go. Most likely, you go to the gym and imitate the lifters with big muscles. You would spend time picking up loads with greater and greater resistance. You might even train with a partner to get you motivated to push through hard or painful workouts. To succeed, you would select goals to reach as you gain strength and power.

Building spiritual strength requires proper form and consistency, much like body building.

A break in good form is tearing down another's spirit. Some examples might include provoking modest or very private individuals to get a reaction or messing with a shy person to put them in the spotlight.

Good form includes showing respect to everyone on the team, even Soldiers who do not fit in according to your ideas.

Of course, there are multiple ways a person could stand out. Perhaps the Soldier is 10 or 15 years older than other noncommissioned officers. Maybe, the Soldier comes from a different group. The Soldier simply may not share the same interests.

As a mental health professional, I have often encountered highly competent, intelligent individuals who perform their jobs well, but cite as their major stressors social stress from comrades. The people they should be able to trust with their lives are the ones who belittle or demean them.

How does tearing down a teammate build team spirit?

Peer influence is powerful. Will you follow the crowd or will you lead your own mind, regarding the attitudes you display and the words you speak?

Yes, you risk the pain of ostracism when you fail

to march with the group mocking or joking people considered the minority.

Sure, it is safer to take cover with the crowd but if you cannot stand up to so called friends, how will you stand up to our sworn enemies.

Yes, your efforts to protect the dignity of your team mate may be met with resistance from the majority. To get stronger, you need to stick with increasing resistance as you push forward.

Do you ensure minority members of the squad can trust you? Do you find ways to build trust by staying true to your word and keeping promises? How far are you willing to go to make it clear you are trustworthy? Do you own up to your mistakes or do you point the finger and shift the blame? When another person fails, do you devalue him or her?

I have seen new team members set up for failure. Do you set up your co-worker for success or failure? Are you willing to help somebody who is struggling and attracting criticism? Will you encourage them to persist through frustration and pain?

I hope your spirit is willing to risk involvement with somebody having a hard time. That person probably needs a friend before he or she needs a mental health professional.

Finding fault and garnering resentment is the easy way. That comes as naturally as cutting a work out short because you are tired.

Trading resentment for gratitude takes effort. What, I am supposed to be happy that I work with "stupid people?" you ask.

Exactly, you are going to grow in new ways when you accept the unwelcome and unexpected. You will leave old ways of thinking and force yourself to see through another person's eyes. Your vision of yourself and other people will improve.

Digesting new ideas and perspectives will strengthen your spirit.

Got a stuck spirit? See your Spiritual Ministry Team or Combat Stress Professional. We want to pump you up.

## EXPEDITIONARY TIMES

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15th Sustainment Brigade  
36th Sustainment Brigade  
90th Sustainment Brigade  
96th Sustainment Brigade  
41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team  
155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team  
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing  
194th Engineer Brigade

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keyword: Expeditionary Times

## 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 and a secondary mission of providing a means for units on Joint Base Balad to disseminate command information to their audiences.

# The Weekly Standard: Inspector General

By Lt. Col. Paul Bird  
13th ESC Detailed Inspector General



Soldiers often have misconceptions about the role of the inspector general and how the IG relates to them and their command.

Some Soldiers think the IG is a big stick they can use to threaten the chain of command when they do not like something.

That is not quite the way it works.

We will look at issues brought to our attention to determine if the command's actions were within regulatory guidelines.

We cannot do anything if the chain of command acted within the scope of Army regulations.

You may not always like the command's decision but you must accept it and drive on if it is not illegal, unethical or immoral.

The IG should almost never be the first stop, but rather the last stop when looking for help.

One of the first questions an IG will ask is; "have you

talked to your chain of command?"

Most issues brought to the IG can and should be resolved by unit leadership. Additionally, the IG will not work cases in which a regulation provides for procedures to address the complaint.

If you are the victim of theft, that is a matter for the chain of command and/or the military police, not the IG.

If you feel that you received an improper evaluation, you can ask for a commander's inquiry or use the Army Board of Corrections for Military Records.

There are several other complaints the IG will not work. For a complete list refer to Army Regulation 20-1, Inspector General Activities and Procedures.

The point is, the IG cannot solve all Soldier problems and issues. It is up to the Soldier to use the chain of command in an attempt to resolve the problem before bringing it to an IG. In cases in which we cannot assist, we can help find the resources to solve your problems.

In closing, be prepared to explain what you and the chain of command have done to resolve your problem prior to your IG visit. If the chain of command is unsuccessful, we will gladly help resolve the matter.

## Sexual Assault Response Coordinator

If someone you know has been sexually assaulted DO NOT:

- attempt to seek revenge.
- make jokes.
- be angry with your friend.
- force them to talk and/or take control from them.
- ask your friend how they could "let this happen."
- assume you understand how your friend feels.
- discuss the incident with others unless you have permission from your friend.

If someone you know has been sexually assaulted DO:

- be supportive and listen to them.
- communicate to your friend that he or she is not responsible for what happened.
- allow your friend to regain control by making his or her own decisions.

Call the Joint Base Balad sexual assault response coordinator at 443-7272 or contact via pager 443-9001, 159 for help. Army members should seek assistance with their unit victim advocate or deployed SARC; you may also call 433-7272 or 443-9001, 122/135 for assistance.

Joint Base Balad: DSN 433-2125  
Lt. Col. Reginald Howard  
(Command Inspector General)  
Maj. Scott Peters (Deputy)  
Master Sgt. Roy Thacker (NCOIC)  
Sgt. 1st Class Danilo Egudin  
Sgt. 1st Class Javier Cruz  
Q-West (15th SB):  
DSN 827-6115  
Lt. Col. Kyle Peterson

Taji (96th SB/ 155 BCT):  
DSN 834-3079  
Lt. Col. Timothy Norton/  
Lt. Col. Paul Bird  
Adder/Tallil (36th SB/ 41 BCT):  
DSN 833-1710  
Lt. Col. Melanie Meier/  
Maj. Jeffrey Copek  
Al Asad (96th SB):  
DSN 440-7049  
Sgt. 1st Class Tamera Wynn

# Chaplain's Corner: happy holidays

By Capt. Carlos A. Molina  
49th Trans. Battalion Chaplain



I can't believe 2009 is almost gone. Better yet, that our deployment is almost done. This has been a wonderful year.

As a 49th Transportation Battalion family we have seen God's hand taking care of us. Even in the midst of tragedy, he has sustained us.

Every year I hear people make commitments and proclaim resolutions for the New Year. The problem with most of these heartfelt promises is that we assume because a new year is beginning, somehow it will magically transform and enable us to do things differently.

The reality is that magic has nothing to do with it. More often than not our

promises and good will fade away along with the emotions that prompted us to make our proclamation.

So, how should we approach the whole concept of New Year resolutions? First, we need to understand that it is good to commit to noble causes and to resolve to improve in every aspect of our lives. Second, make an honest review of your life. Is this how you want to continue living? What specific areas need desperate improving right away?

After you determine one or two significant areas of improvement, decide how to tackle the task. Understand sometimes what works for other people may not work for you. Be prepared for the journey. Any important or significant lifestyle change will be tough and will require constant monitoring.

The apostle Paul in his letter to the

Philippians described how he ran the marathon of life: first, he set his one priority. What is your priority for the rest of your life? Having many goals may sound good, but it will probably lead to distraction. Distracted people usually do not accomplish much, if anything at all. Focus on the one goal for your life right now and keep it in mind that it should fall in line and support the larger focus of your life.

Second, Paul decided to forget the past. You and I need to forget the past too. Your achievements, your failures, they are all gone. All that remains is that we take the lessons learned and move forward. We must not be held back by unwanted and unnecessary emotional baggage from our past.

Third, he strained forward to what is ahead. Single-mindedness of purpose

and forgetting the past are good but with those you do not move forward.

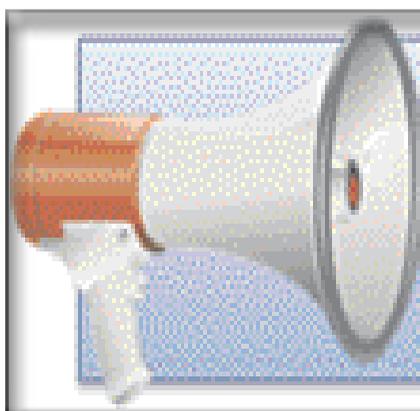
You must strain forward to reach your goal. As an athlete running toward the finish line, all of your energies and efforts should lean forward to achieve your goal.

So, as we approach this New Year, take time to consider where you are at and compare it to where you want to be.

Consider your past, save the lessons and discard the rest.

Then begin the race. At first you might only be able to walk, then trot and finally run. It's all good. As long as you are going in the right direction, consistency will be more important than speed.

It is my prayer that you will have a great New Year regardless of what happens in your life.



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

# JBB supports local children Home buyer tax credit

## SUPPLY FROM PAGE 1

denated the school supplies.

In four months, 140 backpacks arrived at JBB, were sorted, and packed in preparation for distribution Nov. 15, said Sgt. 1st Class Francis Cruz, noncommissioned officer in charge with the 80th Ord. Bn. SPO and a Long Branch, N.J., native.

"It was a good effort (toward) developing a friendship between the U.S. Army and Iraq," Cruz said.

Hashim Mahdi, owner of the Miran Company, which operates the CRY, said, "This is a great day of friendship between U.S. Soldiers and the Iraqis. We have crossed another bridge of friendship."

## JBB makes way for two incoming medical units

BY SGT. JOHN STIMAC  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Two transfer of authority ceremonies took place between the 8th and 51st Medical Logistics Companies, and the 64th and 248th Medical Detachment Companies, at Morale, Welfare and Recreation center east Nov. 27 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Capt. Stephen R. Spulick, commander of the 8th Med. Log. Co. and Biddeford, Maine, native, said he was grateful for all the Soldiers' hard work in making this deployment a success.

"They are the ones that execute the mission," said Spulick. "They have been asked to perform that mission in all conditions and that's what sets them apart from their peers."

Capt. Deepak Matthew, incoming commander with the 51st Med. Log. Co., said the Fort Bragg, N.C. based unit is responsible for medical logistic maintenance, class VIII medical supplies and optical fabrication.

"My Soldiers have trained hard; they are well prepared and they know it is game time and time for execution," he said.

Matthew reminded his Soldiers to remember their morals, ethics, leadership and discipline in the execution of their plan.

Lt. Col. David S. Galloway, commander of the outgoing 64th Med. Det., out of Kaiserslautern, Germany, said he

was proud of his Soldiers for their amazing initiative, despite being asked to do missions by themselves.

"Each of our Soldiers acts as an independent," said Galloway. "They each stepped up and stood forward in the midst of a huge drawdown, and we will continue to do the mission, but with less people."

The 64th passed the torch to the 248th Med. Det., also out of Fort Bragg, N.C.

Lt. Col. Kelley A. Mann, commander of the 248th, said he was excited to join a task force that already contains friends from past assignments, and even fellow units from Fort Bragg.

"All of my Soldiers are looking forward to renewing old acquaintances and forging new friendships as we serve together in the coming year," he said.

In his address, Mann said, "The Dragon Vets of the 248th are proud to serve under the 118th Multifunctional Medical Battalion. I believe you will find that we share the same dedication to duty and commitment to one another."

Mann, an Austell, Ga., native, said the relief in place/TOA process has been a very seamless transition.

"We could not have asked for a better reception or battle handoff at any of our locations in theater," he said. "I sincerely acknowledge the achievements during the past year and I know we have big shoes to fill."

Mann said he looks forward to the next year.

"The Dragon Vets are proud to serve with and for each of you, everyday," he said.

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



Last month, President Barack Obama signed the Worker, Homeownership, and Business Assistance Act of 2009, expanding last year's popular home buyer tax credit.

The new law applies to first-time home owners as well as current home owners.

The act defines a first-time home buyer as anyone who has not owned a principle residence in the three years prior to making the purchase. Home buyers must have a signed sales contract by April 30, 2010 and they have until June 30, 2010 to close the transaction.

The credit applies to those single home buyers whose annual income is no more than \$125,000 and to married home buyers whose combined annual income is no more than \$225,000.

As for current home owners, the law

allows a tax credit of up to \$6,500 when purchasing their next primary residence. However, they must have lived in their current residence for a consecutive five years of the last eight years.

The credit is applicable to homes purchased between Nov. 7 this year and April 30, 2010. Home buyers have until June 30, 2010 to close on the home. Current home owners' income limits are the same as first-time home buyers' income limits.

Lastly, the credit applies only to homes purchased for no more than \$800,000. To avoid paying the credit back, buyers must use the property as their primary residence for at least three years after the purchase. The credit can be claimed on 2009 tax forms, even for purchases in 2010 as long as an amended return is filed with the IRS.

This article is for informational purposes only. Prospective home buyers should seek legal advice from a real estate lawyer, tax attorney and/or accountant. More guidance on the law can be found at <http://www.federal-housingtaxcredit.com>.

**Team MRAP**  
"Operation Toy Soldier"

**All E-4's and below (all services) are invited to a Holiday Celebration hosted by Team MRAP. Lots of food, fun, and games in a festive atmosphere!**

**Where: MWR East**  
**When: December 25, 2009**  
**Time: 1500-1900**  
**POC : Jamie Hollis**  
**E-mail:**  
**James.Hollis@iraq.centcom.mil**

# SHOUT OUT!!!

Contact the Expeditionary Times for more information.

E-mail: [expeditionarytimes@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:expeditionarytimes@iraq.centcom.mil)

# Soldiers give supplies to Taji children during holidays

By Cpl. Richmond Barkemeyer  
96th Sust. Bde. Public Affairs

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Members of the 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), gave back to the children of Iraq Nov. 22 when they visited a Taji area school to distribute supply kits, as part of Operation: Back to School.

