

READY FIRST REPORT



**Harlem Globetrotters and
Kid Rock visit FOB Warrior**

*Transfer of Partnership
Ceremony*

**1/1 AD meet with
Iraqi Leaders**

**Ready First Combat Team
uncases colors in Kuwait**

I would first like to say, I am proud of all the hard work the Soldiers of the Ready First Combat Team have put into preparing for deployment to Northern Iraq.

As a team we have been able to accomplish so much in so little time. Now that we have arrived in Iraq we will begin our mission of assisting and advising the Iraqi Security Forces. Our brigade is very fortunate to be taking over this mission from 2nd BCT, 1st Cavalry Division also known as "Blackjack", of Fort Hood, Tx. "Blackjack" Soldiers have had a very successful year in Iraq and have done an exceptional job to ensure the Ready First Soldiers had a smooth transition into this deployment. Although it seems like we have a long time to go, it will go fast as you continue to build relationships with those in the local community and strive to add a "Ready First" touch to the progress that is being made. Your hard work and dedication will be rewarded by knowing that our partners in the Iraqi Security Forces are becoming more capable with each passing day thanks to the training and mentorship you provide them. No matter how busy it seems here, make sure to take the time to stay in touch with your families, they are what makes this brigade truly special.

Work hard and stay vigilant and this year will be over before you know it.
Stay Ready First!

Col. Larry Swift
Brigade Commander
1st HBCT, 1st AD



Ready First Report

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The leaders of 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, and 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, share dinner with leaders from the Sons of Iraq at Joint Security Station McHenry in Kirkuk province, Iraq, Dec. 4.

Sharing the partners



U.S. Story and Photos by Pfc. Jessica R. Luhrs
1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq— For units preparing to depart Iraq, passing on hard-earned partnerships is important, and it's always easiest to do that on a full stomach.

1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, lead introductions between local Sons of Iraq leaders and their replacements from the 1st Battalion, 37th Armored Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, over a meal at Joint Security Station McHenry in Kirkuk province, Iraq, Dec. 4.

"You have been our best partners over this last year," said Lt. Col. David Lesperance, the commander of 1st Bn., 8th Cav. Regt., to the Sol leaders. "Everything we've been able to accomplish is really because of you."

1st Bn., 8th Cav. Regt., has partnered closely with the Sol throughout their nearly yearlong stay in Iraq.

It is very sad to say goodbye to the Sol leaders gathered here today, Lt. Col. Lesperance explained. But it is hoped that the leaders here will continue to have a strong relationship with the new unit replacing ours.

The new unit is led by Lt. Col. Geoffery Catlett, the commander of 1st Bn., 37th Arm. Reg., who served in the Kirkuk area in 2007.

"I know from personal experiences all the risks you have taken, I appreciate your efforts with the security in the area and you can expect the same support from 1/1 AD," said Lt. Col. Catlett.

1st Bn., 36th Arm. Reg., is looking forward to working in partnership with the Sol and continuing the great work of Col. Ryan Gonsalves, the commander of 2/1 Cav., and Lt. Col. Lesperance, according to Lt. Col. Catlett.

"We always had a very good partnership with 2nd BCT, and I am really looking forward to the new unit," said Col. Yunis, a leader within the Sol. "We will continue to work together with them."





Lt. Col. Derrin Williams, the commander of 501st Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, and Command Sgt. Mjr. Ramon C. Caisido, the command sergeant major of 501st BSB, based in Fort Bliss, Tx. uncase their battalion colors on Nov. 25.



Col. Larry Swift, the commander of 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, and Command Sgt. Mjr. James Daniels, the command sergeant major of 1/1AD, uncase the brigade colors at Camp Buerhing, Kuwait.



The 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division Color Guard led by Command Sgt. Major James Daniels, the command sergeant major of 1/1 AD march at the uncasing ceremony here on Nov. 25.



Lt. Col. Patricia A. Sellers, the commander of 1st Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, and Command Sgt. Mjr. Dana S. Mason Jr., the command sergeant major of 1st STB, uncase their battalion colors on Nov. 25.





The Command Team of the Ready First Combat Team and their colors after uncasing them here on Nov. 25. The brigade colors were uncased in Camp Buerhing, Kuwait as the Ready First Combat Team makes their journey to Forward Operating Base Warrior. The brigade cased their colors last week in Fort Bliss, Tx. before beginning their journey to FOB Warrior.

UNCASING OF COLORS

U.S Army Story and Photos by Pfc. Jessica R. Luhrs
1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division Public Affairs

CAMP BUERHRING, Kuwait— To mark the arrival of Col. Larry Swift, the commander of 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, Command Sgt. Major James Daniels, the command sergeant major of 1/1 AD and their Ready First Soldiers, here, an uncasing of the colors ceremony was held on Nov. 28.

