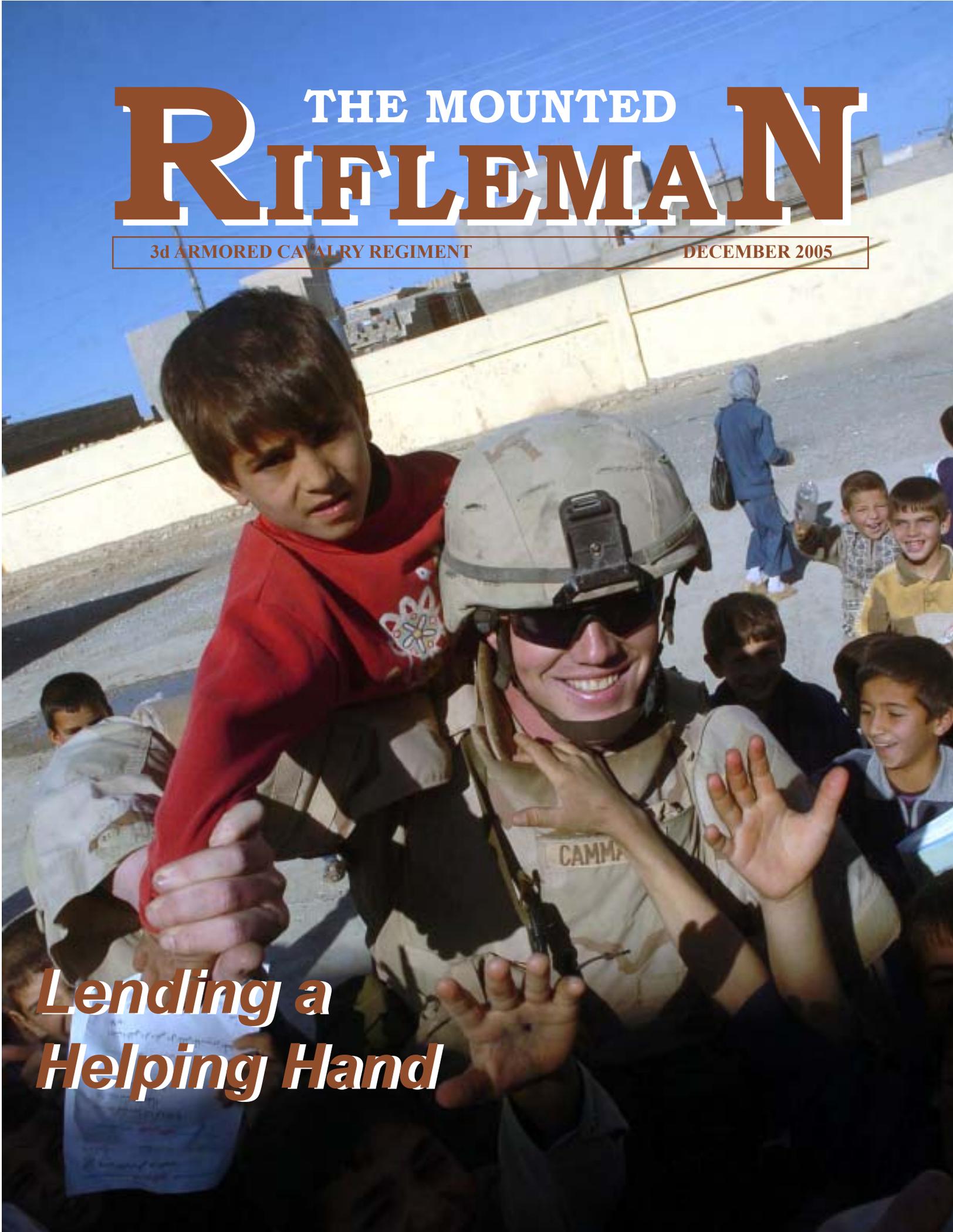


THE MOUNTED RIFLEMAN

3d ARMORED CAVALRY REGIMENT

DECEMBER 2005



*Lending a
Helping Hand*

THE MOUNTED RIFLEMAN



**Published monthly by the
3d Armored
Cavalry Regiment**

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The Mounted Rifleman is the official publication for the Troopers, Noncommissioned Officers, Officers, family members and friends of the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment. Views expressed herein are those of the authors.

The Mounted Rifleman is the primary Command Information tool of the Regimental command leadership. Its mission is to foster esprit de corps, enhance morale and keep Troopers informed throughout the Regiment.

ABOUT THIS

ISSUE

First and foremost, on behalf of the Regiment of Mounted Rifleman, Happy Holidays to all of our family members and friends of the Regiment.

It is hard to believe that we have made it to this point of our deployment here in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom III. In some instances, it seemed as time passed quickly; and there were days when time crept slowly on by.

We can measure our successes here by taking a look back at significant milestones the Regiment has accomplished since arriving in early March.

One such milestone was securing and setting the conditions for the Iraqi people to participate in the National Elections held Dec. 15.

Words cannot express what this day meant for the millions of Iraqis who put their lives at risk to make their voice heard through the democratic process.

Our Troopers made that happen. Our Troopers have assisted our Iraqi Security Forces counterparts by training and leading them to become a capable force.

Our Troopers have shaped the opinions of young Iraqi children - the future of Iraq - by renovating schools and volunteering their own sweat and energy to enhance the educational experience for those children.

Our Troopers have lent a helping hand to the cause of establishing freedom and peace in Iraq. We can reflect during this holiday period and say to ourselves - job well done.

Finally, some of our Troopers have once again paid the ultimate sacrifice in defending our nation and helping the Iraqi's secure theirs.

Sgt. 1st Class Eric Pearrow and Spc. Jason Kubasak are heroes who will go down in the legacy of Troopers who have served our Regiment with distinction and honor.

We are truly thankful and we will honor these heroes everyday.

-- The Editor



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks

Cover: 1st Lt. Christopher Cammack, platoon leader, Howitzer Battery, Second Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, lifts an Iraqi child during a visit to a local school in Tal Afar on Dec. 11. Left: Sgt. LaMont James, left, and Sgt. Peter Crouch, both of Aviation Intermediate Maintenance Troop, Fourth Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, install a water hose to the school's water tank as part of repairing the school's plumbing system. See related articles and photos of the operation on Pages 28-31.

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Cover photo by Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks

During this holiday period, I would like to first thank our Soldiers and their families for their service to our nation. Command Sergeant Major Burns and I consider it the greatest privilege of our professional careers to serve alongside the courageous, disciplined, and dedicated troopers of our Regiment.

The holidays have given us the opportunity to reflect on what our Regiment has accomplished over the past ten months. We have seen tremendous change. The Regiment has delivered severe blows to the enemy in South Baghdad and Western Ninewa Province.

These two areas were critical to the enemy because it was in these areas that terrorists planned and organized attacks against the Iraqi people, Iraqi Security forces, and our own forces.

The aggressive actions of our Regiment have denied the enemy these critical safe havens. As a result, the enemy was unable to disrupt the critical steps toward representative government in Iraq.