More than 40 members of the brigade, including Col. C.J. Read, commander of the 96th Sust. Bde. and a Layton, Utah, native, and Command Sgt. Maj. Vicki Briggs, the unit's senior enlisted adviser and a Roy, Utah, native, helped distribute the supplies to roughly 300 children.

To date, Soldiers at Camp Taji have distributed almost 5,000 kits to local children as part of the program. The kits are assembled using donations from churches, civic organizations and private citizens.

"Basically ever since the war started, Soldiers saw a need out there in the civilian populace with the Iraqis, to be able to give back," said Read. "They realized that we have so much and we come from a great nation that does have a lot."

Read said he sees the heavy involvement of the Iraqi Army as a positive sign

in the road toward giving the country back to the people of Iraq. IA Soldiers not only provided security for the event but handed supply kits out to the schoolchildren as well.

"It used to be that the American Soldier was the one up front and we'd be the ones handing (supplies) directly to the school kids," he said. "Now we're kind of in the background. We weren't the ones handing out the packets, the Iraqi Army were. We were in more of a supportive role, which is the way it should be. It was great to see that."

Capt. Jeffrey Colemere, trial counsel with the 96th Sust. Bde. and a Sandy, Utah, native, worked closely with the Iraqi Army.

"My job was to stay outside and make sure all the supplies were sorted, and, when they were done, the Iraqi Soldiers would carry them in and distribute them," he said. "The whole purpose of this exercise was to engender trust between the Iraqi Army and the Iraqi citizens, which hasn't always existed to my understanding."

Colemere said there were some initial communication problems between his team and the Iraqi soldiers, but once those were resolved, the operation went very smoothly.

"They did a fantastic job," he said.



U.S. Army photo by Maj. Robert Edwards

**Capt. Jeffrey Colemere, trial counsel with the 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Sandy, Utah, native, works with an Iraqi Soldier to prepare supply packs as part of Operation: Back to School. To date, Soldiers from Camp Taji have distributed nearly 5,000 packets to area schoolchildren.**

"They were working hard. We were working right along with them, shoulder to shoulder, and I think we made some very good friends."

Staff Sgt. Daniel Hanks, a paralegal with the 96th and a Saratoga Springs,

Utah, native, hung the nets on the school's soccer goals. Hanks worked with the school's soccer coach to fix the goals and said he struggled to bridge the language gap.

"It was basically gesturing and trying to talk through motions," he said. "But some things, like a smile or a wave, go through any language."

Hanks said he was also glad to have the chance to participate in the program.

"It's a great thing that we can do as Soldiers, helping to bring some good light into the lives of Iraqi citizens, especially children," he said. "They're the future of this country and I think it went a long way to building relations between the Iraqi Army and the citizens, and the United States and the citizens."

Colemere said the best part of the day was helping the local citizens.

"It was an opportunity to do good for some people who are really in need, and it was an opportunity to see the Iraqi Army grow and develop and gain trust in the eyes of their public," he said. "It was an opportunity for us as Soldiers of the 96th, to get off the base and interact with Iraqis in their community and let them know that we are here for their good."

Read said this gift to the community was especially significant during the holiday season.

"Honestly, you left a changed person," he said. "I can't think of a person here who wouldn't leave a changed individual. We have so much, living in America, and we have so much to be grateful for. We have plenty of everything, and then some. You can't help but feel good from trying to help."



U.S. Army photo by Maj. Robert Edwards

**An Iraqi student inspects the contents of his Operation: Back to School bag. Soldiers at Camp Taji have distributed nearly 5,000 packs to area students.**

# 50th Multi-Role Bridge Co. returns home

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The 50th Multi-Role Bridge Company returned home Dec. 1, after devoting a year to mobility support throughout Iraq.

The 50th MRBC, out of Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., spent the past year deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 09-11, repairing, maintaining and building bridges throughout northern Iraq.

They accomplished their work in partnership with the Iraqi Army Soldiers who will be responsible for continuing their mission.

While in Iraq, and under the command of Capt. John Davis, a Virginia Beach, Va., native, the unit conducted full spectrum bridge operations including inspections, maintenance, removal and emplacement of both tactical bridges, such as the Improved Ribbon Bridge, and line of communications bridges, such as the Mabey Johnson Float Bridge.

As one of two bridge units in Iraq, the 50th MRBC served as a Multi-National Corps – Iraq level asset.

When Gen. Merza, the Iraqi Chief of Engineers, saw the progress his engineers made with the 50th MRBC, he said he knew there was a need for a strategic bridge company within the Iraqi Army.

“Our initial partnership with the 5th Iraqi Army Field Engineer Regiment in April 2009 and then with the 4th IA FER in May of 2009, played a large role in the establishment of the Strategic Bridge Company,” said Davis. “We all feel honored to be a part of that process.”

A major contributor to the successful relationship of 50th and its Iraqi counterparts was Sgt. Mootaz Al-Sultani, an Iraq-born noncommissioned officer from Arlington, Texas.

“Al-Sultani is a role model for Iraqi Soldiers,” said Davis. “It’s as though he inspires them with his knowledge and leadership. He is an NCO in the U.S. Army and has now come back to help his country. Just as we have bridged gaps over the Tigris, Al-Sultani bridged the gap between us and

our Iraqi partners, making it possible to develop not just a professional relationship, but a friendship.”

Davis served two previous OIF deployments and said he attributes many of the accomplishments to his NCOs.

“Our success is at the staff sergeant level,” he said. “Many of my NCOs have prior deployments to Iraq and are already skilled in troop leading procedures. Therefore, I can entrust



First Sgt. Bobby Parlor, with the 1218th Transportation Company, 751st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Wellington, Fla., native, with Pfc. Bradley Newton, the flag bearer and a Tallahassee, Fla., native, holds a company formation prior to the start of the 1218th Trans. Co. combat patch ceremony Nov. 8 at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq.

them to operate independently.”

Members of the 4th and 5th IA FERs praised the 50th MRBC for their professionalism, duty and desire to train Iraqi Soldiers.

“It has been a true honor to have the 50th MRBC in our Joint Task Force,” said Lt. Col. Paul Huszar, commander of the 37th Engineer Battalion – Joint Task Force Eagle, out of Fort Bragg, N.C. “The relationship they established with the 4th and 5th IA FERs

paved the way for the rest of my commanders when we arrived in June.”

Spc. Jessica Ball, a St. Louis native, said she is proud of the units’ accomplishments during the deployment.

“We all have a much different outlook on Iraq and its people after having been able to work with them,” she said. “We had a lot of fun getting to learn more about their culture and we’re all truly proud of what we’ve accomplished.”

## Service members track travel at JBB terminals

BY SPC. MICHAEL V. CAMACHO  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Just as equipment and sensitive items are tracked for accountability, units with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) track and maintain accountability of personnel, both at Joint Base Balad and throughout Iraq every day.

The mission of the reception, replacement, return-to-duty, redeployment, and rest and recuperation team with the 487th Human Resource Company, 90th Special Troops Battalion, 90th Sustainment Brigade, 13th ESC is to track service members and civilian contractors in transit arriving at or departing from JBB, said Staff Sgt. William MacNeil, a noncommissioned officer in charge of the passenger terminal, R5 team with the 487th and a

Fayetteville, N.C., native.

The Tactical Personnel System and Deployed Theater Accountability System track the movement of personnel as they travel, said Staff Sgt. Tamara Oliver, noncommissioned officer in charge of the R5 team. The TPS is a simple form of tracking, showing the start and end point of the trip, while the DTAS is more detailed and states the service members’ locations and the status of their flights, she said.

“We’re set up to receive over 600 passengers and, in the process of receiving those 600 or more, we account for them in the DTAS and scan them in the TPS,” said Oliver, an Atlanta native. “Once we account for them in those systems, we check out their traveling plans.”

MacNeil said the team begins assisting service members the moment they arrive in country. That is when they receive a reception brief about Balad and information related to their travel.

When units arrive at JBB, the R5 coordinates with unit representatives to help with their transition into theater, he said.

While the R5 team in Balad deals heavily with the accountability of transient personnel, the team’s largest mission is service members’ leave, called rest and recuperation, or R and R, said MacNeil.

“For the R and R personnel traveling ... we process them through and we coordinate with the Air Force and the (KBR, Inc.) personnel that work on the out bound side,” he said. “We’re assisting with the process. It’s a joint effort working with those different agencies.”

The Air Force Movement Control Team at the Balad passenger terminal takes the names the R5 team provides to put on the flight manifest, said MacNeil. Personnel report to the passenger terminal with the dates given to them by their command. There they will be briefed and given additional travel in-

formation and times, he said.

As the responsible drawdown of U.S. troops and equipment from Iraq draws nearer, JBB has become a centralized hub for service members and civilian contractors traveling in and out of Iraq before they depart the country to Kuwait, said Oliver.

“Baghdad used to be the major hub for R and R but now they’re drawing that down so they can include (Multi-National Force – West) and (Multi-National Force – North) so we can merge together in order to get the passengers flowing quicker,” he said. “Baghdad could not hold all of the passengers coming in and out.”

Passengers fly in and out of the Catfish Air terminal at JBB as well, said Marine Lance Cpl. Jesse Mendez, a Catfish Air R5 team liaison with the 847th HRC and a Houston native.

“From here we make sure we rendezvous with them and get them to where they need to go,” he said.

# Counter-attack system unites Soldiers, Sailors

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. RYAN TWIST  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The counter – rocket, artillery and mortar system brings Navy and Army personnel together as they work to ensure the safety of the service members at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

First Sgt. Charles T. Ragsdale Jr., with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Air Defense Artillery out of Fort Bliss, Texas, 90th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), said the biggest obstacle Soldiers and Sailors had to overcome in their mission was understanding the differences between the two different branches.

"We've come together and built one cohesive team," said Ragsdale, an Atlanta native. "(I) couldn't have asked for a better set of Sailors to work with Soldiers."

He said the service members' mindsets varied initially, but they have come together to understand the mission.

The unit was formed late last summer at Fort Bliss, where the Navy began training with the Army prior to the de-



Fire Controlman 1st Class Jason M. Richards and Fire Controlman 1st Class Daniel L. Watts, both with the Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Air Defense Artillery out of Fort Bliss, Texas, 90th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), troubleshoot a counter – rocket, artillery and mortar system Dec. 1 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Watts, a Munford, Ala., native, and Richards, a San Diego native, are both part of a team that maintains one of the C-RAMs at JBB.

ployment, practicing live fire and combat skills as a team, he said.

Fire Controlman 1st Class Edward L. Lorts, with the HHB 3-3 ADA, C-RAM seven, and a Chicago native, said he learned how to use Navy equipment on

the ground in Iraq.

"I'm a technician, a maintainer," he said. "The weapon system has a lot of maintenance to make sure everything runs smoothly and my job is to ensure the maintenance gets completed."

Lorts said if a system goes down, he trouble shoots to get it back online in a timely manner.

"I feel our job is very important; ensuring the safety of everybody on this base is a key," he said. "With this equipment on this base, people can go about their daily jobs or routines, feeling a little bit safer that they don't have to worry about incoming mortars or other (indirect fire)."

Sgt. Brandon E. Breed, battle non-commissioned officer in the Engagement Operations Center with the HHB 3-3 ADA, and a Flint, Mich., native, said his team is the primary unit responsible for confirming possible threats. Other sections give warnings through the tower speakers, instructing service members to take defensive action when an IDF attack occurs, he said.

"I'm the person that acknowledges the incoming attack," he said.

Breed said the unit works to avoid complacency, because attacks are unpredictable and their alerts are imperative to the safety of service members at JBB.

Ragsdale said the Soldiers and Sailors are proud to come together for this mission.

"I think their favorite part of the job is just a sense that they have a piece in the protection of (JBB)," he said.

## Deployed Airmen participate in safety day

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron explosive ordnance disposal flight participated in the first in-theater Air Force EOD Safety Day Nov. 13 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

"It's important to have this safety day held here in-theater, since we're already in the mindset of operating in the deployed environment," said Master Sgt. William Sistler, 332nd EOD flight chief.

Since 2005, the Air Force EOD career field experienced 10 deaths and eight serious injuries. Fifty-four EOD Airmen have also received at least one Purple Heart.

Aimed to help prevent future loss of life and limb, the major command-wide event focused on compliance with standard operating procedures and examined the interests of the EOD career field.

"Our civil engineer EOD Airmen continue to conduct operations in a dynamic and ever-changing combat environment," said Lt. Gen. Loren Reno, Air Force deputy chief of staff for logistics, installations and mission

support, who proposed implementing the day in deployed locations. "The toll on the EOD field has been significant."

The day kicked off with speaking events concentrating on the challenges associated with the EOD career field.

Maj. David Linkh, 332nd Expeditionary Aerospace Medicine Squadron traumatic brain injury clinic director, spoke to the Airmen about common physical injuries and mental health concerns.

"There are multiple types of deployment stress (faced by EOD Airmen), with adjustment stress being the most common," said Linkh. "Right now, these deployments may initiate anxiety when routine operations must coincide with maintaining a constant state of readiness."

A representative from the chapel spoke to the group regarding the emotional and family difficulties faced in their occupation.

The group then participated in an open-forum discussion with members of 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing leadership. The Airmen discussed EOD culture and their various down-range responsibilities.

"Like most emergency management personnel or emergency responders, our job is to come out here and make



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

Tech. Sgt. Chip Fudala, 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron explosive ordnance disposal team leader, packs explosives prior to a controlled detonation Nov. 11 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. The EOD's primary mission is to respond to indirect fire attacks at JBB and dispose of unexploded ordnance.

sure that the area is safe for the rest of the base to operate," said Tech. Sgt. Michael Chamberlain, noncommissioned officer in charge of the flight. "We get a lot of (unexploded ordnance on JBB). So, we go out and either blow it up on spot or move it. We make it safe so other people can move around and continue with their job."

The eight-member EOD flight team wrapped up its day by sharing personal accounts from the field before partaking in down-time activities.