The Ready First Combat Team Soldiers based out of Fort Bliss, Tx. are going to be deployed to Forward Operating Base Warrior and Joint Service Station McHenry and servicing the surrounding areas.

Ready First Combat Team is scheduled to be in Northern Iraq for the next year continuing the plans set by 2nd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, by assisting the Iraqi Security Forces and the people of Iraq to help build prosperity in the country, according to Col. Swift.

"Watch your brothers and sisters to the left and right of you," said Col. Swift. "Take care of one another and we will all make it back, Stay Ready First."



Capt. Dennis Maher, the commander of Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, with Shaykh Khalif, a Mahuz Triangle religious leader.



Quick to make partnerships

U.S. Army Story and Photos by Pfc. Jessica R. Luhrs
1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq— Meeting with the local leaders is very important especially for a new unit, when the commander of Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division arrived at the Joint Service Station McHenry he immediately began meeting with leaders. Capt. Dennis Maher, the commander of Bravo Company, 1-37 AR, 1/1 AD met with Shaykh Khalif, a Mahuz Triangle religious leader, for the first time in Mahuz Thursday. During this meeting Capt. Maher, Khalif and other commanders of 1-37 AR, 1/1 AD discussed how the Iraqi Security Forces and the U.S. Military plan on facilitating employment, irrigation and electricity in the area, according to Capt. Maher.

These are some of the biggest issues we have in the village, according to Khalif. The irrigation systems pipes are broken and many of the people in the village do not have electricity.

Soldiers of 1-37, 1/1 AD, along with Kahlif, also went through the village to see the conditions of the schools, clinic and irrigation systems in the area, according to Capt. Maher. During the walk through the village, the Ready First Combat Soldiers were able to take a look at the area they will be working in for the next year.



A Soldier of 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division is greeted by a child while on patrol in a village on Dec. 3.





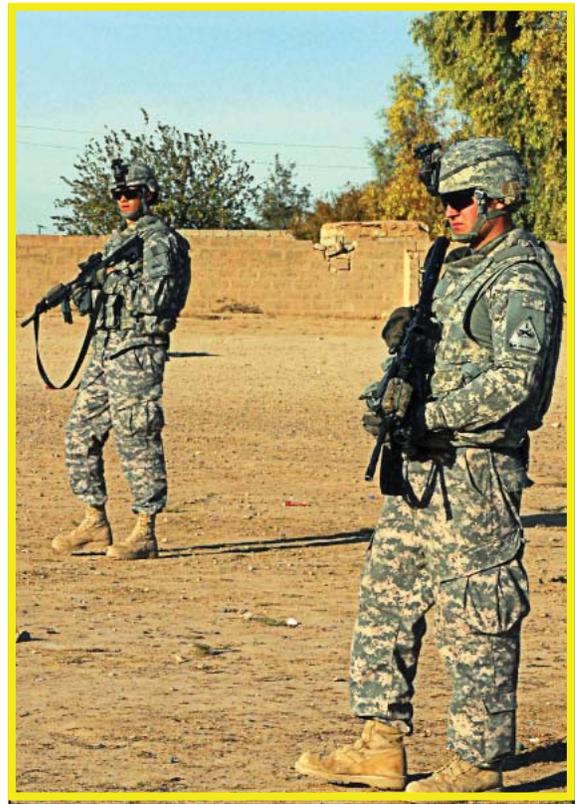
Soldiers of Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division of Fort Bliss, Tx. talk to children in the village on Dec. 3 in Mahuz Triangle. The Soldiers of 1-37 AR are currently stationed at Joint Service Station McHenry in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

There is a condition to the U.S. Military being able to assist the people of Mahuz and bring prosperity to the area, according to Capt. Maher.

The security of the Soldiers, non-profit organizations and contractors must be assured.

“Bringing security to the area is not only a job for the ISF and U.S. Military,” said Capt. Maher. “The local people also need to be telling the insurgents to leave their cities.”

Once the security is guaranteed, these groups will be able to begin working, according to Capt. Maher. When this happens, local jobs will be created and the economy will finally be able to grow. “We are hoping after building the area up that long-term jobs and prosperity will be the result,” said Capt. Maher. We plan on having many different meetings with the leaders in the area, said Capt. Maher. By doing this, the ISF and U.S. Military will have a better understanding of what the people in the area need. Soldiers of 1/1 AD began arriving in the area earlier this month and will be replacing the Soldiers of 2nd Brigade, 1st Cavalry who have been in the area since Jan, according Capt. Maher.



Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division patrol the village on Dec. 3.



Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, patrol a village to tour the schools and clinic in the area on Dec. 3 in Mahuz Triangle.





The World Famous Harlem Globetrotters perform for servicemembers at Forward Operating Base Warrior, Kirkuk, Iraq Dec. 13.

Harlem Globetrotters

U.S. Army Story and Photos by Pfc. Jessica R. Luhrs

1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq— From the time the world famous Globetrotters stepped into the gym here on Dec. 13 to the end of the autograph and picture portion of the night, the energy in the gym, which was packed with Soldiers and Airmen, was contagious.

As part of the 7th Annual Harlem Globetrotters Holiday Tour of U.S. Military Bases through Iraq and Kuwait, the Globetrotters made a stop at Forward Operating Base Warrior to play an expeditionary game.

"Coming to perform for servicemembers means everything to us during the holiday season," said Rocket, a member of the Globetrotters. "We know they're all here protecting our freedom and it means the world to us to be able to come over here and provide them with at least two hours, where they're relieved from their duties and they can just laugh, smile and have a piece of America with them."

"The servicemembers are away from their families during the holiday season and so are we," said Airport. "But it is no big deal to come over here and perform, they're over here fighting for our lives."

Not only did the Globetrotters entertain the servicemembers—with their famous comedic basketball game—they also did so with a camouflage ball that made its debut during their time in Iraq, according to the Globetrotter website.

"This ball was made to show our appreciation to the servicemembers," said Rocket.

"We're going to be using the ball in every game we have in the United States and Canada to show our appreciation year-round."

"This is just the kind of entertainment the Soldiers need especially around the holidays," said Sgt. Chris Lopez, a Human Resources non-commissioned officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery, 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division of El Paso. "We don't really get a chance to relax while in Iraq, to get to enjoy a few hours of a good show, it just what we needed."

"The Globetrotters are a legend," said Command Sgt. Maj. James Daniels, the command sergeant major for 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, of El Paso, Tx. "I watched them growing up and even have some of their jerseys, to see the young Globetrotters living the legacy is amazing."





Soldiers and Airmen participate in a magic trick that the World Famous Globetrotters Mascot, Globie, preformed at the 7th Annual Harlem Globetrotters Holiday Tour at Forward Operating Base Warrior, Dec. 13.



A World Famous Harlem Globetrotter, Airport, dunks the ball at Forward Operating Base Warrior, Kirkuk, Iraq, on Dec. 13, during their 7th Annual Harlem Globetrotters Holiday Tour.



A World Famous Harlem Globetrotter, Airport, dunks the ball at Forward Operating Base Warrior, Kirkuk, Iraq, on Dec. 13, during their 7th Annual Harlem Globetrotters Holiday Tour.



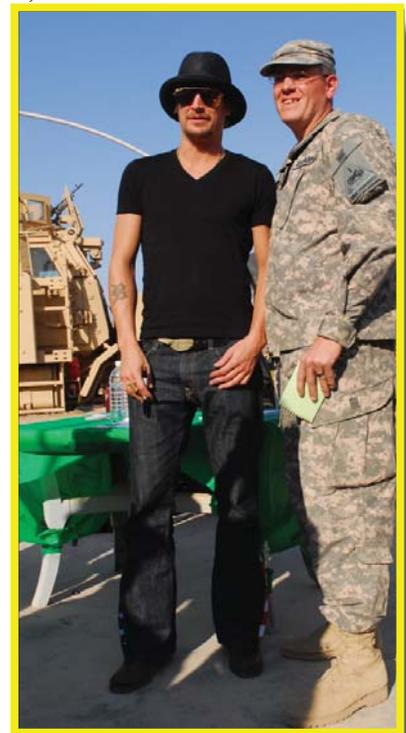
- READY FIRST



Soldiers of Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division patrol the village on Dec. 3 in Mahuz Triangle.



Soldiers with the Mechanics Platoon, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, receive training in Combat Lifesaving in Camp Buehring, Kuwait. The dummies the Soldiers practiced on bled, blinked and breathed.



A Soldier of 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division with Kid Rock at Joint Service Station McHenry.



COMBAT TEAM -



Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment are followed by Iraqi children after a Humanitarian Drop Dec. 22.

Capt. Rhodes, commander of Bravo Co. 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, with an Iraqi child during a humanitarian drop on Dec. 22.