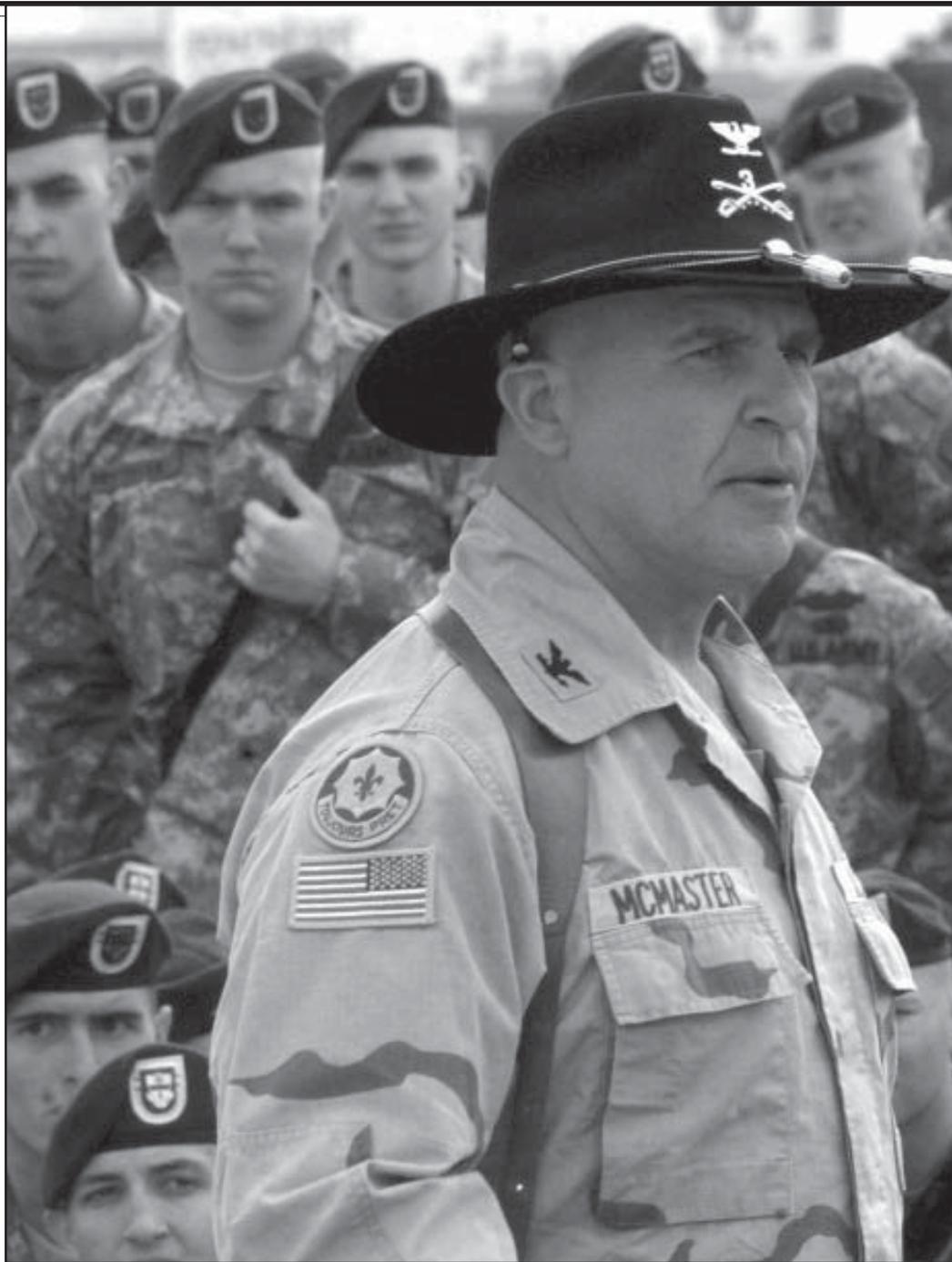
The Constitutional Referendum on the 15th of October, and the National elections on the 15th of December were safe, fair, and free.

Our Regiment has lifted the pall of fear from the people and life is returning to normal.

There is a tremendous sense of momentum – momentum toward peace and security and against the terrorists and murderers who want Iraq to fail.

As a result of our efforts the enemy is weak and getting weaker every day while Iraqi security forces are strong and getting stronger every day.

Our Regiment's area of opera-



A message 71st Colonel o



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks
Col. H.R. McMaster, 71st Colonel of the Regiment, gives words of praise to the paratroopers of the 2nd Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment prior to the unit's award ceremony completing their tour in Iraq in support of the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment's mission in Tal Afar.

e from the f the Regiment

tions is rich in history and military significance.

Alexander the Great marched his army along these same routes in 331 B.C. on his way to fight the Persians on the plains of Northern Iraq.

The Roman ruins in the town of Sinjar and the 16th century Ottoman castle in the center of Tall Afar remind us that Western Ninewa Province has long been a crossroads of civilization.

When the Regiment first arrived in the area, the towns of Biaj and Avgani were under enemy control and corrupt officials at the border town of Rabiya were permitting terrorists and weapons to move freely into Iraq.

Based on the actions of our troopers and Iraqi soldiers, the towns of Biaj and Avgani are back under Iraqi governmental control.

Tiger Squadron, partnered with an Iraqi Army brigade and an Iraqi Border Police Brigade, has reestablished control of the border and the entire border region.

As a result, the enemy can no longer move freely in the area.

Tall Afar was particularly important because it became a base from which terrorists could organize, train, and recruit for the enemy's efforts not only in our area of operations, but also in Mosul and throughout Iraq.

During Operation Restoring Rights, the Regiment, reinforced with over 5,800 Iraqi troops and the 2nd Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment (White Falcons), destroyed the enemy's safe haven in Tall Afar and returned the city to the control of the Iraqi government.

Sabre Squadron, whose determined efforts in Tall Afar set the conditions for success in the operations, is now securing that victory alongside our Iraqi Army brothers

and a new police force.

The enemy was drawn to Tall Afar and Western Ninewa Province for two reasons.

First, the area gave the enemy access to support in Syria. The enemy needs financing, expertise, reinforcements, and people willing to kill themselves to commit mass murder from outside the country.

Controlling this region allowed the enemy to move this support freely across the 300 kilometer border and through towns over which the terrorists gained control in the late summer of 2004.

The second reason that Western Ninewa Province and Tall Afar were important to the terrorists is that Al Qaeda in Iraq, the same murderers who attacked our own nation on Sept. 11, 2001, want Iraq to descend into civil war so terrorist organizations can use this land to plan, organize, and conduct mass murder not only in this region, but across the world and especially against our own nation.

Al Qaeda's goal is the Afghanistan "model." After Soviet forces withdrew from the country, a civil war erupted.

Osama Bin Laden's organization supported the Taliban who, after winning the war, established an Islamist state that hosted Al Qaeda and supported terrorists across the world. Western Ninewa was the ideal place to incite ethnic, sectarian, and tribal conflict because it is populated by

Kurds, Arabs, Yezidis, and Turkomen who are further sub-divided into Turkomen Shia and Turkomen Sunni.

We must defeat the enemy's effort to destabilize Iraq and incite civil war. Our mission is vital to bring security and freedom to 26 million Iraqis who suffered greatly over the

lence throughout the world.

One could argue that the danger we now face is greater than the danger that fascism and Japanese imperialism posed in the Second World War. Over sixty years ago, the "Greatest Generation" defeated the forces of tyranny and oppression.

The troopers of the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen represent the new "Greatest Generation."

Every trooper should be very proud of what our team has accomplished and I know that our families are proud of their Soldiers.

The troopers of this Regiment are making history.

Years from now, when grandchildren ask our troopers what they did during the great War on Terror, our Soldiers won't have to say, "Well, I displayed a yellow ribbon on the back of my car and supported the Soldiers fighting for our nation."

Instead, our troopers will be able to say that they rode with the Brave Rifles and fought to secure the freedom and security that future

generations will enjoy as a result of their great efforts and sacrifices.

They might also say that they fought alongside the finest men and women they have ever known and were part of a team – a family really – in which the soldiers next to them were willing to give all – including their lives – for each other.

They are likely to say that their service in Iraq in the Regiment of



Photo by Sgt. 1st Donald Sparks

Col. H.R. McMaster, 71st Regimental Commander, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, presents a coin to Pfc. William Patterson of Fox Troop, Sabre Squadron.

The troopers of the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen represent the new "Greatest Generation."

past thirty years under Saddam Hussein – one of the most brutal and murderous dictators in history.

It is also vital to securing the future for all civilized people, including our own children.