"The guys deserve a day to reflect – hit the reset button – and make sure we are all doing the right things for ourselves," said Sistler. "There are a lot of things that go on in this field that we may not talk about to anyone other than other EOD guys. Our experiences and memories about what we do may make interesting, exciting or sad stories to those outside the field, but to us, we live with them every day. We are just regular people, who do a special, unique mission."

# Force protection Airmen: another layer of armor in base defense

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron Force Protection unit, composed of Airmen from 60 different Air Force specialties, aids in defending the base against hostile actions inside the wire.

Force protection escorts are charged with monitoring and safeguarding local and third-country nationals who work at JBB – a task that, without FPs, would be performed by security forces Airmen.

"Our team mission is to make sure we have 100 percent accountability of third-country nationals and local nationals here," said Staff Sgt. Matthew Bickel, FP trainer. "This applies to restricted areas as well as other areas that might be sensitive. We make sure they're not gathering or transmitting critical information."

Bickel, from Ramstein Air Base, Germany, said the FPs provide a high standard of protection for all personnel at JBB.

The roughly 150 Airmen in the FP unit come from a variety of career backgrounds, including finance, radio communications and firefighting. Some find their deployed mission a stark contrast to the one associated with their specialty badge. For others, their home station



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

**Senior Airman Milton Whittaker and Airman 1st Class Midelyne Camille, 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer force protection escorts, check the underside of vehicles entering the gravel yard for prohibited items Nov. 19 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Airmen deployed as FP escorts protect resources while providing safety and security at JBB.**

experience assists them in their force-protection function.

"The different (Air Force specialty codes) that you see come into here all contribute something," said Airman 1st Class Hursel Johnson, from Ramstein AB. "With my normal job being fuels, I know the flight line really well. Working on it all day, I know the rules and how to drive on it. Therefore, while watching these guys and escorting them (on

the flight line), I make sure they drive correctly. By doing this, I maintain the security there."

Staff Sgt. Joseph Salazar, a force protection member from Luke Air Force Base, Ariz., said most Airmen slated to arrive in the force protection unit receive special training at home station. But, to prepare them for work at roughly 15 diverse on-base sites that change with time, the FPs receive more

training upon arriving at JBB.

"We aim to have their training completed within three days after getting off the plane," said Bickel. "They receive guidance in areas like vehicle and personnel searches, asp-baton training, weapons familiarization, and use of force."

Tech. Sgt. Steven Conard, 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron training noncommissioned officer in charge, helps ensure the new force protectors are also trained by the cops whose workload the FPs supplement.

"There are specific things cops do that force protection is also expected to do," said Conard. "We help facilitate them in getting that sort of training, so they can execute those duties without there being a lot more (security forces) badges on base."

Master Sgt. Cynthia Ramos, NCOIC of FP, said the training, hard work and responsibility of maintaining security downrange may be something her Airmen take and apply to their work at their stateside duty locations.

"I think what they do here might affect what they do back at home station," said Ramos, from Ramstein AB. "They are taking home what they know from their time here and what they learn here. A lot of the career fields don't have the opportunity to deploy. Having this time in-theater provides a lot of experience to take home and use. Being here, especially doing this job, allows them to really understand the military's mission."

## Memorial basketball game held in honor of fallen Soldier

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Soldiers with 1st Battalion, 137th Assault Helicopter, hosted an Army versus Air Force memorial basketball game and a game for JBB's old-timers Nov. 30 at the East Gym at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, in honor of Spc. Michael Cote, a UH-60 Black Hawk crew chief with A Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment, who died Sept. 19 when his UH-60 Black Hawk crashed at JBB.

The event raised more than \$4,000 in donations that will go to a college fund for Cote's infant daughter, Brooke Cote, said Spc. Kylie Perrine, a supply specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1/137th AHB.

"We wanted to do something in her name because all Cote ever talked about was being a dad," said Perrine, a Toledo, Ohio, native. "He would always

say 'I didn't go to college but my daughter will go to college. I didn't do this but she will do this.' So this was a way for us ... to help his dream be complete."

Perrine said roughly 300 service members and personnel attended the fundraiser, buying T-shirts and donating whatever cash they had, she said.

The focus of the event was the Army vs. Air Force game, said Sgt. Brandon Scott, event coordinator and supply sergeant with HHC, 1/137th AHB. There was also an "old school" basketball game, which was only open to patrons 35 years or older, he said.

The JBB community came together to see the basketball game, but more importantly to remember and honor Cote, said 1st Sgt. Gary Sanders, the senior noncommissioned officer with A Co., 1/52 AVN.

"It was much more than just a basketball game for JBB, it was a memorial," said Sanders, a Cincinnati native. "It was a way people ... brought something good out of a bad situation."

During halftime, a memorial presentation showed photos and video of

Cote, said Sanders.

There in the middle of a close, enthusiastic game, everyone showed quiet respect for their fallen comrade, he said.

"The whole audience went silent," he said. "You could drop a pin in that place and you would have heard it. Everybody stopped and started watching the screen."

Sanders said the trophy awarded to the winning Army team will be sent to Cote's wife, Ashlee Cote.

Members of the unit continue to stay in touch with her, he said.

Perrine said overall, this was an



**Service members at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, signed a memorial banner at an Army versus Air Force basketball game and memorial service in honor of Spc. Michael Cote, a UH-60 Black Hawk crew chief with A Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment.**

event that honored Cote's memory and his personality.

"He was loud, he was funny, he was full of life," she said. "With the cheering and the bantering ... and the morale – that was Mike. He was never down."

# Joint unit extends battle-space communication

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – As coalition convoys travel the roads of Iraq, C-130 Hercules aircraft circle overhead, listening to ground radio traffic, ready to respond if a friendly convoy makes an emergency transmission.

Keeping those C-130s flying is the mission of the Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors and Marines with the 777th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron, Joint Airborne Battle Staff Detachment. The unit provides immediate and reliable command, control and communication support for operational and strategic ground convoy movements.

"We provide the overhead security and are basically the 911 for the convoys out there, in case they need help," said Capt. Craig Barrington, JABS detachment commander. "Communication is the life blood of any operation. It can make the difference in operational success or failure."

Represented by all four Defense Department service branches, the four- or five-member aircrews simultaneously listen to five radio channels, identifying calls for assistance. When required, the teams transmit voice communications from the convoys in need to the appropriate ground stations.

"We are here to provide communication links between convoys and their respective headquarters," said Barrington. "This is accomplished through radio relay, significant event reporting and, if needed, the ability to react to life-threatening situations."

While embodying the "one-team, one-fight" mantra, each military branch contributes differently to the mission – with the Air Force and Navy filling most



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

Service members of the 777th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron joint airborne battle staff detachment prepare for a mission on a C-130 Hercules Nov. 24 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. The JABS is a joint operation focused on providing airborne communications support to ground forces.

of the leadership positions.

"The Air Force typically provides the aircrew experience, communications technicians and officer leadership for the detachment," said Air Force Maj. Brian Neff, former Multinational Corps – Iraq JABS commander. "The Navy provides a wealth of communication experience, as well as the enlisted leadership. The Army and Marines both offer a unique experience, as many have previously deployed as (communications) operators in convoys, and now they are deployed in support of this mission."

Knowing what their counterparts on the ground are going through gives some Soldiers and Marines with the 777th a special dedication to the job.

"I take the job seriously, knowing

that I was on the other end before," said Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Gene Gibbs, a communications operator and Charleston, S.C., native. "I believe my experience supplies me with a greater dedication to duty. When we get a phone call from a Soldier or any coalition force on the ground, I treat it as if I'm on the ground."

While the crew members relate to their comrades below, they appreciate the value of the JABS mission.

"I know (ground convoys) can be nerve-wracking at times," said Sgt. Michael Wisdom, a communications operator deployed from Fort Hood, Texas. "I've been on the road but never in a situation where I've needed life support. But knowing that this team could

provide emergency relief like that at a moment's notice is the highlight of the job."

Lt. Col. Sean Bordenave, 777th EAS commander, said the constant flow of 13-hour, dusk-till-dawn missions could not happen without the successful assimilation of the difference service branches and their specialties.

"From the perspective of a commander, the thing I've found absolutely unique here is the teamwork," Bordenave said. "From the maintenance team generating the aircraft and working those last-minute maintenance issues, to the air battle staff and crew getting prepped for and flying some very long missions -- it is absolutely phenomenal."

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# Suicide intervention training aids JBB chaplains, assistants

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. RYAN TWIST  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Soldiers practiced conversing with suicidal Warfighters in mock scenarios during suicide intervention training Dec. 1 through Dec. 4 at Joint Base

Balad, Iraq.

The 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), out of Fort Hood, Texas, held a 13th ESC Resiliency Counseling Training Conference for chaplains and chaplain assistants, to educate unit ministry teams in applied suicide intervention skills training and warrior/chaplain resiliency training, said Master Sgt. Michael I. Bair, the command chaplain noncommissioned officer in charge with the 13th ESC.

“We brought all the chaplains and chaplain assistants in from all across Iraq, so that we can give them a little bit of downtime,” said Bair, a Fredericksburg, Va., native. “During the downtime ... (we) give them some tools to put into their tool chest, to help them be more resilient and help their Soldiers do the same.

“I provide mentoring training for all the chaplains and the assistants spread all across the country.”

Bair said sometimes chaplains can forget to slow down here in the Iraqi theater.

“Chaplains can’t forget that they can’t go 100 mph all the time because we’re in this for the long haul,” he said. “This isn’t a sprint.”

Lt. Col. Roy T. Walker, command chaplain with the 13th ESC and an Elizabethtown, Ky., native, said chaplains work long hours to help Soldiers and often forget to care for themselves.

“We want to give (them) the tools to recognize when they’re burning out,” he said. “We want to give them tools to also recognize when others are burning out.”

The break from the daily grind served as a first step in these Soldiers’ suicide intervention training, said Walker.

ASIST is one of the leading forms of suicide intervention, he said.

“We want to make sure that everyone here recognizes signs and symptoms,” said Walker. “We don’t want to assume



**Capt. Kerstin L. Hedlund, a chaplain, and Sgt. Matthew F. Carpenter, a chaplain assistant, both with the 90th Sustainment Brigade out of Little Rock, Ark., 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), listen and react to a practice exercise during the Resiliency Counseling Training Conference at Provider Chapel Dec. 1 through Dec. 4 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Hedlund, a Fort Worth, Texas, native, and Carpenter, a Portales, N.M., native, attended the training designed to teach all 13th ESC ministry teams applied suicide intervention skills training and warrior/chaplain resiliency training.**

that we all have some historical knowledge because we’re made up of Guard, Reserve and (active-duty Soldiers). What one of us may have had, the others may have not.”

Walker said the 13th ESC commander requires all chaplains and chaplain assistants to receive T2, the most basic level of training, to help them recognize signs and symptoms of suicidal service members and know when and how to intervene. The next level of training, T4, includes training the trainer, allowing the chaplains or chaplain assistants to spread their knowledge about suicide prevention, he said.

In the final level, chaplains and chaplain assistants become master trainers – hosting seminars and workshops.

Walker said the chaplains and chaplain assistants have collaborated with the mental health community to help

Soldiers. Soldiers can come to chaplains and chaplain assistants with confidential issues and those issues will remain private unless Soldiers pose a threat to themselves or someone else, he said.

For clinical issues, Soldiers are referred to the Combat Stress Control.

The chaplains and chaplain assistants learn during the ASIST training when to have Soldiers seek help or when those Soldiers need someone to listen, or give a little advice, said Walker.

“We learn the training and we take it back to our units,” he said.

Lt. Col. James H. Finn, a chaplain with the 118th Multifunction Medical Battalion out of Newington, Conn., said the group gained camaraderie in addition to resilience from this training.

“It helps us get to know the other chaplains that are out in the field, in different areas where our Soldiers might

be,” he said. “So we can trust one another and network together as teams.”

Finn said networking among ministry teams helps Soldiers spread knowledge about intra-theater issues.

“I think the most important thing is for people to trust their chaplains and trust their leadership,” he said. “If they don’t feel confident in their leadership, that is the time to go and talk to either a chaplain, or combat stress or somebody else you can trust.

“That’s the most important thing from all levels, general down to the private, (is the) need to communicate. If we’re not communicating, then we’re affecting our own mission and impacting the Soldiers around us. If one Soldier speaks out and they’re having problems, maybe another Soldier is thinking about hurting themselves or hurting somebody else.”

**13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)**

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# Fly away security: have weapons, will travel

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Composed of a specially selected group of 15 Airmen, the 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron fly-away security unit faces conditions much different from most of its colleagues.

In groups of two or three on C-130 Hercules aircraft, the FAS teams conduct their mission to provide security for the aircraft and crews of the 777th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron.

"We supply security for the aircraft itself, as well as provide security for the crew and everybody on there," said Staff Sgt. Christopher Amor, with the 332nd ESFS. "Without the crew, the resource wouldn't be able to take off."

Each team of cops provides either flight-deck denial or ground security.

Flight-deck denial missions coincide with the transfer of distinguished visitors and personnel under control. The locked-and-loaded law enforcers are responsible for ensuring no unauthorized individuals enter the flight deck of the aircraft.

The Airmen post themselves strategically inside the aircraft, while maintaining communication with one another during flight to maintain vigilance over the passengers, said Staff Sgt. Rafeal Strother, a FAS team leader, from Holloman Air Force Base, N.M.

"We're the blocking force between



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

Staff Sgt. Rafeal Strother, Staff Sgt. Chris Amor and Senior Airman Bryan Malia, 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron fly-away security team members, board a C-130 Hercules aircraft prior to departure on a mission Nov. 13 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. The FAS team provides ground security, resources and crewmembers to neutralize possible threats to U.S. aircraft at airfields throughout the area of responsibility.

any hostile threat that has made it on the aircraft," said Strother. "No one approaches the flight deck without prior approval from the aircraft commander."