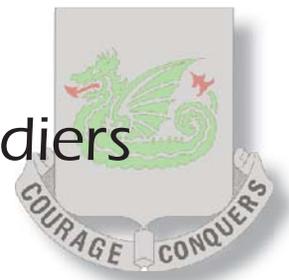


The Ready First Combat Team prepares to case their colors in Fort Bliss, Tx., this ceremony marks the beginning of the brigade leaving for Forward Operating Base Warriios, Kirkuk, Iraq, where the brigade will be supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.





Staff Sgt. Brown, a non-commissioned officer with the 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, calls his family on a phone in the Morale, Wellness and Readiness Center at Joint Service Station McHenry.



Communication: Key for Soldiers

U.S Army Story and Photos by Pfc. Jessica R. Luhrs
1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq— A worry for Soldiers while they are deployed is their family. But with a communication facility like the Morale, Wellness and Readiness center at Joint Service Station McHenry, being able to get in touch with family and friends is easy for the Ready First Combat Team Soldiers.

Soldiers from the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, began arriving in Northern Iraq this month and the MWR on JSS McHenry is already packed with Ready First Soldiers placing phone calls and getting on the internet to stay in touch with their families.

"I try to call my wife and 3 kids every other day," said Staff Sgt. Jonathan Sierra, of Miami and a Squad Leader with 1st Platoon, Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, 1/1 AD. "It means a lot to them to know that I am OK, talking to them helps me also; I think I would go crazy if I didn't get to hear from them.

To use the phones at the MWR Soldiers can purchase minutes on the computers Internet is also available to Soldiers at no charge in the MWR, opening up the doors of communication with the states, according to Spc. Elizer Cubero, the Local Area Network manager, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-37 AR, 1/1 AD.

A lot of the Soldiers are using social networking sites such as; Facebook, MySpace and Skype to get in touch with their families, according to Spc. Cubero.

"My family likes to talk to me on Skype, they can see me through the video chat, it is like I am back home with them," said Spc. Cubero.

Even though it might take a little longer to communicate there is also a postal drop at the MWR, according to Spc. Cubero.

Some of the Soldiers still like to use the postal services, it is a little more personal, said Staff Sgt. Sierra. When Soldiers get letters or packages from their families it shows them that someone took the time to sit down and write them a letter.

Being able to communicate with the states means a lot from the highest ranking to the lower enlisted Soldiers, said Spc. Cubero. It offers a sense of stability for the Soldiers.

The MWR offers internet, television, books, educational computers, and phone calls on holidays for free to the Soldiers, said Spc. Cubero. Soldiers can also make phone calls to the states for 8 cents a minute.



Operation "Lion/Dragon" Hunt



U.S. Army Story and Photos by Pfc. Jessica R. Luhrs

1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division Public Affairs



Col. Noyat, an officer in the Kirkuk Emergency Services Unit, presents the plans for operation "Lion Dragon Hunt" to ESU members and their counterparts of Delta Company, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, on Dec. 9. The two forces conducted a raid that led to the capture of 20 people without proper identification.

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq— Over 400 Emergency Service Unit members, also known as the Lions, led by Brigadier Gen. Khatub Umer Aref, the brigade commander, cleared objectives simultaneously Dec. 9, in operation "Lion Dragon-Hunt", proving they are a trained and professional brigade.

The Lions had assistance from over 70 members of Delta Company, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, attached to 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, known as the Dragons, led by Capt. Jeremiah Fritz, the commander of Delta Company. In addition to the 70 members of Delta Company, the U.S. Army also provided military working dogs to assist in the mission, according to Capt. Fritz.

"We had two main purposes today," said Capt. Fritz. "One was to demonstrate the ability of the Kirkuk ESU to perform clearing operations and also to disrupt the enemy."

In addition to these missions the ESU and U.S. Military were also looking for those illegally staying in the area, according to Capt. Fritz.

Even though no weapons caches were located, over 20 people were detained and taken to the Amal Shabi Iraqi Police Station for lacking proper identification to be in the area, said Capt. Fritz.

This mission was very successful; together we made the insurgents fearful and met our objectives, according to Brig. Gen. Aref.

"Every day the ESU is getting better and better, they are very close to being completely independent," said Capt. Fritz.

"We will continue to do missions like this," said Brig. Gen. Aref. "We will not give the insurgents a break."



The Commander of Delta Company, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry with Brigadier Gen. Khatub Umer Aref, the brigade commander of the Kirkuk Emergency Services Unit, after the two forces conducted an operation in the Amal Shabi village.

The combined color guard with representatives from 12th Iraqi Army, Iraqi Police, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division and 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, at the Transfer of Partnership Ceremony at Forward Operating Base Warrior, Dec. 19.