Indeed, our nation's security is under grave threat in Iraq and I could not be more proud of what the Soldiers of our Regiment are accomplishing to defeat those who want to foment hatred, insecurity, and vio-

Mounted Riflemen was the toughest experience in their lives.

They are also likely to say that their experience in combat alongside their fellow troopers was the most fulfilling and most important time in their lives. The next generation of Americans will refer to our troopers as heroes and they will be right to regard them as such.

I want to thank our families for the support that you give our troopers and the sacrifices you make.

The war has placed extraordinary demands on military spouses and children.

I hope that the pride associated with what your Soldier has accomplished on our important mission and the profound gratitude of our nation, our Army, and our Regiment will serve as some compensation for those sacrifices.

Since the Secretary of the Army announced the Regiment's impending move to Fort Hood in June, I know that the uncertainty associated with that announcement and the general lack of information has been a source of anxiety for many of you.

Although there are no guidelines officially published, I have asked the rear detachment and the chain of command forward to give you the information that we have so you might gain some insight into your future prior to your Soldier redeploying.

The chain of command and I will do all we can to accommodate Soldier and family preferences and our Army is doing all it can to generate options for Soldiers and families.

A move to Fort Hood this summer about three to four months after we return from Iraq is certainly destabilizing in the short term.

– change designed to bring stability in the long term – entails additional turbulence in the short term until the reorganization is complete.

I believe that the next several years will permit Soldiers and families to rebalance their lives.

The Regiment's return to Iraq only ten months after returning resulted from the unpredictability of war.

At the outset of the war in Iraq, planners predicted far fewer US troops in Iraq in 2005.

Enemy attacks in April and November of 2004, however, and the effect of these attacks on fragile Iraqi Army and police forces resulted in the need to commit additional forces sooner.

Our Army did what others have done for centuries when faced with a difficult situation – it called on the cavalry.

As Soldiers and families contemplate their future, I ask that they take two things into consideration – the intangible rewards of service and the fact that future service will entail far less turbulence and allow for more

time at home.

The chain of command and I will support fully every Soldier who decides to transition to civilian life – you have served with distinction in time of war.

The troopers in our Regiment, however, have an unprecedented level of experience in one of our Army's elite combat formations.

We need troopers with that level of experience and leadership ability



Photo by Sgt. 1st Donald Sparks

Col. H.R. McMaster, 71st Regimental Commander, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, congratulates Lt. Col. James Daniels with a kiss following his promotion.

Our Army did what others have done for centuries when faced with a difficult situation - it called on the cavalry.

Considering the high percentage of turnover that the Regiment will experience upon our return from Iraq, however, it is best to move the Regiment before replacements arrive – replacements who would then have to move soon after arriving at Fort Carson.

All of us recognize that the demands of the war in Iraq have imbalanced Soldiers' personal lives.

The transformation of the Army



Photo by Sgt. 1st Donald Sparks

Col. H.R. McMaster, 71st Regimental Commander, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, hands out stuffed animals to iraqi children in Tal Afar, Iraq on Christmas Day.

to lead our Soldiers through this turbulent period, sustain the high level of competence and excellence in our Army, and defeat the enemies of our nation.

I ask troopers and families to consider re-enlisting.

Our nation needs you; our Army needs you; and, most importantly, your fellow troopers need your leadership and expertise.

If there is anything that the chain of command or our reenlistment team can do to give you an option that you and your family would like, we will do it.

All of us consider this a top priority. The bulk of the Regiment will

return from late February through early March.

As Soldiers return from Iraq, emphasis will be on reintegrating troopers with their families.

We are planning our block leave

...Our nation needs you, our Army needs you, and most importantly, your fellow troopers need your leadership...

to align with school Spring breaks – the window will be from the middle of March until the middle of April.

After block leave, the emphasis will be on receiving the Regiment's

equipment, changes of command at the troop and squadron level, and preparing the Regiment for the move to Fort Hood in the summer.

December has not been without loss for the Regiment. Sgt. Timothy Boyce (Maintenance Troop) passed away and Spc. Jared Kubasak (Ironhawk Troop) was killed in action.

Both men died serving their nation and their fellow troopers. The families of our fallen and wounded troopers remain in our thoughts and prayers and we will continue to honor our fallen comrades with our deeds as we continue our vital mission.

A message from the XVII CSM of the Regiment

I had the opportunity to visit with soldiers from across the Regiment on Christmas Eve and Christmas day. The food and celebrations our Soldiers enjoyed were excellent. Morale was high. Many troopers expressed concern to me over their future as the Regiment faces the move to Fort Hood, Texas.

Details are still pending from the Department of the Army, but I assure you that I will do everything I can to help our noncommissioned officers and Soldiers as they move on to their next assignment or transition into civilian life.

I ask that before anyone makes the final decision to leave the Army that you go home, take block leave, and take time to reflect on what you have accomplished and how you have contributed to the war effort.

I know many Soldiers who left the Army after the Gulf War in 1991. They found that life in the Civilian sector was not challenging and rewarding enough and returned to the Army.

Many former noncommissioned officers had to start over at a lower rank and work their way up again.

I could not be more proud of the discipline the Regiment has exhibited in combat here in Iraq.

I firmly believe that the discipline enforced by the Regiment's noncommissioned officers and adhered to by the enlisted Soldiers has saved lives in combat.

Consequently, we have been able to focus on bring-

ing the fight to the enemy.

At the same time, we must all take this level of discipline to the next level as we begin to transition with 1st Brigade of the 1st Armored Division.

The end of a deployment is the most dangerous time for our Troopers because we are so familiar with our equipment and the enemy that sometimes we can take them for granted.

It is up to all leaders and troopers to guard against



Photo by Sgt. 1st Donald Sparks

Command Sgt. Maj. William Burns, XVII Command Sergeant Major, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, shares a moment with Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Flowers, 2nd Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment during the unit's award ceremony.

this complacency. This goes through our port operations in Kuwait and at home as we re-integrate into society. Surviving a tour in combat does nothing to make us invincible.

My country 'tis of thee

Cav troopers become American citizens during Naturalization Ceremony at Saddam's former palace in Baghdad

By Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks
NCOIC, 3rd ACR Public Affairs

As a young boy growing up in the Dominican Republic, Amaury Lantigua always wanted to serve in the military.

He was particularly impressed by the discipline the men in uniform exemplified every time he saw them.

At age 20 Lantigua left his native country in June 2001 and arrived to the U.S. where he settled in Manhattan, N.Y.

In January 2003, he pursued his childhood dream – this time wearing the uniform of the United States.

Now a tanker and sergeant, Lantigua fulfilled

another dream when he gained his U.S. citizenship during the Multi National Corps-Iraq Naturalization Ceremony held Dec. 20 at the Al-Faw Palace on Camp Victory in Baghdad.

Lantigua was one of 13 troopers assigned to the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regi-

ment [representing nine countries] to raise their right hand and take the oath to become American citizens.

There were 66 servicemembers in Iraq participating in the ceremony.

Lt. Gen. John R. Vines, MNCI commander, spoke to newest group of naturalized American citizens and made reference to their service to the nation.



Photos by Sgt. 1st Donald Sparks

Spc. Franciso Alfaro, center, assigned to Support Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, recites the Pledge of Allegiance during the Mult National Corps-Iraq Naturalization Ceremony on Dec. 20.

“It’s ironic that the men and women who are about to become American citizens spend a significant portion of their lives defending it,” Vines said. “Before they were American citizens, they were willing to risk everything to defend a nation.”

Vines mentioned that the most coveted title in the world today is not president or general, but that of an American citizen.

The Oath of Citizenship was led by John M. Bulger, district director for the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service.

Each servicemember was given a certificate and a folded U.S. flag.

Sgt. Reisom Markose, a cannon crew member assigned to Tiger Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, recites the Naturalization Oath of Allegiance to the United States.





“Who would have thought that we would be sitting here in a beautiful foyer built by one of the most brutal dictators in the world has known, yet here we are trying to make Iraq the land of the free and it’s done by your bravery,” Bulger said.