The ground security mission differs from the FDD tasking.

When the plane is slated to land in areas considered unsecure by Air Mobility Division, the duo or trio provides protection while it is on the ground. Their destinations include roughly 10 locations within the U.S. Central Command area of operations.

Scanning the surrounding area for immediate threats, the Airmen conduct airfield security assessments while de-

nying unauthorized entry into the aircraft.

"If the crew notices something out of the ordinary or something seems off, we investigate," said Strother, a Shawsville, Va., native. "And if it poses a hostile threat or hostile fire is received, we engage."

Knowing their tail is covered allows the aircrew to conduct its mission more effectively.

"Having the fly-away security team on board definitely makes it easier when at some austere environments (where) a person wouldn't want to stay the night," said Capt. Brent Beck, C-130 pilot and aircraft commander. "We've

had to do that before. We've broken down in places where we've needed to have the FAST work overnight. It definitely makes (the aircrew's) job easier because aircraft security is one thing you have to worry about."

Security is not the only way the FAS teams contribute; when the mission allows, the security forces members also lend their muscle to helping the crew with miscellaneous tasks.

"They do an excellent job of helping out the loadmasters in the back, reconfiguring the airplane and keeping it clean," said Beck.

And when they come back, they know they need to be ready for another flight soon.

"These guys work their backsides off," said Tech. Sgt. Heather Huckins, FAS coordinator. "There are times they have had to be ready to be out to the aircraft within 15 minutes of being notified. They don't break deadline."

Always on standby to defend the aircraft crew and resources against hostile forces, the team members understand and accept the inherent threat of flying into potentially unsafe areas, Strother said.

"We came into this career field knowing that we may have to put ourselves in harm's way to protect others," said Strother. "That's essentially what we're here for. Our motto is Defensor Fortis – Defender of the Force. We know taking on the responsibility of securing the plane, there may come a time when we have to put our lives on the line. But, it's part of the job and we gladly accept it."

## Unit ministry team offers spiritual feeding stations

BY SPC. LARRY D. WESLEY JR.  
264TH CSSB

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION SPEICHER, Iraq – The 264th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) unit ministry team at Contingency Operating Location Speicher, Iraq, offers constructive ways for troops to cope with life issues and remain resilient during adversity.

The team created spiritual feeding stations – bookshelves built by Sgt. Douglas Carroll, a light-wheel vehicle mechanic and a Sanford, N.C., native, and filled with Christian religious materials – placed in common areas inside each unit, said Lt. Col. Steven Debusk, the 264th CSSB commander.

The material serves as an opportunity to reach the diverse needs of Soldiers, said Capt. Myron Johnson, the battalion's chaplain. Johnson said he supports spiritual fitness throughout the 264th, by making these resources available to help Soldiers through both professional and personal issues.

Staff Sgt. Silkia E. Ramos, a human resources specialist with the 724th Transportation Company and a Clinton, Mich., native, refers to the station located near the entrance of her company headquarters as the "spiritual bookcase." These bookcases offers a number of different Christian books and handouts, including Bibles and audio players loaded with sermons, said Ramos.

Johnson said he believes the spiritual feeding stations serve as an additional method of reaching Soldiers.

"These bookshelves in the company areas make the inspirational material more accessible to the Soldiers," he said. "When the materials are placed in an area where Soldiers frequent, they are more likely to use them."

Ramos echoed Johnson's sentiments. "Considering the environment we are in and the stress that comes along with it, the spiritual guidance from our battalion chaplain and assistant, including the literature and audio players, mean a great deal to Soldiers who often practice their faith and seek spiritual growth," she said.

Sgt. Jannette Calderon, a human resources specialist with the 2025th Transportation Company, refers to the spiritu-



U.S. Army photo by Capt. Myron Johnson

Staff Sgt. Silkia E. Ramos, a human resources specialist with the 724th Transportation Company and a Clifton, Mich., native, previews a book at her unit's spiritual feeding station.

al feeding stations as the spiritual feeding table.

"There are many Soldiers who do not have easy access to spiritual feeding material, due to the current operational tempo and frequency of missions," said Calderon, a Jacksonville, Ala., native. "Soldiers appreciate good reading material to use during down time and during missions.

"Some Soldiers will not go to a chapel but if the material is there, they will pick it up and read it. Having a spiritual feeding table in our (tactical operations center) gives Soldiers an opportunity to get resources at any time.

"Many Soldiers have thanked me for having materials available to them at all times," she said.

# Battalion command

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq — The commander of a Mississippi Army National Guard battalion accompanied his Soldiers on a convoy security mission Nov. 24 and 25 from Contingency Operating Location Q-West to Contingency Operating Location Warrior, Iraq.

Lt. Col. Kerry Goodman, commander of 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms out of Senatobia, Miss., and a Meridian, Miss., native, used his own truck and crew to roll with members of 1st Platoon, B Company, 2/198th CAB out of Greenwood, Miss.

Goodman said he regularly joins his convoy security missions to supervise, to improve his battlespace awareness and to help him see it from his Soldiers' perspectives.

"A leader has got to go with the Soldiers to make sure they are doing what they are supposed to be doing," he said, "but my main reason for joining missions is to be out there with my Soldiers and experience what they experience, and understand what issues they are having."

Goodman's presence raised morale, said Staff Sgt. Robert E. Cullom, a squad leader and, during this mission, a scout truck commander.

"We like to see commanders out here with us," said Cullom, a Flowood, Miss., native. "Having the battalion commander take time to be here definitely helps morale. It gains our trust and respect."

Sgt. John F. Diviney,

a gunner serving as noncommissioned officer in charge of Goodman's vehicle crew and a Spokane, Wash., native, said he agrees the time Goodman spends with the troops is good for morale and builds trust.

"I've known battalion commanders that hardly ever went out the wire," said Diviney. "You have to respect commanders who get out there with the troops, and Lt. Col. Goodman goes out a lot. When he's talking to the Soldiers, you can tell he understands enlisted life and the Soldiers can tell."

Goodman said every leader is either a good or a bad example to the troops.

"One of the most valuable lessons I ever learned about leadership I learned from a bad platoon sergeant," he said. "He was the worst leader I ever saw. He was never around for us. He was overweight. He was not tactically or technically proficient. I was young and could have learned the wrong lessons but, instead, I learned what not to do from his bad example. I learned the importance of leading by example."

Another benefit of being with the Soldiers is that it allows the commander to recognize outstanding performance, said Goodman.

"If I see something that deserves recognition, I have the privilege of giving an impact award," Goodman told his assembled Soldiers before departing Warrior for his return trip to Q-West.

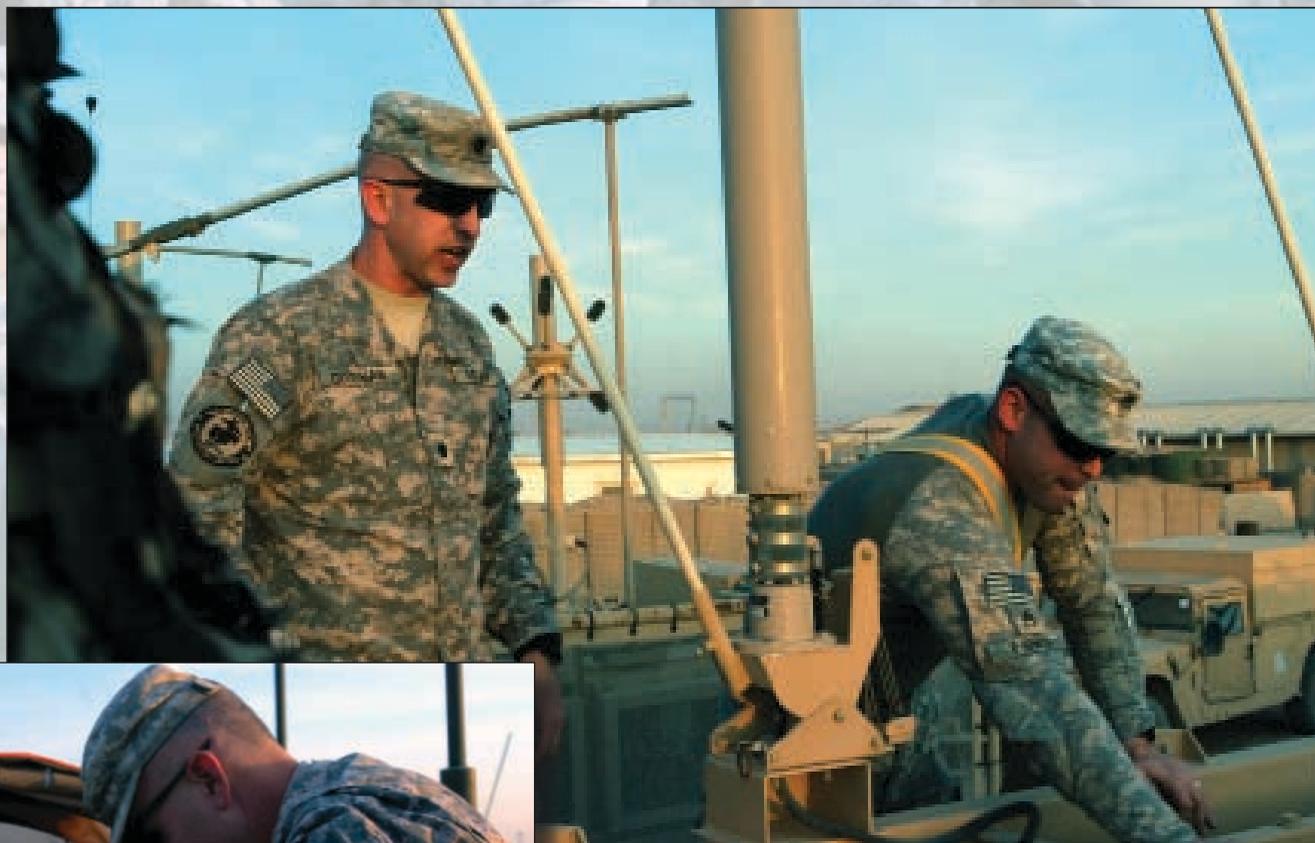
Goodman bestowed two Army Achievement Medals, one to Cullom and another to Staff Sgt. Jonathan A. Parks, a scout truck commander from Grenada, Miss.

"These NCOs identified a possible improvised explosive device and did an outstanding job of dealing with it," said Goodman, during the brief Nov. 25 ceremony in the COL Warrior Central Receiving and Shipping Point yard. "They established security in the area, radioed a detailed report and requested (explosives ordnance disposal) support and air cover. When the EOD and air cover arrived, Staff Sgt. Parks and Staff Sgt. Cullom played key roles in coordinating that support. They were vigilant and professional. They did nothing less than what I expect. Even though the IED turned out to be a false alarm, they did the right thing, and this was an excellent experience for the entire convoy."

Cullom said that he was surprised and honored by the recognition.

"I was actually feeling down about the whole incident," he said. "I felt like I wasted the convoy's time. I even thought I might get some flack because it turned out not to be an IED."

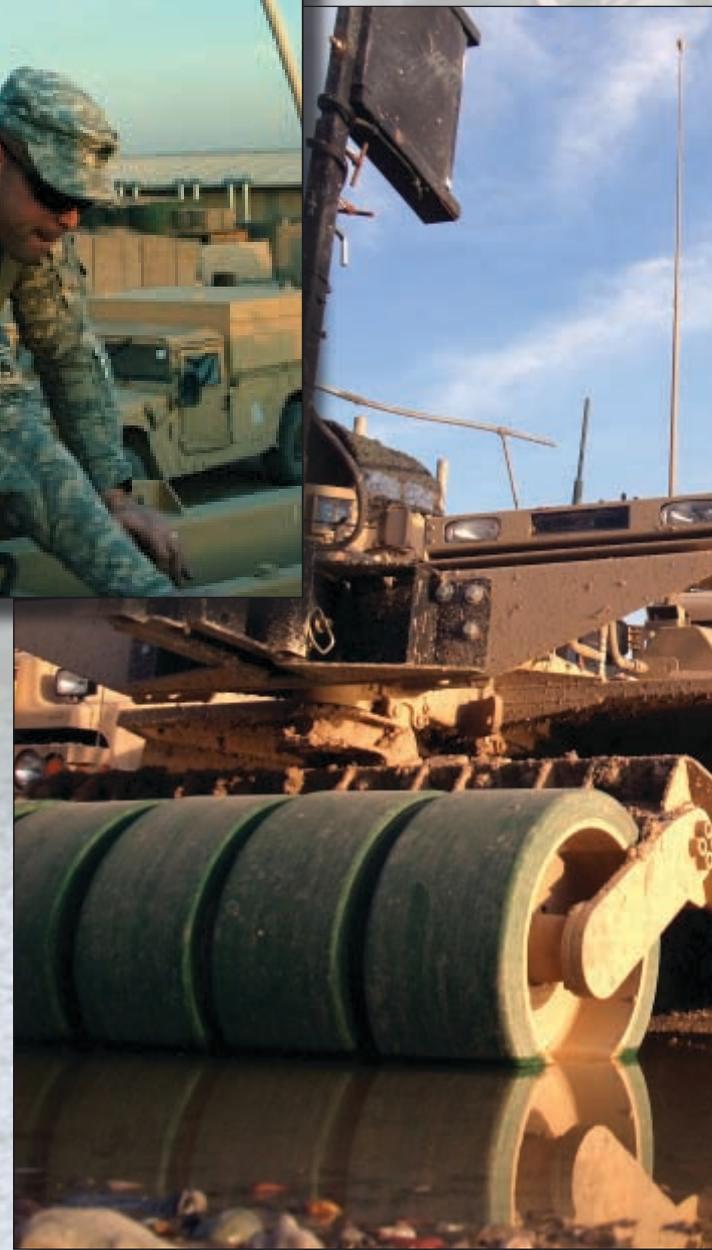
The recognition



Lt. Col. Kerry Goodman (left), commander of 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms out of Senatobia, Miss., and a Meridian, Miss., native, and Staff Sgt. Jonathan A. Parks, scout truck commander with B Company, 2/198th CAB out of Greenwood, Miss., and a Grenada, Miss., native, examine the antenna mount on the hood of Parks' Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle at the Convoy Readiness Center yard Nov. 25 at Contingency Operating Location Warrior, Iraq.