A mark in Ready First History

U.S. Army Story and Photos by Pfc. Jessica R. Luhrs
1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq— “Tonight Col. Ryan Gonsalves, commander of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, and Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffery Hof, command sergeant major of 2nd BCT, 1st Cav. Div. put a cover on one flag and Col. Larry Swift, commander of 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division and Command Sgt. Maj. James Daniels, command sergeant major of 1st BCT, 1st Arm. Div. remove one from another,” said Maj. Tony Cucolo, commanding general, United States Division-North.

On Dec. 19, 2009, during a Transfer of Partnership Ceremony, the Ready First Combat Team made a promise to continue the partnerships and friendships the Black Jack Brigade secured during their year here, according to Col. Swift.

“Progress marked the Black Jack Brigade time here with Iraqi Security Forces this year,” said Col. Gonsalves. “We conducted an excess of 6,000 partnered combat patrols, worked together to detain more than 125 high value targets and found almost three tons of ordnance caches throughout Kirkuk.”

“Also the ISF and Black Jack Brigade worked together on almost 1,000 humanitarian projects valued at \$62 million that generated 21,000 jobs,” said Col. Gonsalves.

“I am confident the people of Kirkuk are in good hands, and I know that you will continue a noble service together, as one, bonded by the universal promise of peace, prosperity and hope that you deeply deserve,” said Col. Gonsalves.

“I’d especially like to thank you, Col. Gonsalves, your officers, non-commissioned officers and Soldiers of the Black Jack Brigade for a professional and smooth partnership transition,” said Col. Swift.

“We look forward to continuing the positive work of the Black Jack Brigade for the people of Iraq,” said Col. Swift. “You can expect the Ready First Combat Team to be an impartial proponent of peace and stability.”

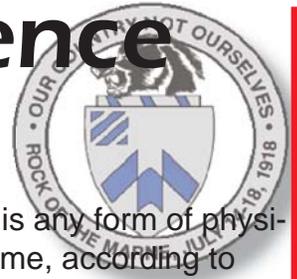
“To my Soldiers and leaders of the Ready First Combat Team, good work – but the hard part starts now,” said Col. Swift. “We must represent our country with honor and complete our mission here to high standards.”

“Col. Gonsalves and Command Sgt. Mjr. Hof, mission complete,” said Maj. Gen. Cucolo. “Col. Swift and Command Sgt. Maj. Daniels, this is your time to put a Ready First Combat Team mark in history.”



Preventing Domestic Violence

U.S Army Story and Photos by Pfc. Jessica R. Luhrs
1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division Public Affairs



FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq— Domestic violence is any form of physical, non-physical or sexual abuse; which takes place either in or outside of the home, according to James, a law-enforcement specialist working with 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, currently attached to 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division.

These words were said to a group of Iraqi Police, female supporters of Pena Women's Cultural Center and U.S Forces, at the PWCC, Kirkuk, Iraq, Dec. 21 at a domestic violence meeting.

At this meeting the participants discussed how the IP could better deal with victims reporting domestic violence, causes of domestic violence, the cycle of violence, different support services and the effects of domestic violence on children, according to James.

The PWCC and IP's really took a step forward today, said 1st Lt. Anthony McClanahan, 3rd Platoon Leader, 1-30 Inf. Reg., of Durant, Iowa. Being able to have both groups present in a meeting will make everyone more aware of the needs of the other group.

Right now the country is changing and domestic violence is being recognized as a factor that is holding the country back from prosperity and growth, according to one of the PWCC women attending the meeting. Some of the issues the IP need to be aware of are; women being judged when reporting domestic violence, the need of a domestic violence specialist at IP stations and ideas to help ease the process of reporting domestic violence, according to Zhyan Hussan Aif, a leader at the PWCC.

One of the biggest issues is the victim being judged when they go into the IP station, according to Zhyan. Many of the victims are looked at and grouped as criminals when they go into the station, this could be solved by having a domestic violence specialist at the station.

There is a great need for a specialist in domestic violence or a room the victim could go to in order to report the abuse to the IP station, according to Zhyan. If these services were available then the victim could bypass the process of telling their story to 5 or 6 IP members and be able to immediately report the situation safely.

Having a room for the women to report the abuse to could be arranged, according to a member of the IP. We are changing also, it only takes time.