Bulger went on to praise the men and women after hearing their individual stories about coming to America and reasons for serving in the armed forces.

“The National Anthem has taken on a new meaning for me today,” Bulger said. “This is my first opportunity to be in a combat zone, and after hearing your stories I realized America really is the land of the free and you all are the brave.”

For Lantigua, assigned to Heavy Company, 2nd Squadron, 3rd ACR, the third time was the charm for him to gain his citizenship.

He missed his first opportunity due to his first deployment to Iraq in 2003 and his second chance while he was on leave.

“I almost missed this one because I was preparing security for the Iraqi elections, but I was told by my leaders I wouldn’t miss this chance,” Lantigua said. “I am really excited because when you come to the United States, becoming a citizen is the first thing you want to do.”

After all the fanfare, Lantigua called his mother who still lives in the Dominican Republic to tell her his great news – in a jokingly manner.

“I told her my new name is now Harry Potter,” he said revealing laughter. “She said, ‘What, you’re not Dominican anymore?’ I assured her that I still had my name, but I’m now an American. She was proud.”

The other 3rd ACR troopers gaining their citizenship were Spc. Nasir Adams, Spc. Francisco Alfaro, Sgt. Daniel Arias, Spc. Adel Gabriel, Pfc. Anthony Garganera, Sgt. Reisom Markose, Spc. Bruce Mohan, Sgt. Enrique Palis, Spc. Christopher Rodgers, Spc. Rodriguez, Spc. Makara Son, and Spc. Thao Vangsoua.

Iraqi Police open new station in Tal Afar

Marks milestone for city in reconstruction, security efforts

By Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks
NCOIC, 3rd ACR Public Affairs

With one quick snip of the scissors, Tal Afar Police Chief Gen. Fawaz Mahmoud Issa officially opened the new Al Salam Police Station during a ribbon-cutting ceremony in Tal Afar held Dec 27. The event marked a milestone for Tal Afar's Police Department as part of efforts to restore the city's quality of life and security.

Last year terrorists destroyed a police station in Tal Afar, however, the opening of the new station represents a resurrection of the police force according to city officials.

"We're very thankful for the Coalition Forces for their support in building this police station," said Tal Afar Mayor's Assistant Gen. Sabah Hamidi Mohammed. "We also want to thank the military police for their training of our police officers and police force."

The new police station building features a holding cell, an arms room, investigation and intelligence cells, an interrogation room, and an information desk.

Currently 180 Iraqi Police officers will be assigned to the station, with an additional 60 officers scheduled to be added to the force.

Posters featuring the Iraqi Police Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics adorned the walls of the new station.

The opening of the station brings personal satisfaction and accomplishment for Capt. Carlie Ortego, 2nd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, who has assisted in the recruiting and training of the Iraqi Police and served as the project manager of the station.

"When we [3rd ACR] first got here, we thought we might open three police stations in Tal Afar," said

Ortego, from Lafayette, La. "But before we leave we'll have three up and running, with six more scheduled to open shortly after our departure. It's just amazing."

Ortego mentioned when the regiment arrived in April there were approximately 200 police in the city, but now there are more than 600 on the ground and another 900 at police academies in Jordan and Mosul.

"We had some early obstacles related to security upon our arrival," Ortego said. "But after the successful operations two months ago [Operation Restoring Rights], it allowed my job to flourish and for me to get the Iraqi Police all the resources they needed."



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks
Tal Afar Police Chief Gen. Fawaz Mahmoud Issa snips the ribbon to officially open the new Al Salam Police Station during grand opening ceremonies Dec. 27 in Tal Afar. The building, which was funded through 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment reconstruction efforts, features a holding cell, investigation and intelligence cells, an interrogation room and an information desk.

The opening of the station also allowed Ortego to keep a promise she made to the Iraqi Police.

"I told them to be patient as we were standing up the police force," she said. "I promised them new equipment and a new building and here it is. This building will give them the motivation to do their jobs and it shows we believe in them. I kept my word."



TIGER SQUADRON

By Lt. Col. Gregory Reilly
Tiger Squadron Commander

The Squadron continues to excel in so many ways by achieving all missions with distinction, style, and class. This is due as a result of great company level leadership and by the hard work of our outstanding Troopers.

As December came, so did the cold weather, the Christmas holidays and the Iraqi national elections. The elections were extremely successful, the weather was bitterly cold, and our Troopers celebrated in their own special way absent their loved ones.

Through all this, they remained focused on the mission, and reminisced about life back home.

The December Iraqi National Elections were a complete and total success. The Squadron planned, coordinated, and provided security for 37 different polling sites spread throughout an area that was 120 miles wide and sixty miles in depth.

Over 130,000 Iraqis came forward in Tiger's area to cast their vote for the future of Iraq. Working together with the Iraqi Army, the Iraqi Police, and Bor-

der Police ensured there were no incidents or violence during the election.

The election was festive as schools were closed, with men and women coming to the polls to vote. Campaign posters and political parties lobbied to the very end to influence the Iraqi voters.

It is just amazing how quickly the Iraqis have adapted to democracy, and the vigor they demonstrate while participating in the process.

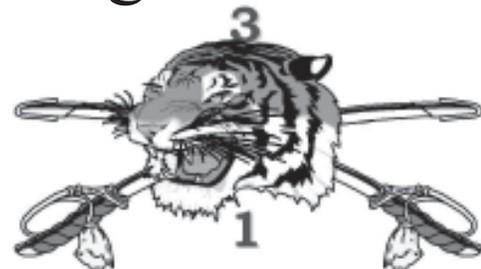
All units celebrated Christmas by decorating, erecting Christmas trees and eating a grand Christmas dinner.

Maj. Bryan Radliff, the Squadron executive officer, scaled the mountain of Sinjar to cut down a tree for each unit, which proved to be a feat only worthy of the "Teeth of the Regiment."

I heard many of the Soldiers compliment their Family Readiness Groups, as they provided gifts for the Soldiers. It was a monumental effort, raising funds, purchasing gifts and mailing hundreds of packages to our Soldiers, in order to make a difference.

See **TIGER**, Page 16

It is just **amazing** how **quickly** the Iraqis have adapted to democracy, and the vigor they demonstrate while **participating** in the process.





Courtesy photos

Crazyhorse Green Quarter Troop and Iraqi Border Police conducts a joint patrol.

Crazyhorse troopers train, bond with Iraqi Army soldiers at border fort

Mounted Rifleman Reports

For those who communicate frequently with Crazyhorse Green Quarter Troop there was an unusual two-week period with no phone calls or e-mails.

Green Quarter Troop, 1st Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, which has been serving in Western Ninewa Province near the city of Sinjar, Iraq, recently went for a two-week extended mission to the Iraqi/Syrian border.

Their mission was to train the Iraqi Border Police in combat operations

specifically patrolling. This mission was unique in that it incorporated the Iraqi Army as teachers for the first time and familiarized them to the border.

To make this operation happen it required Green Quarter Troop to pick up from their original mission and

move out to the border for a period of two weeks from Nov. 14-30.

This was not a completely new assignment since they had been there before in July for a total of 21 days on a previous mission.

“The training of IBP has transitioned from very basic marksmanship skills to now moving into day and night patrolling,” said 2nd Lt. James Duty, platoon leader, Crazyhorse Green 1.

Four-day classes were taught by senior U.S. and Iraqi Army noncommissioned officer instructors. The IA was responsible for



Crazyhorse Green Quarter Troop and Iraqi Border Police captured smugglers attempting to cross the Iraqi-Syria border with more than 700 sheep.

See **BORDER**,
Page 15

teaching squad movement and ambush techniques. 3rd ACR NCOs taught reconnaissance and observation skills in a mounted and dismounted role.