Sgt. Maxy Parish, a gunner with 1st Platoon, B Company, 198th Combined Arms out of Greenwood, Miss., and a Rolling Fork, Miss., native, chats with Lt. Col. Kerry Goodman, commander of 2/198th CAB out of Senatobia, Miss., and a Meridian, Miss., native, atop Parish's Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle at the Convoy Readiness Center yard Nov. 25 at Contingency Operating Location Warrior, Iraq. Goodman accompanied the platoon on a convoy security mission Nov. 24 and 25 from Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq to Warrior.



# er leads from front

pleased Cullom's driver, Pfc. Charles E. Hall, III.

"I was clapping the loudest," said Hall, a native of Sarah, Miss. "I was glad that the scouts got recognized. We do the job up front, and we don't get a lot of notice. Them getting awards is like all of us scouts getting awards."

Awarding outstanding achievement raised morale but, simply by being out with the Soldiers, Goodman earned a greater trust, said Sgt. Joseph R. Schultz, an assistant convoy commander and Minneapolis native.

"When commanders come out with us, they make better decisions because they gain a first-hand understanding of the situation," said Schultz. "Soldiers feel uncomfortable with leaders who make decisions about our missions and lives from behind a desk. If you're a leader, you should never ask somebody to do something you're not willing to do yourself."

Sgt. Edward V. Lee, a truck commander and a Sunflower, Miss., native, said much the same.

"It's definitely motivating to have the battalion commander out here with us," said Lee. "He's experiencing what we do every day, instead of staying in an office. If we have something to say about a mission, he will understand our point because he's been out here with us."

Goodman performed well as a truck commander and team member during the mission, said Spc. Michael A. Boucher, a driver.

"It's good to have the battalion commander out there," said Boucher, a Batesville, Miss., native. "And he wasn't just along for the ride. He did a good job with his vehicle and with passing information.

I could tell he knew what he was doing."

Goodman said he feels a deep sense of responsibility for the welfare of his Soldiers.

"As a commander, I try to do what's right for everybody," he said. "My number one goal is to accomplish the mission and take care of these Soldiers, to get them all home. Before we left Mississippi, I made a promise to the families that I would be there for their Soldiers, that I would take the same risks."



Pfc. Derrell A. Pittman, a gun truck driver and a Greenville, Miss., native, performs preventative maintenance, checks and services on his Caimen version of the Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle. Pittman belongs to 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms out of Senatobia, Miss.

Spc. Todd D. Simpson (standing), a gun truck driver and a Cleveland, Miss., native, speaks with Pfc. Charles E. Hall, III, a gun truck driver standing in the gunner's hatch of his Caimen version of the Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle. Both are members of 1st Platoon, B Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms out of Greenwood, Miss.



Reflected in an early winter puddle is the Self-Protection Adaptive Roller Kit, designed to absorb the damage of improvised explosive devices and shield the vehicle and crew, attached to a Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle's front. In the right distance are the gun trucks of 1st Platoon, B Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms out of Greenwood, Miss., assembled in the Convoy Readiness Center yard Nov. 25 at Contingency Operating Location Warrior, Iraq.

# Brokedown Cadillac, Hooters calendar girls visit JBB

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
SGT. JOHN STIMAC  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The country music band Brokedown Cadillac and six Hooters calendar girls treated service members at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, to a Thanksgiving celebration Nov. 25 at Morale, Welfare and Recreation center east.

Corri English, lead singer of Brokedown Cadillac and an Atlanta native, said the group is on a 10-day tour that started in Kuwait, with their remaining shows in Iraq.

“I have tons of family in the military; my brother-in-law is currently in

the Navy, and some of the other band members have family in the military,” she said. “We wanted to come here and say thank you, and what better time to come than Thanksgiving?”

English said this was her first time in Iraq and she was a little nervous about coming.

“I didn’t know what to expect when I got here,” she said. “We were really well taken care of and we were all impressed with the morale and positive attitudes of all the men and women. It was fun to be a part of that.”

Maj. Anthony Alfydi, the knowledge manger officer in charge with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a San Francisco native, said he believed it was terrific the group come so far to spend their Thanksgiv-



Service members dance with Hooters calendar girls as country music band Brokedown Cadillac performs at Morale, Welfare and Recreation center east Nov. 25 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. JBB was one of 10 stops on their tour throughout Kuwait and Iraq.



Service members stand in line to get autographs from Hooters calendar girls at Morale, Welfare, and Recreation center east Nov. 25 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. The women were in for a 10-day tour with country group Brokedown Cadillac.

ing holiday with service members.

“This is great for morale,” said Alfydi. “It’s good to have a break from the daily grind. It gives us a chance to get some autographs from the girls and the band, which are from my home state of California.”

Sara Hoots, a Hooters calendar girl and New Braunfels, Texas, native, said she was excited Hooters chose her for the Iraq tour.

“One of the reasons I was excited about coming was not only to meet the troops, but getting to tell them how

much we appreciate them back in the states,” she said.

Hoots said it was a blessing to be a part of the holiday with the service members.

“Gratitude isn’t even a word to describe what you all are doing over here,” she said. “We all miss you at home.”

Hoots also said she wanted to thank all the Soldiers in Iraq for keeping people safe back in the U.S.

“You guys are the real rock stars here,” she said.

## New England Patriots cheerleaders visit patriots in Iraq

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION BASRA, Iraq – Five of the New England Patriots cheerleaders spent Thanksgiving Day with the Soldiers at Contingency Operating Location Basra, Iraq.

Tracy Sormanti, director and choreographer of the New England Patriots cheerleaders, said they came to boost morale and show support for the troops in Iraq.

Sormanti, a Putnam, Conn., native, said the holidays can be a difficult time for deployed service members, and she could not think of a better time to come over and show her support.

“We were invited awhile back, and there is not a better time of year for us to come and support the troops than

during the holidays,” she said. “We know that the troops do so much for our country all year long and this is probably the time that they miss their families the most. It is a really small sacrifice for us to be away from our families for 10 days, when they are away from their families for a year or more at a time.”

Sormanti said she is no stranger to spending time overseas. This was the Patriots fourth military tour this year, and they have spent Thanksgiving with service members five out of the last six years.

“We try to do at least two (visits) a year, and this year our schedule worked out that we got invited four times and we were able to accept all four visits,” she said. “We are really lucky when we get these opportunities. Everyone says thank you to us for coming. We say thank you for the invitation and we meet so many incredible, amazing people.”

Spc. Gabriel B. Dauber, the yard manager with the 601st Movement

Control Team out of Santa Fe, N.M., met the cheerleaders during their visit to COL Basra.

“I think it is a really good ... morale (booster) for everybody, especially on Thanksgiving, for them to take the time out of their day to come out here and visit us,” said Dauber, an Albuquerque, N.M., native.

Sormanti said more visits are being planned for 2010, so the Patriots can continue to show their support for deployed Soldiers.

“We are really lucky,” she said. “We get to wear the red, white and blue and support the three time super bowl champions, the New England Patriots. We are on the sidelines at the exciting football games every Sunday, doing



Two of the visiting New England Patriots cheerleaders pose for a picture with Soldiers after sitting down for a traditional Thanksgiving meal Nov. 26, at dining facility two at Contingency Operating Location Basra, Iraq.

these great things that Americans get the chance to do. We are doing these great things because of all these people who are here today, in places like Iraq. People ... who are giving up the wonderful amenities that we have at home. Here we are, cheering for the Patriots, but it is because of the true patriots ... that we get to do those great things.”

# Wagonmasters at Q-West celebrate Thanksgiving

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq – Ice sculptures glistened next to massive 3-D cakes.

Thousands of Soldiers listened to Christmas music performed by a jazz band while feasting on turkey, ham, dressing and more.

Soldiers dressed as Native Americans and pilgrim settlers, and even a turkey roamed about taking pictures with others.

Thanksgiving had come to Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

The 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), operated a dining facility-hosted Thanksgiving dinner for U.S. and Iraqi service members and civilian contractors Nov. 26 at Q-West.

Sgt. Brenda Berger, battle desk non-commissioned officer for A Company, 106th Brigade Support Battalion and a Raleigh, Miss., native, said this was her second Thanksgiving in Iraq.

“I don’t particularly like it ... it’s just part of the deal,” she said.

Master Sgt. Vanessa Price, senior food management NCO in charge and a Shreveport, La., native, said they tried to provide a feeling of home.

“(The cooks) worked a lot of late hours,” she said. “A lot of them had only maybe one or two hours of sleep. It’s all worth it just to see the smiling faces.”



Sgt. 1st Class Aaron Finley, schools and training noncommissioned officer with the 15th Sustainment Brigade, serves Thanksgiving dinner in the dining facility Nov. 26 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq. It is traditional for senior noncommissioned officers and commissioned officers to serve their subordinates Thanksgiving dinner.

Berger said she appreciated their hard work.

“It’s a nice change from the everyday thing,” she said. “The ice sculptures are really nice. I never had ice sculptures at my Thanksgiving before.”

Spc. Willie Copeland, a B Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms convoy security driver and a Senatobia, Miss., native, said it was hard to

be away from family and friends during this time of year, but the cooks’ efforts to make Thanksgiving better for the Soldiers helped.

“They did an awesome job on the decorations,” Copeland said.

Pfc. Daniel Rivera, a Ceiba, Puerto Rico, native, and 15th Sust. Bde. cook, carved several ice sculptures, including a horse’s head like the one in the 15th’s patch, with help from Sgt. 1st

Class Jason Cecil, DFAC manager and a Nashville, Tenn., native.

“Thanksgiving is the Super Bowl for us cooks,” Rivera said. “You can sit down, eat a good meal and have good art made by the same cooks who cook your meals every day.”

Cpl. Joseph Williams, 15th cook and a Baton Rouge, La., native, said most of the preparation work was done by the civilian contractors at the DFAC.

“A lot of these people don’t get the recognition that they should,” Williams said. “They work real hard.”

Sixto Jimenez, head baker with the dining facility and a San Jose Del Monte, Philippines, native, made all 10 of the decorative cakes at the feast with assistance from his baking team, a process that took him five days in addition to his normal daily duties.

“I didn’t focus on that only,” he said. “If I have free time, I make one.”

Jimenez, a baker for U.S. forces in Iraq for four years, said he was excited to have so many people enjoy his work.

Roughly 3,000 pounds of meat, including 1,920 pounds of turkey, were cooked for the feast, Price said.

At the end of the meal, Berger said she could think of a long list of things to be thankful for.

“I’m thankful that in about 90 days I’ll be going home (and) our company has had no major injuries or deaths,” she said. “And the Saints have a perfect season so far.”

Copeland also said he had something to be thankful for.

“I’m thankful to be alive ... to enjoy Thanksgiving,” he said.

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or

--Select “PAO” from the JBB homepage

--Select “Provider Common” in the left hand column

# Country singer tips hat to troops

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq – Country music singer Aaron Tippin, a Pensacola, Fla., native, performed for and met with troops and civilian contractors at the Morale Welfare and Recreation tent Nov. 27 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

The concert at Q-West was one stop on the singer's Iraq "In Overdrive" tour, named after his latest album, marking the latest of several tours to the country.

"It's either seven or eight times," he said, unable to recall exactly how many times he toured in Iraq. "I come to see the guys and gals ... that's the greatest reward."

Tippin said performing for troops started his career.

"(This) gives me a chance to bring it home," he said.

Retired Marine Lt. Col. Bill Cowan, a Fox News analyst and Sacramento, Calif., native, told a few jokes and praised the professionalism and performance of the young troops of today before introducing Tippin at the start of the show.

"You all are going to be the next great generation," he said.

He encouraged the Troops to serve again by running for public office when they leave the military.

Tippin played a number of his chart-topping songs and covers of other popular country songs. He also made use of a semitrailer horn, rigged to a portable air compressor via plastic pipes, for occasional humorous effect.

Spc. Jon Voelkel, a fueling special-

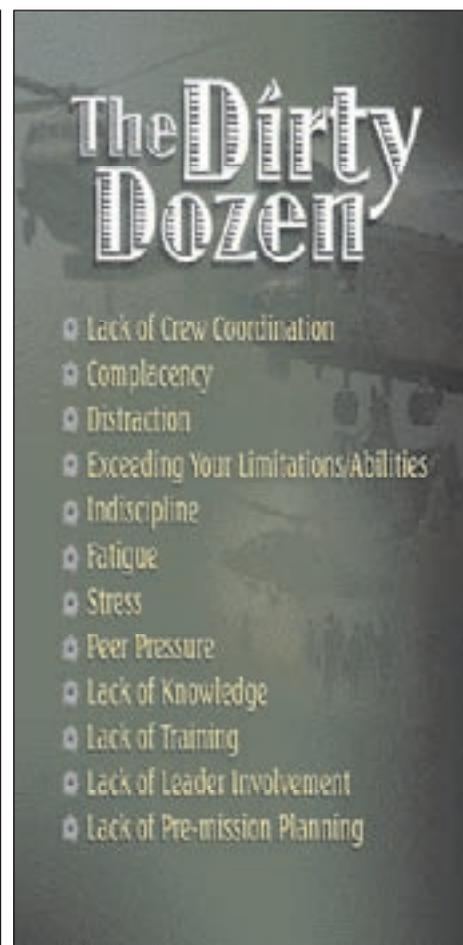


Country music singer Aaron Tippin, a Pensacola, Fla., native, sounds a semitrailer horn rigged to a portable air compressor at a concert for the troops at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation tent Nov. 27 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

ist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 15th Special Troops Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), was one of the Soldiers who

said he enjoyed the show.