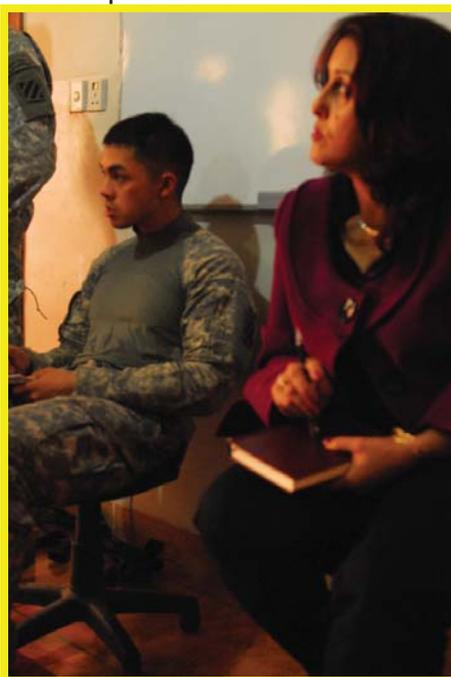
Another one of the plans the PWCC mentioned is to start a specialized hotline number so victims can report domestic violence more easily and at any time, according to Zhyan. If there was a number the victims could call they could report the domestic violence and receive rehabilitation from PWCC.

The participants also discussed the meaning of justice for the victims, according to 1st Lt. McClanahan. Justice is not just putting an abuser in jail for a few days, there needs to be a set punishment that will prevent the situation from happening again.

All that this group has discussed today truly is a step-forward, according to 1st Lt. McClanahan.

We will hopefully continue these meetings every couple months and also find a solution for the issues that were discussed, according to Zhyan.

Zhyan Hussan Aif, a leader at the Pena Women's Cultural Center and 1st Lt. Anthony McClanahan, 3rd Platoon Leader, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, of Durant, Iowa speak to members of the Iraqi Police and supporters of the PWCC, at the PWCC Dec. 21, about how to deal with domestic violence.



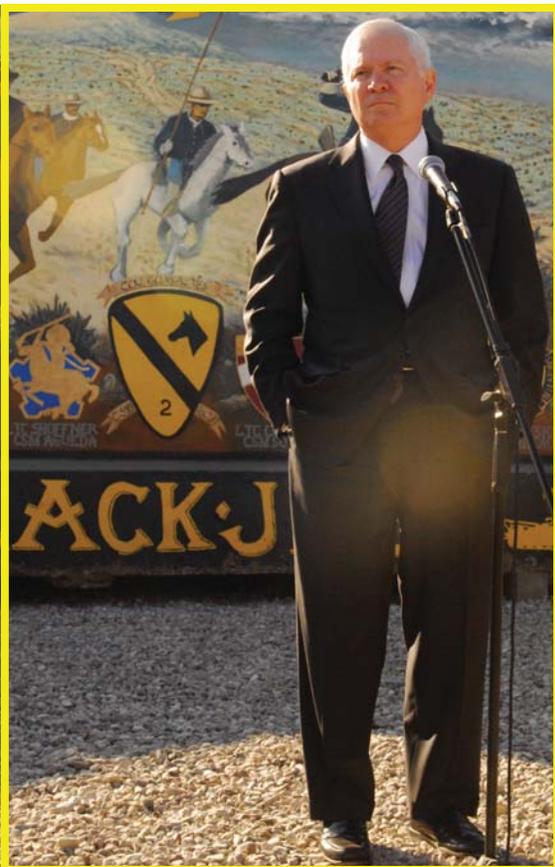
SecDef visits FOB Warrior

Photos by Pfc. Jessica R. Luhrs

1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division Public Affairs



Servicemembers stationed at Forward Operating Base Warrior, received a visit from Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, Dec. 11. Gates answered any questions the servicemembers had during the town hall that was held.



A Soldier from 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, asks Secretary of Defense Robert Gates a question at a town hall, here on Dec. 11.

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates at the town hall meeting, here on Dec. 11., during this meeting Gates answered questions from the Soldiers of 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division.



The glue of a platoon

U.S. Army Story and Photos by Pfc. Jessica R. Luhrs
1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division Public Affairs



FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq— A deployment pushes teams and leaders to their limits. With various challenging situations, deployment often shows the effectiveness of certain leadership styles. The style that has inspired the Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division has been from one ambitious Non-Commissioned Officer.

Staff Sgt. Stephen Bulwinkle, a native of Richmondhill, Ga. and the squad leader for 2nd Platoon, B-Company, 1-37 Arm. Reg. actions displayed strong leadership and reliability among his fellow Soldiers, said 1st Sgt. Craig Nettles, the first sergeant for B-Co, 1-37 Arm. Reg.

Bulwinkle is a great inspiration to our Soldiers because of his strong leadership style, said 1st Sgt. Nettles. His leadership style always ensures that his Soldiers understand every task that they are given and he builds them up so that when they get a mission, their confidence level is over the top to make sure it gets done right.