“The students were very involved with note taking and asking questions during the classes,” Duty said. “After the classroom instruction and rehearsals, the students were broken into several squads and given a patrolling schedule. They would go out with IA and U.S. instructors to encourage correct techniques and reinforce training.”

According to Duty the Iraqi Army were encouraged by the 3rd ACR leaders to make on-the-spot corrections and reinforce their new training techniques.

“It was a good chance to pound the ground,” said Sgt. Dominic Taverna.



Courtesy photo

Staff Sgt. Brian Flamer, Crazyhorse Troop, 1st Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, instructs Iraqi Border Police on reconnaissance and observation skills in a mounted and dismounted role, during the unit's two-week mission at Border Fort 22 to train the border police.

The two-week mission allowed the troopers to learn more about each other's culture. Living beside Iraqi forces gave Soldiers a chance to personally interact with them and develop a solid working relationship.

“It was nice to see Iraqis from a different point of view. They are actually really nice people,” said Sgt. Paul Marotz.

Sgt. Joseph Jaggears described them as “curious and considerate” people.

“It was nice to see Iraqis from a different point of view. They are actually really nice people.”

**-- Sgt. Paul Marotz,
Crazyhorse Troop, 1-3**

Towards the end of the two-week period at the border fort, the Cav troopers prepared to celebrate Thanksgiving. It was also a time for the troopers to enlighten their Iraqi counterparts on the tradition of the American holiday.

“The tradition of having a turkey is important and we shared this with the Iraqis,” Duty said. “We were able to buy two turkeys which were shared for a Thanksgiving meal.”

During a night patrol on Nov. 22, the joint force captured seven detainees and approximately 700 sheep.

The Iraqis celebrated the capture by butchering several sheep at the courtyard and prepared a feast for the Soldiers.

The process of gutting them and using every part of the sheep was new for some soldiers.

As one Soldier said “There was a language barrier but it was more different than just that.”

All of the troopers agreed the border experience was crucial in devel-

oping future capabilities of Iraq.

“The Iraqis, after four or five patrols, were getting pretty good at patrolling, and each one was better than the previous patrol,” said Pfc. Thomas Brown.

“The operation was important to our ability to train Iraqis, to perform the mission, and teach them to be able to teach the next Soldier as well,” Duty said. “Watching Iraqis teaching other Iraqis was seen as a great victory by Green Quarter Troop.”

TIGER from Page 13

Once again, our Family Readiness Groups have surpassed all expectations by supporting our Soldiers deployed in Iraq.

Our Soldiers had a feast on Christmas consisting of turkey, roast beef, ham, mashed potatoes, crab, shrimp, assorted pies and ice cream. Our cooks are truly amazing, putting their special touch on the meal in order to provide only the best for our Soldiers.

It is fascinating how our Soldiers decorated with the materials they had available to make Christmas in Iraq as special as possible.

I spoke to most of our units on Christmas Day, thanking them for their sacrifice to our Nation and their commitment to our mission.

As we celebrated the holidays our mission continued. Apache Troop continues to maintain stability and make progress in their assigned area.

Their mission includes training Iraqi police, Iraqi Army forces and improving Iraqi border defenses.

Bandit Troop continues to secure areas around Rabiya, to improve border defenses, the Iraqi Police, and training Iraqi Army.

Crazyhorse Troop, improves border surveillance, working with Iraqi Army and maintaining surveillance of the border.

King Battery continues to improve relations in several towns, secures several routes and assists in providing indirect fire if required.

Predator Battery continues to secure a very contentious route, secures Tiger's main base camp, and improves stability in several Iraqi communities.

Dragon Company continues to secure routes in Tal Afar, and improves areas in their assigned zone.

Roughrider Troop continues to provide flawless support to the Squadron that is positioned at three separate locations.

We welcome the new Command Sergeant Major of Tiger Squadron, Command Sgt. Maj. Jonathan J. Hunt and his wife Jeanine.

Command Sgt. Maj. Hunt has served over 20 years in our Army in every leadership position from Section Sergeant to Platoon Sergeant and First Sergeant.

He served as the Regimental Operations Sergeant Major since June of 2004, and brings extensive experience serving in Cavalry organizations and is the Squadron's new senior Scout.



We are extremely fortunate to have a warrior of his caliber, one who is dedicated to the absolute best leadership of our Squadron.

We are extremely fortunate to have a warrior of his caliber, one who is dedicated to the absolute best leadership of our Squadron.

As we turn the corner on 2006, we have another election to prepare for in February, and then we will slowly begin preparations for our redeployment.

We are always seeking ways to improve the conditions of the Iraqi people, conducting medical visits, distributing food and water; building schools and clinics, and assisting the Iraqis in understanding the progression process in Iraq.

Tiger Squadron is extremely versatile, agile,

and determined to get every mission accomplished and to do so at the least cost.

Our leaders and Troopers continue to make our Regiment and Army proud, demonstrating time and again that the most difficult missions seem effortless when led by competent leaders and executed by aggressive and determined Soldiers.

I am so very proud of their resilience and accomplishments. Tiger Squadron, working as a team in Iraq, with the flawless and unwavering support of our Rear Detachment and awesome Family Readiness Group, combine to make Tiger an extraordinary organization.

Tiger 6



SABRE SQUADRON

By Lt. Col. Christopher Hickey
Sabre Squadron Commander

Seasons Greetings from Tal' Afar, Iraq! This is truly a special time of year, not only for our Soldiers as the Christmas Holidays approach, but even more so for the Iraqi people who are set to vote for their first elected government in their lifetimes.

The anticipation for both Soldiers and Iraqis is palpable throughout the city at this special time of year and this special moment in history.

I was recently able to return to the States for a couple weeks, during which time I got the opportunity to visit with many of our wounded Soldiers currently at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

It was an amazing and uplifting experience to see these Soldiers who, in the best of spirits, are working to get their lives back to a relative degree of normalcy after incredibly traumatic events.

Sgt. Leroy Scott, one of our Grim Troop Heroes and a truly inspirational person to be around, had just received his prosthetic leg and took his first steps on it toward me while I was there.

Another of our Heroes from Grim Troop, Sgt. Jeremy Wolfsteller, turned down an in-person offer from the President of the United States to pin his Purple Heart on him because he had already coordinated to have Col.

Teeple, the former Regimental Commander, pin him.

The bravery and continued dedication to the 3rd ACR displayed by these Soldiers was an experience I will not soon forget and one that renewed my vigor to return to the fight at hand in Tal' Afar.

Throughout my absence and since my return, Sabre Squadron, in conjunction with Iraqi Security Forces, has been working diligently to secure Tal' Afar for the upcoming elections; a task that will culminate on Dec. 15 as the populace of Tal' Afar and the surrounding areas goes to the polls to vote for their new leadership.

Combined operations with the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police have continued to showcase their progress.

With each operation they are able to assume a larger role than in the previous ones, and the support the Iraqi Security Forces are providing for their country in the upcoming elections is something they can rightfully feel proud of.

The Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police leadership continue to express their wishes to be made a larger part of the security of their own country, and each month, as their competence continues to grow, we are able to hand over more responsibility.

Although this is a special time of year, and we are all looking forward to the Holidays, as well as to the

See **SABRE**, Page 18

The Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police leadership continue to express their wishes to be made a larger part of the security of their own country...



SABRE from Page 17

elections and beginning preparations to go home, it is bittersweet in many ways.

The elections occur in a few days, after which the climactic and historic moment for which we have prepared all year will have passed.

Furthermore, as we start thinking about spending time with our families back home in only a couple short months, we also begin to realize that we may never see many of the great and heroic people that we have gotten the opportunity to work with over the past year.

It will soon be up to the Iraqi Police and Iraqi Army, as well as the city leadership of Tal' Afar to take the forefront in the fight to bring long-term sta-

bility to this region and to their fellow countrymen.

Although we will pray for their success when we are home, we currently still have the ability to set them up for a better chance at victory.