"It's awesome," he said. "(It) got everybody together ... a big morale bonus. It takes the monotony from the everyday grind."



# Service members bring Minneapolis race to Iraq

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION BASRAH, Iraq – Service members and civilians braved the rain and mud to run in an Iraq rendition of the Twin Cities Marathon Nov. 28 at Contingency Operating Location Basrah, Iraq.

Capt. Jim Pereda, the effects executive officer with the 34th Infantry Division out of Rosemount, Minn., and one of the main organizers for the event, said roughly 100 runners participated in the 10-mile run and 49 runners completed the full marathon, which is held annually on a route leading from Minneapolis to St. Paul, Minn.

Running a marathon takes a lot of dedication, said Pereda, a Rodgers, Minn., native.

"It is one of those things you just got to have the goal to do it, I think," said Pereda. "I have run a lot of other things, I have done a lot of stuff, but it takes an awful lot of guts ... for that one."

Pereda said the safety of the runners, both medically and with location, was his primary concern in organizing the event. Quick reaction force teams, as well as water points stocked with Gatorade, water and food, were spread throughout the course to ensure the safety of the runners in all aspects, said Pereda.

Command Sgt. Maj. Elizabeth Shockley, with the 36th Sustainment Brigade out of Temple, Texas, and a Richardson, Texas, native, completed the full marathon.

Shockley said it was a good morale booster and an opportunity for the Sol-

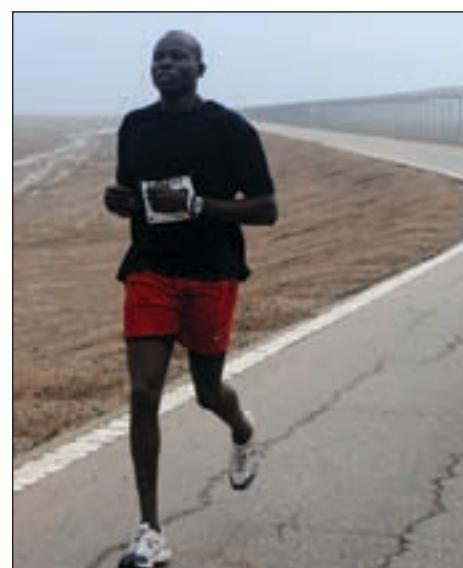
The rain eases as Mamai Isiah, a Kenya native, runs the last few miles of the race Nov. 28 at Contingency Operating Location Basrah, Iraq. Isiah finished the 26.2 mile run in 3 hours, 15 minutes, winning the Iraq rendition of the Twin Cities Marathon.

diers from Minnesota to connect.

"Granted not everyone is going to go out and run a marathon in their spare time," she said. "But, for those that like to, this is an additional perk that ties them back to that marathon that is held back home."

Shockley said she was impressed with her Soldiers' dedication and efforts during the run.

"I am just very proud of all the 36th Sustainment Brigade (Soldiers) that did the training," she said. "It is one thing to say they are going to do something, but (they actually woke) up at 3:30 a.m. and (started) getting ready for a 5 a.m. race during cold, rainy conditions. They didn't



have to do it, they did it because they wanted to. They had a personal goal of running either 10 miles, or 26.2 (miles), and they did it. I am very proud of them."

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN THE BATTLEFIELD WAS EVEN...  
THAT TIME HAS PASSED.

**THIRTEENTH**  
SUSTAINMENT COMMAND (EXPEDITIONARY)  
SUPPORT TODAY  PROVIDE TOMORROW

A PROVIDER OPERATION DIRECTED BY PROVIDER 6 IN COOPERATION WITH PROVIDER 7  
STARRING THE TROOPERS FEATURING THE NCOs AND A SPECIAL APPEARANCE BY THE OFFICERS  
PRODUCED BY THE FIRST SERGEANTS AND COMMANDERS AT ALL LEVELS BASED ON THE GRAPHIC HISTORY OF THE 13TH ESC  
MUSIC BY THE BAND ORIGINAL SCORE BY THE TROOPERS TELEPLAY BY THE STAFF WRITTEN BY COURAGE, VALOR AND HONOR  
FROM PROVIDER PICTURES and PHANTOM SUPPORT PRODUCTIONS

**R** RESTRICTED  
No one under 17

# Q-West celebrates Native American heritage

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
STAFF SGT. ROB STRAIN  
15TH SUST. BDE. PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq – Soldiers gathered to celebrate Native American Heritage Month at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Center Nov. 27 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.



The celebration, hosted by the 395th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), featured a poem written by Spc. Ashley Blake, a Yup'ik Eskimo dance performed by Sgt. Vernita Bunyan and a movie about modern Native Americans.

The event's guest speaker, 1st Lt. Gerald Halfhide, the services and supplies officer with the 395th CSSB, traced his Native American lineage back to the time of the pilgrims. He said members of his tribe were the natives who helped show the pilgrims how to live on the land, and in turn, were a part of the first Thanksgiving celebration.

"I'm proud to know my ancestors

were a part of the first Thanksgiving," he said.

Halfhide encouraged the Soldiers in the audience to learn the history, culture and philosophy of Native Americans, to help dispel stereotypes.

"No, we don't all live on reservations and we don't all want to open a casino," he joked.

Col. Larry Phelps, commander of the 15th Sust. Bde., said it was important for Soldiers to understand other cultures.

"There is a purpose to every movement (in the Eskimo dance)," he said, encouraging the audience to understand those movements."

Native Americans have not always been treated properly by the immigrants to their land, especially in regards to reservations, said Phelps.

"They were people who lived off the land and we sent them to where the land would not support them," he said. "It's our past. We can run from it, or learn from it."

Phelps said people need to learn from the mistakes in the past in order to make a better future.

He challenged the audience to take action, to help make this future.

"So, what are you going to do about all of this?" he asked.



Sgt. Vernita Bunyan, with the 395th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, demonstrates a Yup'ik Eskimo dance at the Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq, Morale, Welfare and Recreation building Nov. 27, as a part of the Q-West Native American Heritage Month celebration.

## DREAMCATCHER

By Ashley Blake

A Native American Heritage Month tribute

To be embraced by the arms of the wind  
Smiled upon by stars  
Small in contrast to skies deep and vast  
Rivers knowing and still  
Currents cutting and fast  
Leaving my simple reasoning in awe...  
Without a single flaw despite  
Human law  
So I plead you forgive mortal greed  
My mind is in need to know the story of your seed  
And footsteps that tread hear before mine  
The Indians, Romans, the African and Greek  
The wise royal sick young the blind and weak  
Guarded by the mothering of your hand  
Patient and kind  
Your beauty soothing to body  
Flooring to the mind  
Replenish what it is I think I know  
Marveled at your mysteries  
The roar of your skin rippling through mid-air  
I fancied riding the chill of your breath Imagined  
The sky your stare  
The trees dance not by chance  
Music is all I can hear  
Moving my soul to the rhythm of your aura  
My heart sways to shores on your skirt hem  
The moon forms pathways on your oceans  
I have yet  
To walk across  
We focus more on physical than mental  
Ignorance the expensive cost  
Your wrath whistles through the spirits of mankind  
I just see it as you reclaiming yourself

Cleansing your aura with rapids of wind fire and water  
Tsunamis hurricanes and such  
Things like this would be less surprising if we  
Had stayed spiritually in touch  
So I lay close in hope that I'll hear your song whispers through  
Dancing leaves  
I fancy myself a stone in your veins  
For they are streams  
Polished by the wisdom of what they have seen  
Grazed your bosoms in spirit  
Shared conversations with clouds  
I am thankful to be part of you  
We are one and I am proud  
Are flowers your laughter?  
I know that you are more than a resource  
A part of a universe abroad  
The sun wanted you far enough so you wouldn't see him marvel  
At the beauty of your harmony but close enough to bask in the warmth  
Of his fingertips  
The stars render you a spectacle watching you mature  
Jupiter protecting you from meteor sores  
I can appreciate the beauty I've witnessed in this dimension  
And the stories you've inspired  
Saga to explain the curve of your breasts  
Racing sunrise to see the dew in your hair  
Standing still to ride the chill of your breathe  
I wish to know your story  
So I listen...

Do you  
have a  
story  
idea?

Contact us  
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# Sudoku

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

Last week's answers

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

Level: Hard

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

# TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. What single name is more commonly applied to Holy Roman Emperor Charles the Great?
2. Who was on the cover of Time most often-Winston Churchill, FDR or Joseph Stalin?
3. What assassin's diary reveals that he changed his plans from kidnapping to murder the day before he did the deed?
4. What 10-year-old began earning his bad reputation by throwing puppies off the Kremlin walls in 1540?
5. What trials, beginning in 1945, spawned the phrase "I was only following orders?"

1. Charlemagne 2. Joseph Stalin 3. John Wilkes Booth's 4. Ivan the Terrible 5. The Nuremberg war crimes trials

## 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)

### Monday

1700 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

### Wednesday

1230 Provider Chapel

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## JB BALAD ACTIVITIES

<b>INDOOR POOL</b> Swim Lessons: Mon., Wed., - 6 p.m. Tue., Thu., Sat., - 6:30 p.m. Aqua Training: Tue., Thu., - 7:30 p.m., 8:30 p.m.	a.m., 5-6 p.m. Edge Weapons & Stick Fighting 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. Sunday- 5:45 a.m., 3 p.m. P90x: Monday- Saturday- 4:30 a.m., 4 p.m., 10 p.m. Soccer: Tue., Thu., - 8 p.m. Wednesday- 8 p.m. MACP Level 1: Friday- 8 p.m. 5 on 5 Basketball: Saturday- 8 p.m. <b>H6 RECREATION CENTER</b> Bingo: Sunday- 8 p.m. Texas	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. Dominos: Saturday- 8:30 p.m. Darts: Saturday- 8:30 p.m. <b>WEST REC- REATION CENTER</b> Green Bean Karaoke: Sun., Wed., 7:30pm 9-ball tourney: Monday- 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. 3 on 3 basketball tourney: Saturday- 7:30 p.m. 6 on 6 volleyball tourney: Friday- 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.
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## UPCOMING SPORTS ON AFN



### Thursday 12/10/09

NBA Wednesday: Chicago Bulls @ Atlanta Hawks, Live 3 a.m. AFN/sports  
 2009 SEC/Big East Invitational: Georgia vs. St. John's, Live 3 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 Big East/SEC Challenge: Kentucky vs. Connecticut , Live 5:30 a.m. AFN/sports

### Friday 12/11/09

Thursday Night Football: Pittsburgh Steelers @ Cleveland Browns, Live 4 a.m. AFN/sports  
 NBA on TNT: Boston Celtics @ Washington Wizards, Live 4 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 NBA on TNT: Orlando Magic @ Utah Jazz, Live 6:30 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 Big East/SEC Challenge: Syracuse vs. Florida, Live 4 p.m. AFN/sports

### Saturday 12/12/09

NBA Friday: Portland Trailblazers @ Cleveland Cavaliers, Live 4 a.m. AFN/sports  
 Oklahoma City Thunder @ Memphis Grizzlies, Live 4 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 Minnesota Timberwolves @ Los Angeles Lakers, Live 6:30 a.m. AFN/xtra

### Sunday 12/13/09

Marquette @ Wisconsin, Live 1 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 Indiana Pacers @ Washington Wizards, Live 3 a.m. AFN/sports  
 Southeastern Conference Basketball: Purdue @ Alabama, Live 5 a.m. AFN/prime atlantic  
 UFC 107: Penn vs Sanchez (FedEx Forum; Memphis, TN), Live 6 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 Wooden Classic: UCLA vs. Mississippi State (Honda Center; Anaheim, CA), Tape Delayed 9 a.m. AFN/xtra

### Monday 12/14/09

Cleveland Cavaliers @ Oklahoma City Thunder, Live 3 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 Sunday Night Football: Philadelphia Eagles @ New York Giants, Live 4:15 a.m. AFN/sports  
 San Antonio Spurs @ Los Angeles Lakers, Live 5 p.m. AFN/sports  
 UFC 107: Penn vs Sanchez (FedEx Forum; Memphis, TN), Tape Delayed 6 a.m. AFN/xtra

### Tuesday 12/15/09

NHL on VERSUS: Buffalo Sabres @ Montreal Canadiens, Live 3:30 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 Washington Wizards @ Los Angeles Clippers, Live 6:30 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 New Orleans Hornets @ Dallas Mavericks, Tape Delayed 11 a.m. AFN/sports

### Wednesday 12/16/09

NHL on VERSUS: Philadelphia Flyers @ Pittsburgh Penguins, Live 3 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 Los Angeles Lakers @ Chicago Bulls, Live 4 a.m. AFN/sports  
 Washington Capitals @ Colorado Avalanche, Live 5:30 a.m. AFN/xtra

# Arts & Entertainment

## 'New Moon' made to be mocked, pleases series lovers

BY SPC. BRANDY M. OXFORD  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



From the opening cut, "New Moon" knew its audience.

Bare chested boys and broken hearted Bella (Kristen Stewart) satisfied the true blue "Twilight" lovers while over the top moments – Jacob (Taylor Lautner) dramatically taking off his shirt, Bella and Edward (Robert Pattinson) slow motion running through the forest in flowing, white clothes – made the rest of the audience howl, cheer and laugh.

At the theater, I was surrounded by an audience, at least 50 percent male, laughing consistently, from the opening credits, introduced with dramatic music and a giant full moon, to the moment Dakota Fanning, all vamped out

as Jane, stepped into a shot.

The movie was based on the second novel in a teen lit series that combines "Sweet Valley Twins" with Anne Rice novels. It had a fetching story line but first time author Stephenie Meyer lacked the skill to earn the praise of most respected critics.