His mission in Iraq truly emphasizes his ability to lead patrols, where insurgents are known to exist, and help to assist and train the Iraqi Army and Police forces, according to Cpl. Ryan Groggin, a team leader with B-Co., 2nd Plt., 1-37 Arm. Reg.

"He is a true leader," said Cpl. Groggin. "He has the ability to adapt to adapt to any situation, even when there is an absence of orders and gets the job done."

A situation that most of the Soldiers in 1-37 Arm. Reg. remember was when some Soldiers in B-Co., were in a vehicle roll-over, according to Cpl. Groggin. Not only was he the first one on scene, but he also was climbing through the turret pulling Soldiers out, then getting accountability of all that were in the vehicle.

Staff Sgt. has done an outstanding job, said 1st Sgt. Nettles. His experience has been invaluable and his leadership qualities have helped shape this platoon into the effective team that we are now, he is the glue that holds 2nd Plt. together.

Staff Sgt. Bulwinkle believes that much of a unit's success can be attributed to good leadership on all fronts. He has been receptive to many different leadership styles that have changed him personally, all starting with his former team leaders.

Good leaders need confidence—a lot of confidence, said Staff Sgt. Bulwinkle. They need to have experience, be aware of everything going on, and have a lot of empathy for their guys.

A leader must know what his Soldiers are going through, what pressure is on them, according to Staff Sgt. Bulwinkle. It's a leader's job to keep morale up, to put their needs above your own. My Soldiers are my priority, according to Bulwinkle.



Staff Sgt. Stephan Bulwinkle, the squad leader of 2nd Platoon, B-Company, 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, leads his platoon in a humanitarian mission in Northern Iraq, Dec. 16.



Breaking barriers: to save lives



Iraqi Army Soldiers and their instructors, after they completed the Basic Medical Specialist Course at the 49th Brigade Headquarters, on Dec. 15, during this course the Soldiers learned combat lifesaving skills.

U.S Army Story and Photos by Pfc. Jessica R. Luhrs
1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq— How to provide proper care to eye injuries, burns, abdominal injuries and other basic combat lifesaver methods are some of the techniques that 20 Iraqi Army Soldiers learned in these past five days, at the Iraqi Army 49th Brigade Headquarters.

U.S. Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, currently attached to 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, along with surgeons of the Iraqi Army, partnered up for the first time to teach the IA lifesaving methods.

In order to become a Basic Medical Specialist the IA Soldiers attended a class for five days that was taught by 1st Lt. Yasser Hassan Saed, a surgeon with the IA, Capt. Jon Stubblefield, the physician assistant, 1-30 IN, Sgt. 1st Class Robert Gladden, the medic platoon sergeant, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-30 IN and Pfc. Micheal Avila, a combat medic, HHC, 1-30 IN.

After they completed the class the Soldiers then took a test on what they learned and received certification as Basic Medical Specialists, said 1st Lt. Saed.

Having these Soldiers trained as Basic Medical Specialists is a huge asset to the IA, according to Lt. Col. Rakin Kalif, the commander of the IA training department. Not only will these Soldiers be able to assist others in an emergency, but they can also teach others from the knowledge they have gained during this course.

We already know the skills we are teaching these Soldiers are getting put to use, according to Capt. Stubblefield. We have had an Iraqi Soldier save his brother after an accident, because of this combat life saving training.

Since we know this training is working for the Soldiers, we are hoping to get many more trained as Basic Medical Specialists, according to 1st Lt. Yasser.



"This is a big step to the IA becoming a self-sufficient force," said Pfc. Avila. "We have done what we can and taught them different ways to assist someone in an emergency, now it is their turn to go teach others."
 "The U.S. Forces are continuing teaching this class along with IA surgeons twice a month," said Sgt. 1st Class Gladden. "We are hoping that the Soldiers we have taught combat lifesaving methods to will take what they learned back to their units and teach fellow Soldiers."
 The leadership of the IA wants all IA Soldiers to have knowledge in combat lifesaving and this is the first step to getting all of the Soldiers trained .said 1st Lt. Yasser.

Soldiers of the Iraqi Army learning to properly lift a litter from Sgt. 1st Class Robert Gladden, the medic platoon sergeant, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, attached to 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, at the IA 49th Brigade Headquarters, on Dec. 15.

Soldiers of the Iraqi Army learning to properly lift a litter from Sgt. 1st Class Robert Gladden, the medic platoon sergeant, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, attached to 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, at the IA 49th Brigade Headquarters, on Dec. 15.



A Soldier with the Iraqi Army receives certification to be a Basic Medical Specialist from Lt. Col. Rakin Mohammad Kalif, a training commander for the Iraqi Army, at the Iraqi Army 49th Brigade Headquarters, on Dec. 15.