Our time is getting short and the pressure not to waste it is starting to set in. We look forward to our mission being complete, but we won't have achieved our goal until we have done everything in our power to ensure the future success of this region.

The mission only ends soon for us; for the people of Iraq it will be an ongoing battle and we must not fail them in the time we have left.

BRAVE RIFLES! AI-EE-YAH!

Sabre 6

All-Madden captures first-ever Dust Bowl

By Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks
NCOIC, 3rd ACR Public Affairs

Staring at his team during warm-ups for the flag-football championship game, All-Madden Head Coach Christopher Alaimalo only had several thoughts in his mind.

Although his team entered the game with the league's best record at 14-1, the best defense and the most explosive offense, Alaimalo was still worried.

"I just don't want my players to be overconfident and cocky," said Alaimalo, from American Samoa. "This team across the field will be competitive."

His words were true as All-Madden defeated the G-Men 12-7 in the first-ever Dust Bowl to capture the flag-football title Dec. 28 at Forward Operating Base Sykes, Iraq.

All-Madden, comprised of players from Headquarters and Headquarters Troop and Howitzer Battery, 2nd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment was led by two-way player Rashawn Quinzon who had two interceptions and a 73-yard touchdown reception.

Quinzon, who played both receiver and safety at Lincoln High School in Detroit, played the entire game.

The G-Men, representing Renegade Troop, 4th

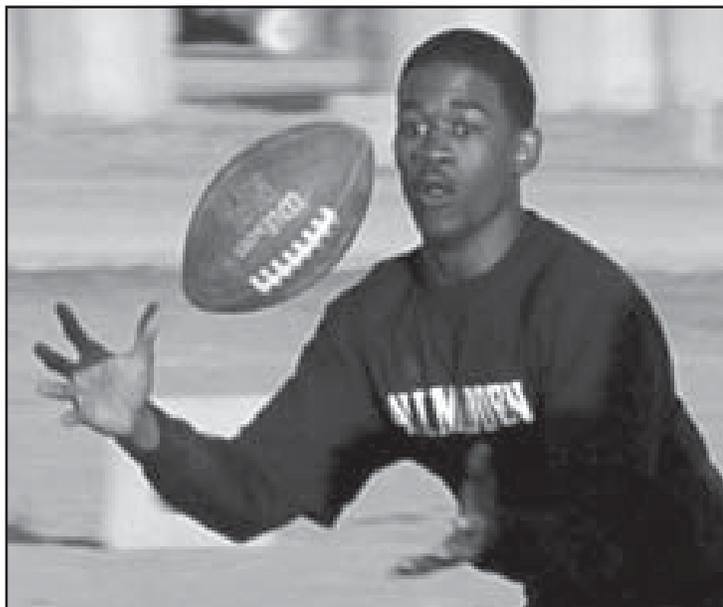


Photo by Photographer's Mate First Class Alan Monyelle

All-Madden running back Jason Smalls receives the football on an option play during the Forward Operating Base Sykes flag-football championship held Dec. 28.

Squadron, 3rd ACR, entered the game at 10-4, with two of their losses to All-Madden.

In the first half after falling behind 6-0 on Quinzon's touchdown catch from quarterback D.J. Collins, less

See DUST BOWL, Page 19



Photo by Photographer's Mate First Class Alan Monyelle

G-Men quarterback Fabian Harrison is stopped in his tracks by the All-Madden defense. The game was hyped as the Dust Bowl with All-Madden winning 12-7 to capture the title.

than a minute after grabbing his first interception, the G-Men rallied on their next offensive series.

Quarterback Fabian Harrison led the G-Men on an 80-yard scoring drive in which he converted three fourth-down opportunities. On a crucial fourth-and-3, Harrison scampered for four yards.

After gaining a first down on fourth down from a defensive penalty, Harrison evaded a sack and found Ryan Santos open at the goal line for the tying score.

The G-Men made their extra point after attempt it's only lead of the game.

With less than two minutes remaining in the half, All-Madden began its eventual winning scoring drive. After a near-turnover, Collins regained his composure and started picking apart G-Men's defense.

After consecutive completions and a quarterback keeper putting All-Madden inside the G-Men's 10-yard line, Collins hit receiver Jason Smalls for a 7-yard touchdown catch

and run.

After failing to convert their second extra-point attempt, All-Madden led 12-7 just before the end of the first half. All-Madden didn't lose a game all season leading at halftime, but Alaimalo still told his team to remain focused and to play with intensity.

During halftime, G-Men Head Coach Eric Mitchell urged his defense to contain All-Madden's option-oriented offense.

"I told my linebackers to stay home and contain their quarterback when he runs the option play," Mitchell said. "But mostly all we need is a turnover. If we can force a turnover or two, we'll win this game."

However on G-Men's first offensive play of the second half, Harrison threw his second interception to Quinzon much to Mitchell's dismay.

On the next play Harrison made up for his mistake by intercepting Collins near the G-Men's goal line.

Although his team got the turn-

over he wanted, Mitchell watched his offense struggle to move the ball in the rest of the second half.

But his defense, led by linebacker Marlon Lonebear, countered by shutting down All-Madden's offense and giving the G-Men one final attempt with less than four minutes to play.

Driving up the field as time ticked away, Harrison tried to lead the comeback but time expired with the G-Men less than 20 yards away from the winning score.

"I was kind of worried on that last drive," Alaimalo said after the game. "I knew they were not going to quit. They just wouldn't give up, but my players didn't let up."

Despite losing the championship game, Harrison was proud of the effort his teammates gave on the field.

"Whenever you have turnovers like we did against a good team like All-Madden, they will hurt you," Harrison said. "We made them play hard, but it just came down to one play that hurt us."



THUNDER SQUADRON

By Lt. Col. Ross A. Brown
Thunder Squadron Commander

Dear Friends and Families of Thunder Squadron, happy holidays and greetings from southern Baghdad.

Thunder Squadron continues the counter insurgency fight in the MND-B Area of Operations where our Soldiers are winning the fight against the enemy.

We continue to operate as a member of the 4th (Vanguard) Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, but we will soon transition and become attached to the 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division and the 4th Infantry Division.

December has been a decisive month for our effort against the enemy.

The Squadron conducted seven major operations where air assault, mounted maneuver, and Iraqi Army forces combined to disrupt and destroy enemy forces throughout our Area of Operations in the weeks prior to the national elections.

Our offensive operations have also been key to the decrease in the number of attacks in the heart of Baghdad.

Overall, the election was a violence-free success for the people in our area.

We will continue to maintain the offensive and kill or capture the enemy until relieved by our successors.

Thunder!

Thunder 6

“As the Soldiers of Thunder Squadron **continue** the counter insurgency fight, their determination remains unshaken and their **dedication** to mission accomplishment **drives** the Squadron forward.”



Mad Dog mourns loss of hero, leader

Spc. Dan Balda
4th BCT PAO

Soldiers assigned to the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment came together to mourn the loss of a fellow Soldier at Forward Operating Base Falcon Nov. 30.

Sgt. 1st Class Eric Pearrow, a Platoon Sergeant assigned to Mad Dog Company, 3rd Squadron, 3rd ACR was killed Thanksgiving Day in a tank accident.

Lt. Col. Ross Brown, 3-3's battalion commander spoke with the audience at length about his decision to move Pearrow's platoon leader to another platoon because of "his talent, maturity and leadership; but also because of my complete faith in Pearrow as a leader," he said.

Brown recalled how lucky he was to have spoken with Pearrow Thanksgiving Day. On Thanksgiving Day, hours before Pearrow died, Brown was able to speak with him.

"I explained it was my confidence in him that played such a large part in why I moved his lieutenant. I'm very thankful I was able to tell sergeant Pearrow this before he died."

Brown did have one solace from Pearrow's death however.

"He died doing something that he loved to do, that was to tank," Brown said. "He thrived in being a tanker on the move and in the fight."