I volunteered to review "New Moon" because, in a week between semesters, I needed cheesy, light entertainment and read all four books: "Twilight," "New Moon," "Eclipse" and "Breaking Dawn." Although Meyer's writing irritated me, I shamefacedly hid the cover of each book because I could not stop until I knew what happened to Edward, Jacob and Bella.

Both movies, "Twilight" and "New Moon," struggled to portray Bella and Edward, and their relationship, appropriately because a large portion of the books relies on thoughts of the charac-

ters, not dialogue. Walking out of the theater, it was clear a lot of the audience did not understand the relationships between the characters or that Stewart's "bad acting" is actually Bella's awkward personality.

Despite the gap inherent between books and movies, "New Moon" did well to stick to the story line and portray the characters appropriately. While we'll see most of the deeper character development in the third movie, if it follows the book, "Twilight" and "New Moon" have not failed to portray each character true to the book's form.

Spinning, overhead camera shots and Bella remaining static in a rocking chair in her room as the seasons passed without Edward added a level of drama and effort I did not expect from the next "Harry Potter" phenomena.

The first movie redeemed itself a bit with a Claude Debussy classic, "Clare

de Lune," but the second movie's best musical moment relied heavily on the awkward elevator scene in which it was played. A soundtrack from this movie would be a mistake.

Although Edward was beloved in the books, Pattinson's sickeningly flat stomach failed to please the vocal audience, especially beside Lautner's tan, ridiculous 12-pack – revealed when he dramatically stripped off his shirt to dry Bella's bleeding forehead. The remainder of the wolf pack, however, rocked some serious baby fat, reminding every adult in the audience they were eyeballing high school boys.

So, Meyer followers, rest assured "New Moon" stuck to the storyline and is packed full of beautiful Bella, dramatic Edward and darling Jacob. Apprehensive dates and friends, this movie's mock-ability is high, so expect to laugh; you won't be alone.

## 'Swell Season' does it 'Once' again

BY SGT. KEITH S. VAN KLOMPENBERG  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



Glen Hansard and Markéta Irglová came to fame in 2007 after starring in the low-budget Irish film "Once," a modern-day musical

featuring their original music. Their song, "Falling Slowly," won the 2007 Academy Award for best original song.

I was fortunate enough to see these two perform in 2006 in Chicago, where they opened for Damien Rice. At the time, they were relatively unknown but I knew they were something special, so I text the name Swell Season to myself in the middle of the show as a reminder to buy the album.

To my surprise, "Swell Season" was not the name of the band at the time, but in fact the name of their debut album. Recently, the two have been referring to themselves by Swell Season rather than by their names, and their newest album, "Strict Joy," was released with this band name.

The first album revolved mostly around piano and acoustic guitar and was full of slow peaceful love songs with gorgeous harmonies. I remember once listening to the album on a rainy train ride through Illinois, trying to sleep. That is probably the perfect setting for such music.

"Swell Season" was a perfect album, until I heard the two perform Bob Dylan's "You Ain't Goin' Nowhere" on the

"I'm Not There" soundtrack. It was an incredible cover with a huge energy I didn't know the band was capable of. It made me feel like something was missing from "Swell Season," but with "Strict Joy" I think they have made up for it a bit.

Don't get me wrong, "Strict Joy" is still a rather slow, soft affair, but it has little extras that go a long way. The band makes use of more drums and organ this time and they also play more with harmonies and layered vocals than on the previous record. It feels a bit more modern this time around, in a good way.

Hansard is the main force behind Swell Season. He wrote most of the songs and takes lead on most of the vocals, too. His voice is fantastic when he sings soft and smooth, but I think the best mo-

ments are when the songs build and he starts to scream.

Irglová has a beautiful voice that stands well on its own but is best in harmony with Hansard. Their voices blend together wonderfully and it's hard to believe she is 20 years his junior. For the best example of this, listen to the end of "I Have Loved You Wrong." Though I prefer the Hansard-featured songs, Irglová's pieces break up the album nicely.

If you enjoyed the first Swell Season album, you won't be let down by "Strict Joy," though I think it's different enough to satisfy some who may have been a bit bored the first time around.

If you like Damien Rice or The Frames, Hansard's other band, check out "Strict Joy."

## PVT MURPHY



### Sustainer Reel Time Theater

#### Wednesday, Dec. 9

5 p.m. Cirque Du Freak:  
Vampire's Asst  
8 p.m. The Step Father

#### Sunday, Dec. 13

2 p.m. Armored  
5 p.m. Law Abiding Citizen  
8 p.m. Astro Boy

#### Thursday, Dec. 10

5 p.m. Old Dogs  
8 p.m. The Blind Side

#### Monday, Dec. 14

5 p.m. Astro Boy  
8 p.m. Saw VI

#### Friday, Dec. 11

2 p.m. Saw VI  
5 p.m. Law Abiding Citizen  
8:30 p.m. Armored

#### Tuesday, Dec. 15

5 p.m. Armored  
8 p.m. Law Abiding Citizen

#### Saturday, Dec. 12

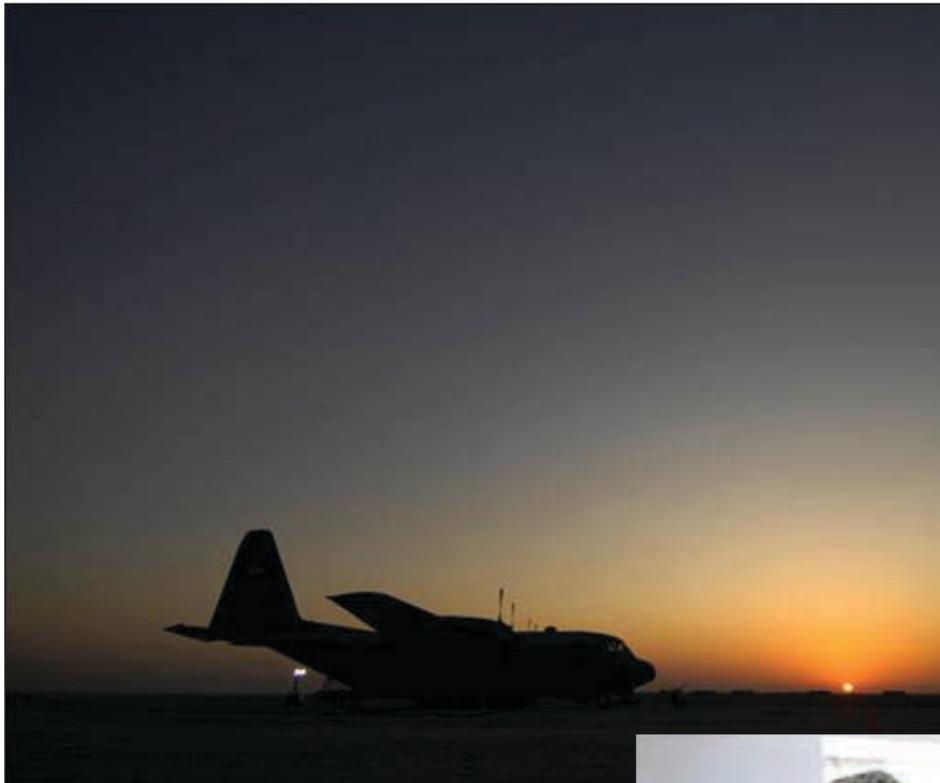
2 p.m. Astro Boy  
5 p.m. Armored  
8 p.m. Law Abiding Citizen

#### Wednesday, Dec. 16

5 p.m. Saw VI  
8 p.m. Armored



# PHOTOS AROUND IRAQ



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Steven King

An Air Force C-130 Hercules cargo plane attached to the 164th Expeditionary Air Squadron, 25th Combat Air Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division, is silhouetted by the setting sun Nov. 11 at Contingency Operating Location Speicher, Iraq.



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Daniel St. Pierre

Soldiers with the 1st Iraqi Army and U.S. 2nd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, load onto a CH-53 Sea Stallion during a static loading exercise Nov. 15 at Camp Ramadi, in western Iraq. Members of the U.S. Army, Marine Corps, and Iraqi Army train together loading and unloading Sea Stallions to prepare for upcoming missions.

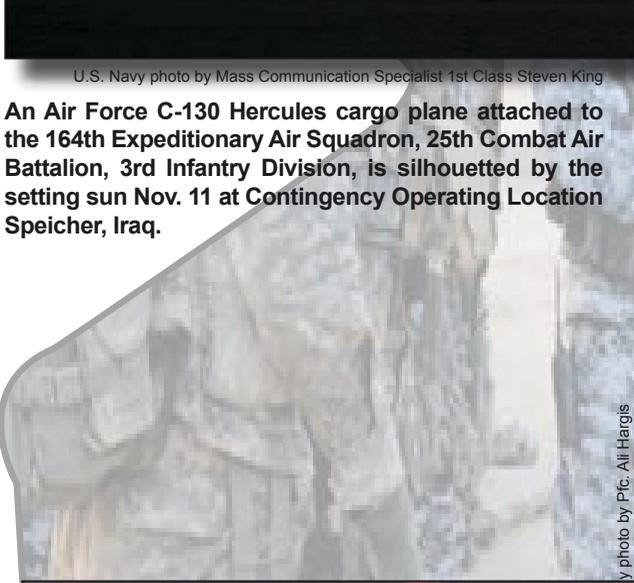


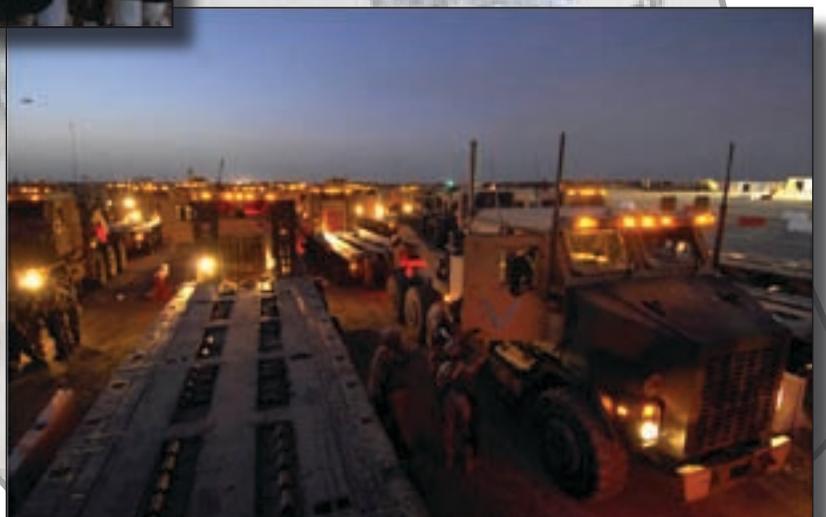
photo by Pfc. Ali Hargis

Members of 1st Battalion, 1st Mosul Brigade, 3rd Federal Police Division, stand and talk with students from Al Shuhada School for Girls Nov. 11 in western Mosul, Iraq. Mosul Federal Police visited the school to distribute more than 150 backpacks during a joint humanitarian-aid mission with U.S. Soldiers.



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

An Iraqi child stares out the window of the Al Hojarat School for Boys and Girls, which schools 650 students, Nov. 5 in Basra, Iraq. The Al Hojarat School was chosen for improvements and renovations by the 1314th Civil Affairs Company, 17th Fires Brigade.



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Steven King

Soldiers attached to the 2025th Transportation Company, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, stage their Heavy Equipment Transport Trucks Nov. 7, as they prepare to convoy from Contingency Operating Location Speicher, Iraq to Contingency Operating Location Warrior, in northern Iraq.

# NEWS AROUND IRAQ

## Suicide Bomber, Countermeasures Course teaches prevention

**MAYSAN, Iraq** – Twelve instructors from the Iraqi Police Service – Maysan Provincial Training Center completed a three-day train-the-trainer course on suicide bombers and countermeasures in late November.

The purpose of the course was to provide the instructors with information concerning suicide bomber attack indicators and understanding terrorist operations and tactics. The course also explained how police and other first responders should react to such incidents.

At the conclusion of the course, attendees participated in a suicide bomber exercise. Course instructor, Noel Mueller said the instructors performed extremely well in identifying, isolating and neutralizing a suicide bomber.

This course is one of a series of several specialized training courses scheduled in the next few months to help train Iraqi Police units province-wide in their mission to ensure safe and successful election activities throughout the Maysan Province.

During a course graduation ceremony at MPTC, Iraqi Lt. Col. Muneam Abd Munshad Al-Kathim, the assistant dean, said, "This is a very important course. It offers the type of training and information that saves lives ... lives of police officers, other first responders and the public."

At the conclusion of the course, attending student instructors said they were eager to begin teaching this course to their colleagues in the Iraqi internal security forces and throughout the Maysan province because it is through training that they make a difference.

## Iraqi correctional officers take lead at Camp Cropper

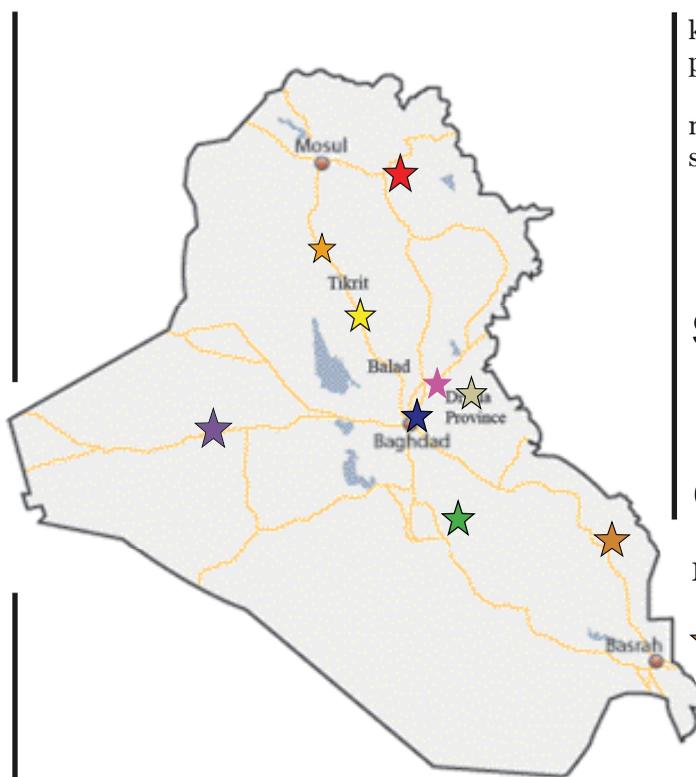
**CAMP CROPPER, Iraq** – Iraqi correctional officers began performance evaluations after taking control of Compound II operations in the theater internment facility here.