Soldiers of the Iraqi Army learning to properly lift one another in a fireman carry. Lift Sgt. 1st Class Robert Gladden, the medic platoon sergeant, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, attached to 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, at the IA 49th Brigade Headquarters, on Dec. 15.



FOB Warrior says “farewell ‘Red Dragons’”



U.S. Army Story and Photos
by Pfc. Jessica R. Luhrs and
Spc. Justin Naylor

*1st Brigade Combat Team,
1st Armored Division Public
Affairs and 2nd Brigade
Combat Team, 1st Cavalry
Division*

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq—

“Red Dragons, you have
been in the arena, your
faces have been marred
by dust, sweat and blood,

and you have risked everything to assist our partners in bringing the light of freedom to the citizens of Kirkuk,” were the words that echoed across the crowded gym.

With a year of hard work, blood, sweat and tears under their belt, the 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment “Red Dragons”, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, handed over the torch of guarding security and building the stability in Kirkuk city to the 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment “Battle Boars”, attached to 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, during a ceremony on Forward Operating Base Warrior in Kirkuk, Iraq, Dec. 10.

“‘Battle Boars,’ as demonstrated by our transition, you are well qualified for the task at hand and I am confident in the ‘Battle Boars’ ability to continue to make a difference,” said Lt. Col. Terry P. Cook, the commander of 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, during his speech. “You have great leaders; you have courageous Soldiers, you will partner with the best security forces in all of Iraq, and you inherit a true opportunity and chance to make a lasting impact in our Nation’s commitment to freedom.”

1st Bn., 30th Inf. Regt. has been transitioning with 3rd Bn., 82nd FA Regt. for nearly a month as they pass over the reins of partnership.

The “Battle Boars” will continue the work of the “Red Dragons” by partnering with the Kirkuk security forces, according to Cook. According to Cook, the strong partnership between 3rd Bn., 82nd FA Regt., and Iraqi Security Forces within the city lead to a decrease in crime, violence and insurgent activities.

“With strong partnerships and cooperation we will continue down this path,” said Lt. Col. Daniel Cormier, the commander of 1st Bn., 30th Inf. Regt. “God willing, Kirkuk will be the model, the example for all of security, prosperity and cooperation.”

Leaders from the various policing organization within Kirkuk city were present for the historic transition. “I want to thank the leaders of Iraq’s security force, our partners who are here today,” said Cormier. “You represent the citizens of Iraq and hope for a better future.”

For the next year, the “Battle Boars” will build a relationship with their ISF partners and work to continue to progress made in Kirkuk city, according to Cormier.

“I would like to leave the Battle Boars with a quote from Larry the Cable Guy... Battle Boars, let’s get-er done,” said Cook.



Lt. Col. Terry P. Cook, the commander of 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, salutes the colors during a ceremony where they cased their colors and transferred partnership to 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, on Forward Operating Base Warrior on Dec. 10.



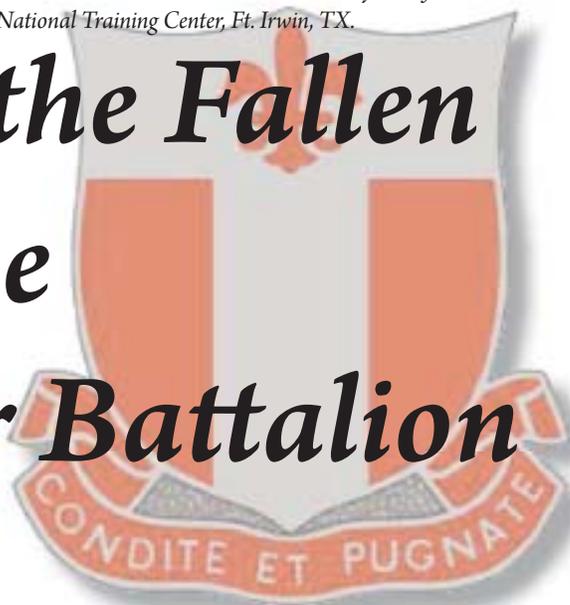


The Ready First Combat Team observes a moment of silence for the Fallen of the 20th Engineer Battalion.

The "Ready First" Combat Team honors the Soldiers of the 20th Engineers who lost their lives on November 5th in a cowardly act of terrorism. The 20th Engineers and the "Ready First" Combat Team served side by side at the National Training Center, Ft. Irwin, TX.

A Tribute to the Fallen of the 20th Engineer Battalion

READY FIRST



The Ready First Combat Team salutes the Soldiers of the 20th Engineer Battalion.