Pearrow's company commander, Capt Michael Hensley preferred to remember him as a hero.

"The kind of hero we dreamt

about being as kids," Hensley said. "Pearrow was a professional non-commissioned officer who was extremely dedicated. He served his country with the vigor and tenacity of a true cavalry trooper."



Photo by Spc. Dan Balda

2nd Lt. Pedro Rivera, a platoon leader assigned to M Troop, 3rd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, shares his memories of Sgt. 1st Class Eric Pearrow Nov. 30 at FOB Falcon during a memorial service for the fallen Soldier who was killed on Thanksgiving Day.

He shared a story of his first meetings as a new company commander with his platoon sergeants to discuss their Soldiers.

"Initially Pearrow was laid back and quiet," Hensley said. "He would present his information but never expand it beyond the topic we were covering.

"As we went on and I learned more about him, I realized that everything I needed to know was just

a question away. Anytime I would stop in he would smirk, he would huff and he would ensure that I knew the displeasure with the tasking or mission that was falling on Maddog. And then I would learn that he had already looked at this issue and developed a way to fix it."

According to Hensley, Pearrow not only met the standard but he made sure he was developing the standard as well.

"He would take my company standards, even the ones he thought were garrison policies, revise them, improve them and emplace them to ensure that his Soldiers led the way," Hensley said. "He led from the front and ensured their health and welfare came first. He loved his job, he loved his platoon and even though we lost him last week we can be comforted that he died doing what he loved."

White Platoon Leader, 2nd Lt. Pedro Rivera, had an especially unique story to share with the assembled mourners. He had known Pearrow in some way, shape or form for the last 10 years. They had been stationed together as both young NCO's and drill sergeants.

Rivera remembered the two of them as "young tank gunners trying to take over the whole armor force." He explained how even 10 years ago, Pearrow's skills as a tanker went high above all his peers and most of his supervisors.

They reunited later as drill sergeants in the same training company

See PEARROW, Page 22

at Fort Knox. As they neared the end of their time training young privates, Rivera prepared to head off to Officer Candidate School and the two young men thought it would be funny if after Rivera earned his commission he became Pearrow's platoon leader.

They laughed at the absurdity of the whole idea as they each left to their new assignments.

A year and a half later their paths crossed yet again, this time in Iraq in the same company, Rivera commanding Pearrow's platoon.

"As a platoon sergeant, Eric always placed readiness first," Rivera said. "He believed by doing that he was protecting his Soldiers from the dangers of this deployment. He was an old school tanker, who ran his platoon efficiently and always to standard.

"I was truly honored to be assigned to the same platoon as he was, this time I was his PL, during my first night out on patrol he showed me the squadrons AO and briefed me on it.

"That night we talked for hours about the old days, old friends. We also laughed about the times we got in

trouble. Eric is a true tanker, a true hero, a true friend, and we owe him more than we can ever repay."

Sgt. Chris Hanmer knew Pearrow from basic training as well. Except in his case Pearrow was his drill sergeant.

"When I heard my drill sergeant from basic training was going to be my platoon sergeant, I was nervous, but just like anything he had another side that not everyone saw," Hanmer said. "Even though he was physically one of the biggest men I have ever seen, he was just a big kid who loved to play with his toys.

"The Army was the place where he found them. He took me under his wing as his mentor and showed me how to lead and to be a better person. He was like a dad to me."

Rivera summed up the assembled mourners feelings best when he finished his remarks with, "Eric, I am much honored to have served with you as a young non-com, as a drill sergeant and as your platoon leader. Thank you for the memories and the good times we had."



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks
A trooper from 3rd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment grasps the identification tags of Spc. Jared Kubasak.

Kubasak's sense of humor remembered during memorial

By Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks
NCOIC, 3rd ACR Public Affairs

Following the memorial service for one of their fallen comrades, the echo of Ironhawk Troop Soldiers patting the backs of their fellow brothers in arms blended harmoniously with the soft music being played at the service.

One by one each Soldier lined up to pay final honors to Spc. Jared Kubasak who died Dec. 12 when a roadside bomb detonated near his convoy in Baghdad.

The memorial, held Dec. 19 at Forward Operating Base Falcon, gave the troopers of 3rd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment a chance to reflect on the trooper known

See **KUBASAK**, Page 23

“I don’t think anyone could ever hate Kuba.”

**-- Staff Sgt. Jonathan Roe,
Ironhawk Troop, 3-3**

for his smile, wit and humor.

He was also remembered as an often shy, nervous young man – but committed to his unit’s mission and the men serving alongside him in combat.

“When it came to completing a task, he was all business, always following orders,” said Capt. Scott Seidel, commander, Ironhawk Troop, 3-3. “As a very attentive and intense soldier, when it was time to work...it was time to work...anyone that spent just a little time around him, they could sense that about him.”

devoted friend. He was loyal and committed to those on his crew and in his platoon, whether it was prepping for mission, helping clean someone else’s weapon, or him just hanging out being Kubie.”

Kubasak entered the Army in May 2000 from Rocky Mountain, Va. Upon completing basic training at Fort Benning, Ga., he went to Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., where he graduated as a Track Vehicle Mechanic.

On July 4, 2003, Kubasak reenlisted and changed his military occupational specialty to Cavalry Scout.

He was assigned to Fort Carson, Colo., in October 2004 to Ironhawk Troop, and deployed to Iraq in March 2005.

Staff Sgt. Jonathan Roe served alongside Kubasak as his section sergeant from his first patrol and was with him on his last patrol.

“On December 12th, I lost one of the greatest men I knew,” Roe said. “Kuba took on life from a different point of view that made many of us take a look at ourselves and think. I don’t think anyone could ever hate Kuba.”

Roe also expressed Kubasak’s desire to return to Germany, where he spent his first assignment as a track vehicle mechanic. He



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks

A trooper from 3rd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment salutes the memorial tableaux during the ceremony honoring Spc. Jared Kubasak who was killed in action on Dec. 12 when a roadside bomb detonated near his convoy in Baghdad.

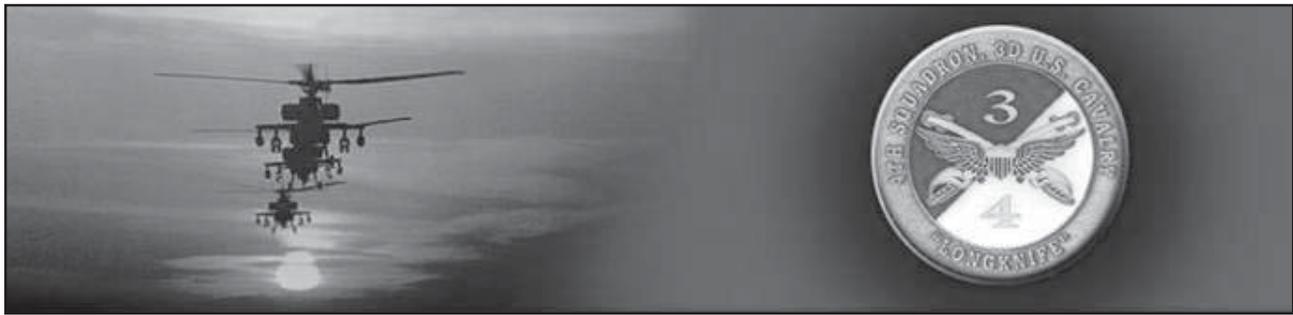
Affectionately called “Kubie or Kuba” by his fellow troopers, Seidel recalled how Kubasak would ‘shy up’ when he’d asked him a question or he’d give him short answers. Seidel lived right across the hallway from his trooper.

“But as little as I talked to him, it was my view into his ‘off-time’ life that I got to see and really appreciate who Jared Kubasak was,” Seidel said. “The other aspect I got from living so close to him was that he was a

noted Kubasak’s unique sense of humor.