For every Soldier posted in what is being called the "Iraqi parallel compound," there is a corresponding ICO posted as well, said Sgt. 1st Class Steven Noreika, 192nd Military Police Battalion ICO integration noncommissioned officer in charge.

ICOs throughout Iraq are continually trained at the Iraqi Correctional Training Academy in preparation for the drawdown of U.S. troops and turnover of detainee operations to the Government of Iraq.

The 192nd MP Bn. that oversees Compound II and the ICOs working there is taking one of the first steps in ensuring a smooth transfer between the U.S. and the GoI.

"I have been tasked with trying to integrate them into their job," Noreika said. "How can we help them succeed in their job when we actually drop the T-Wall,



hand them the key and say, 'it's all yours?'"

After only a month, Iraqi supervisors said they have noticed progress in the ICOs and foresee success.

"They are dealing with very high standards and they are doing great here," said the ICO warden of the TIF here.

"We are looking forward to the ICOs being able to take over the camp and the compounds," the warden said. "They will have the capabilities and the training so that they can do their job in a perfect way. It is still a work in progress."

Training has begun to focus more on using critical reasoning, creative thinking and a newly developed middle management.

"We are starting to integrate them into decision making and (the tasks required) when it comes to managing their ICOs," Noreika said. "It's developing a span of control that they're able to manage because they really didn't have a sense of middle management. So, we're really emphasizing how to develop a span of control and a division of labor when it comes down to roles and responsibilities on the TIF."

ICOs are even given more control of their training as they begin to make more decisions based upon the needs of their operations.

"We'll let them use deductive reasoning to try to come up with a solution on their own," Noreika said. "If they're able to come up with a solution that is acceptable, we run with the solution and monitor the progress and make changes."

It seems to be working fairly well, he said.

"The ICOs have already been organized into the compound they've received initial training and one thing they were lacking was continual education," Noreika said. "We started off with some basic weapons training and computer training. We just did rules of force, rules of engagement, and right now, we're rescheduling them for Shot-gun refresher training."

When enough ICOs are trained to the standards, they will start to take the spots of U.S. personnel pulling out of the compound.

"If everything runs smoothly in Compound II, they develop a sense that they can run that compound and, once we start getting an increase in ICOs here in the TIF, we can expand them out through the rest of the compounds," Noreika said. "We can essentially take the experience that was learned in Compound II, take

key ICOs out of there, move them to the other compounds, and then they can train the other ICOs."

U.S. forces can then slowly drawdown to a minimum overseeing the operation in Compound II, he said.

## Maysan province security unit prepares for election demands

**MAYSAN, Iraq** – Eighteen members of the Maysan Province Personal Security Detail and five instructors from the Iraqi Police Maysan Provincial Training Center completed a five-day basic PSD course Nov. 19 here.

The training prepares them for increased responsibilities anticipated in support of the upcoming federal elections.

The course was conducted by military forces and the U.S. Department of State's International Police Advisor-Trainers at combat outpost station Garry Owen. The mission of this team is to train, advise, assist and enable the Iraqi police service in Maysan Province toward self-sustainment and police primacy.

Students were instructed on how to protect and conduct safe movement for dignitaries. Class scenarios and practical exercises were used throughout the course to illustrate how to protect people while responding to attacks. Particular emphasis was placed on weapons handling, basic foot patrol techniques, fire and maneuver, principle movement, and team positions.

All students were vetted through the Maysan PSD unit and Maysan Provincial Training Center. They received a written recommendation for attendance by their unit commander, Iraqi Police Col. Hamood, who expressed his appreciation for the training in tactics and operations. He also said the class was relevant and beneficial to their duties in the unit to provide protection to the Maysan governor, the mayor of Al Amarah, city council members and other VIPs.

There are 250 members in Hamood's full-time PSD unit and he said he expects the unit to grow considerably in the coming months with increased emphasis on PSD protection details for members of the judiciary. He also said his unit is expected to be very busy in support of upcoming election activities.

## Iraqi Army students graduate from maintenance courses

**TAJI, Iraq** – The Electrical Mechanical Engineering School graduated 28 Iraqi Army students from the BTR-80 maintenance course and 27 Iraqi Army students from the BMP-1 maintenance course Nov. 23 at Taji.

The BTR-80 is a wheeled armored personnel carrier; the BMP-1 is a tracked personnel carrier. Both are used for reconnaissance and troop movement. The students received hands-on and classroom instruc-

tion for maintaining these vehicles. They completed maintenance request documents and learned how to change, add or repair minor items on the vehicles.

The Soldiers came from six different Iraqi Army divisions as well as special operations forces from across Iraq. All students work in electrical and mechanical engineering fields or perform maintenance functions for their units. The courses began Nov. 2.

At the conclusion of the course, Iraqi Army Col. Hassan, the EME School commander, presented the Soldiers with graduation certificates.

Hassan recognized Adel Abdul-Shaheed, assigned to the medium maintenance workshop for special operations forces, as the honor graduate for the BTR-80 course. Hassan also recognized Ehab Muhammed Abd, with 1st Battalion, 33rd Brigade, 8th IA Division, as the honor graduate for the BMP-1 maintenance course.

## Information assurance course preps security forces against cyber threats

 BAGHDAD – Twenty senior Iraqi leaders from all 14 Iraqi Army divisions and four regional operations centers participated in the first information assurance trainers' course Nov 16 through Nov. 20 here.

The overarching objective of the seminar was to provide the attendees with train the trainer instruction to take back to their units.

The seminar was developed by Multi-National Security Transition Command – Iraq and hosted by the Directorate General of Communications and the Ministerial Training and Development Center.

The five-day curriculum included a guided tour of the Iraqi Defense Network's Network Operation Center and addressed topics including threats, vulnerabilities and risks associated with sharing information on computer networks.

"Information assurance training concentrates on the two areas critical to any mission: security and readiness," said Iraqi Brig. Gen. Abdul Salam Adnan Mahumd, chief security officer with the Directorate General of Communications. "This training provides leaders with the tools necessary to educate their units on the importance of safeguarding our information and keeping our networks secure."

Engineer Hadi Na'ma Hussein, with the Directorate General of Communications said with the help of U.S. forces, the DGoC has established an IDN network security plan that outlines user roles and responsibilities, best practices and required technical configuration.

"Our Iraqi Defense Network is only as strong as the weakest link," said Hussein.

## First Iraqi-moderated women's conference held in Baghdad

 BAGHDAD – Thirty-nine women from the Ministries of Defence and Interior attended a conference here Nov. 19 to discuss women's issues, marking the first time an Iraqi woman moderated such an event.

Iman Najid, director of Human Rights for the Ministry of Defence, led the discussion about the struggles

of Iraqi women who are still striving for equal treatment.

"The purpose of this conference is to show how Iraqi women are participating in the Ministry of Defence," said Najid.

Five Iraqi female leaders spoke about their experiences and struggles as a means to encourage and inspire the attendees. Dr. Maj. Noor Lath Saaed Al Berakhdar, Inspector General with the Ministry of Defence, highlighted the importance of mentorship.

"Mentorship starts with the family," she said. "When you are a little child, your parents are role models." Berakhdar said. "(You) must work for it. Have the ambition. Do whatever it takes."

Female military representatives from Multi-National Security Transition Command – Iraq attended in support of the conference and listened to the Iraqi women's issues and concerns. The four-hour session ended with a gift exchange between the U.S. and Iraqi women.

U. S. Army Maj. Tiffany Carr, chief of the School of the Advisor with MNSTC-I, said, "I think the conference was outstanding. It was the first time they coordinated their own conference. They discussed the issues currently facing them and came up with solutions together."

## Base firefighters subdue flames

 CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION SPEICHER, Iraq – Firefighters responded to a morning fire that damaged a building at Contingency Operating Location Speicher.

The fire was extinguished and everyone inside the building was safely evacuated. No one was injured in the blaze.

Soldiers working inside the building notified base fire fighters that smoke was coming from one of the rooms.

Base fire fighters responded with three fire trucks and brought the fire under control within a few hours.

"We will have to move some offices around to continue work, but we are most thankful that no one was hurt," said Col. Thomas James, Task Force Marne chief of staff.

The cause of the fire has not been determined by base fire inspectors at this time. Initially, there are no reasons to believe the fire was caused by any enemy actions.

All Task Force Marne Soldiers on the base were accounted for and the command is taking measures to ensure their continued safety.

## English testing facility opens

 BAGHDAD - A new facility opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony Nov. 18 in the International Zone to provide English language testing for Iraqis.

The mission of the facility is to provide an improved environment for English language testing and to allow military and civilian candidates from the government of Iraq to achieve their full performance potential.

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Judith Resendiz, test control officer, said, "This new facility will support Iraqis who need to validate their English proficiency so they can participate in specialized schooling and pursue opportunities in other English speaking environments that will help them get the skills they need to help sustain their country."

U. S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Craig Olson, director of the Iraq Security Assistance Mission, spoke at the inaugura-

tion of the facility. He stressed the important partnership the United States and Iraq have and explained how the facility will aid Iraqis in mastering their English language skills so they can attend schools in the U.S.

Staff Lt. Col. Mohanad Jaleb, Iraqi Air Force division 1 director, cut the ribbon with Olson.

The International Military and Education Training team administers two exams to Iraqi students. The English comprehension level exam evaluates an individuals listening and reading comprehension proficiency. The American Language Course Placement Test screens students to determine the level of English they have mastered.

The preponderance of test takers is expected to come from the Iraqi security ministries. Those who pass the exams can apply for entry into military schools in the United States, such as the Army War College, Naval War College and U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

## 8 Kurdish students attend waterborne operations course

 BAGHDAD – Eight Kurdish police officers arrived in Baghdad in mid-November to join nine Iraqi police officers in the six-week waterborne operations course at the Baghdad River Patrol Training Center here.

Training began Nov. 15 with two river police students from Dahuk, four from Irbil and two from Sulaymaniyah attending the seventh iteration of the waterborne operations course.

This course is designed to provide law enforcement personnel with the skills and training necessary to function effectively as members of a river patrol unit. The curriculum and patrolling methods are designed to test students both physically and mentally in a variety of situations.

The main focus of the training is on mission planning and waterborne interdiction, with practical exercises throughout the course.

## Iraqi Army captures Baghdad Promised Day Brigade members

 BAGHDAD – The 44th Iraqi Army captured three alleged Promised Day Brigade members Nov. 27 during a joint security operation conducted in northeast Baghdad.

Based on intelligence, Iraqi Army and U.S. advisers searched residential buildings and arrested two warranted individuals suspected of planning and carrying out improvised explosive attacks against Iraqis and security forces throughout Baghdad.

One of the arrested individuals is an alleged senior administrative leader in the PDB terrorist network and the second individual is believed to be a key weapons facilitator.

After preliminary questioning of individuals and collecting evidence at the scene, the security team arrested the two individuals without incident.

The 44th IA arrested a third individual identified as a probable criminal accomplice of one of the warranted individuals. Preliminary questioning led the Iraqi Soldiers and their U.S. advisers to a third residential building but they found nothing.

The capture of these senior leaders is expected to disrupt the Baghdad PDB network.

# Phantom Support



U.S. Army photo by Capt. Murray Shugars

Spc. Marcus D. Glass (standing, left), a gunner from Magee, Miss., and Spc. Martin D. Wilson, a driver from Mendenhall, Miss., watch as Sgt. Victoria M. Moffett, a truck commander from Collins, Miss., inspects the team's personal protective equipment and escalation of force items in the company motor pool Nov. 21 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq, before a mission. All three belong to 1st Platoon, A Company, 106th Brigade Support Battalion out of Magee, Miss., a convoy security unit attached to 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, out of Senatobia, Miss.



U.S. Army photo by Capt. Murray Shugars

Spc. Timothy A. Hunt and Spc. Chance W. Jeffers, II, vehicle gunners with A Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms out of Hernando, Miss., clean an M2 .50 caliber machine gun in the company area Nov. 20 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq. Hunt, an Olive Branch, Miss., native, and Jeffers, a Southaven, Miss., native, members of 1st Squad, 1st Platoon, cleaned excess weapons in preparation for turning them in as part of the responsible drawdown of U.S. forces and equipment in Iraq.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Kimberly Calkins

Oregon U.S. Sens. Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkely and Illinois Sen. Ron Burris, stand with Soldiers from 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Oregon National Guard, Nov. 24 on the Ziggurat of UR, Iraq. The senators got a brief history lesson of the archeological ruins. The senators are in Iraq to meet with Iraqi officials and to get an idea of the future of Iraq. Later, the senators met with Soldiers, giving them an opportunity to voice concerns of jobs, school, health care and the economy upon their return home.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Kimberly Calkins

First Lt. Samuel Kissinger, a unit movement officer with the Brazil, Ind. unit, 138th Quartermaster Support Co., 751st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a West Lafayette, Ind., native, is given his new rank by Brig. Gen. Paul Wentz, 13th ESC commanding general, Nov. 16 during his command visit with the 751st CSSB.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Anita VanderMolen

B Company, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, leave Thanksgiving evening on a convoy security mission. The Soldiers ate a traditional Thanksgiving meal before heading out.