“He was one of the few who enjoyed the Army and couldn’t picture doing anything else, unless it involved Germany,” Roe said. “He helped [his fellow troopers] get through every mission with his odd sense of humor.”

Kubasak is survived by his parents, Daina Lee and Darel William Kubasak who reside in Rocky Mountain, Va.



LONGKNIFE SQUADRON

By Lt. Col. John Scott
Longknife Squadron Commander

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays from all of the troopers of Longknife Squadron here at Camp Sykes Iraq. This holiday season is a time of joyous cheer and fond memories.

Your troopers here in Iraq are performing their jobs brilliantly and with courage.

Our Squadron has just completed its support in providing a safe and secure environment for the Iraqi General Elections.

This historic event marks a major milestone in our tour here in Iraq as we close in on our final months supporting the people of Iraq. As always, I am extremely proud of our troopers and look forward to reuniting them with their loved ones back home.

When this goes to press, the troopers of Longknife will have logged well over 25,000 flight hours during this deployment.

This feat is a testament of the willpower and endurance of the troopers in Longknife. The maintainers and pilots have endured some of the harshest conditions known to Army Aviation and have literally crushed the numbers from previous rotations. Amazing!

The troopers continue to maintain a positive attitude and truly enjoy the new movie theater, gym, TV Room and internet cafe that is better than what we have back at Fort Carson.

The facility is quite impressive.

The boxes of holiday cheer, letters and pictures continue to pour in and bring smiles to our troopers. Your dedication, love and support are very much appreciated as we extend out warmest thanks.

Command Sgt. Major Waller and I are so proud of the Troopers and we've heard about the huge success of the Family Readiness Group Christmas Party.

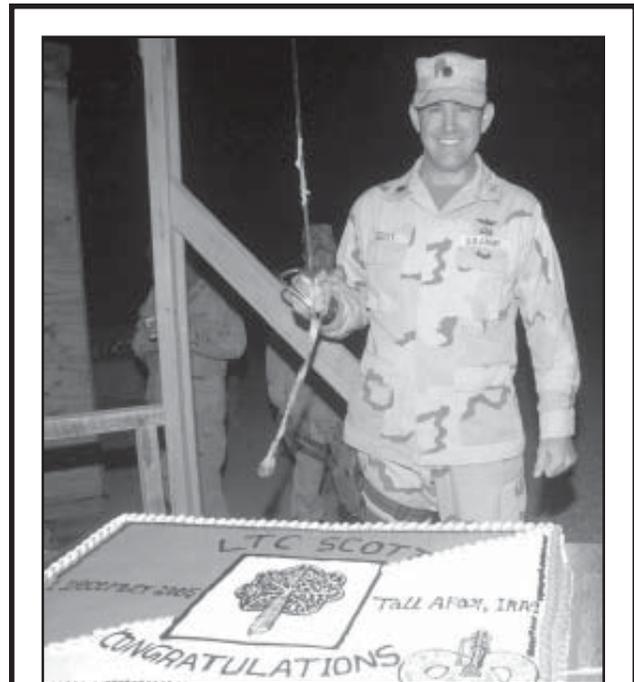


Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks

Cake anyone?

Lt. Col. John Scott, commander, Fourth Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, poses after slicing a cake congratulating him for his promotion to lieutenant colonel held Dec. 2 at Forward Operating Base Sykes, Iraq.

Great job to the families who were directly involved in putting that event together. I know the kids had a great time.

The separation is tough, but with the love and support from home, our troopers gather strength and determination to complete their mission. Again, thank you for everything you do.

Longknife 6.5



MULESKINNER SQUADRON

By Lt. Col. Richard O'Connor
Support Squadron Commander

Happy Holidays to everyone! December has been a historic month for the country of Iraq, the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen, and the Muleskinner Squadron.

The National Parliamentary Elections were an incredible success, establishing the groundwork for a formidable government. Although we were heartbroken to spend the holidays thousand of miles from our loved ones, we continue to be honored and proud to be part of a mission that will far outlive us.

Muleskinner began the month by assuming control of a critical Traffic Control Point on the south side of Tal' Afar, proving yet again that Muleskinner Troopers can juggle numerous missions simultaneously – often out of the realm of their assigned Military Occupational Specialties.

Packhorse tackled this operation with ease and professionalism. In the weeks leading up to the Parliamentary elections, the troopers focused on the physical buildup of the check point and effective measures for searching personnel and vehicles wishing to enter the city.

Their training, dedication to duty, and attention to detail were critical to the security of the city, especially on Election Day.

Packhorse troopers were also asked to train and work

alongside the Iraqi Policemen that will eventually assume their duties at the Traffic Control Point.

The troopers enjoyed learning about each other's cultures and languages. On Election Day, the American Soldiers were able to watch the Iraq Police they served alongside participate in the historical vote.

The Iraqi Policemen came back to work with ink stained fingers, smiles on their faces, and excitement in their voices. Both sides knew they were part of a truly extraordinary day.

Air Raider, Blackmith, and Scalpel Troops all conducted humanitarian aid missions this month. Air Raider traveled to the Three Wieset School near Sinjar, Iraq.

During the operation, Air Raider Troopers delivered school supplies including much needed desks to the 140 child school.

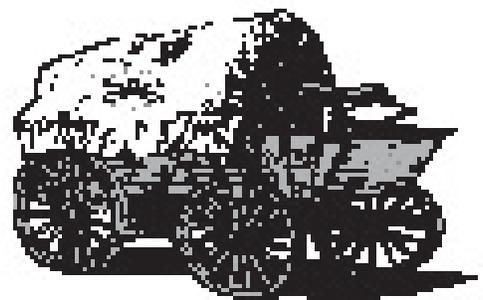
They also repaired windows, installed electricity, and running water. The teachers and students were extremely appreciative of the Soldiers' holiday delivery.

Scalpel Troop led an incredible MEDCAP mission on the Syrian border. The doctors and medics treated over 150 women and children, some of who hadn't seen medical professionals in years.

Blacksmith Troop used their welding abilities to construct soccer goals for schools in Tal Afar that were later delivered on a Combat Logistics Patrol secured

See **MULESKINNER**, Page 26

“Muleskinner Troopers can juggle numerous missions simultaneously - often out of the realm of their Military Occupational Specialties.”



by Chemdawg and Bullwhip Soldiers in the Convoy Security Detachment.

While the Squadron continued to support combat operations, we found time to host three Change of Command ceremonies.

On Veteran's Day Packhorse Troop said goodbye to Capt. Jim Outland and welcomed Capt. Todd Allison.

Blacksmith Troop bid farewell to Capt. Jon Reeves and hailed Capt. Brian Kneriem on Nov. 21. Finally, Capt. Jon Fennell passed the guidon to Capt. Brian Caplin on Dec. 17.

Capt. Outland is currently busy deploying the 3d ACR from the Regimental S-4 shop, Capt. Fennell is working with the Iraqi Security Force integration cell, and Capt. Reeves is serving as the Deputy Regimental Material Management Center Chief.

I want to say a final, heartfelt thank you to these distinguished gentlemen. Their tenure as commanders will

forever be apart of the great history of this Regiment.

In closing, I want to pay a final tribute to Sgt. Timothy Rick Boyce who we lost tragically to an aneurism on Dec. 16. Sgt. Boyce was a talented mechanic who served on the 1st Cavalry Support Team embedded with Tiger Squadron.

He was an inspiration to everyone around him. Sgt. Boyce's optimistic attitude and untiring work ethic served as an example to all who worked alongside him.

We will miss his idealism, his talent, his experience, and his character. He is survived by his wife Sharon, his son Ammon, and his daughter Gracelynn.

To all the Muleskinner family and friends, I wish you all Happy Holidays and God's blessings. We thank you for the generous packages and letters we received during this special season.

We will be home soon!

Muleskinner 6

Boyce get final salute from fellow Blacksmith troopers



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks

Troopers from Maintenance Troop, Support Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment gather around the memorial tableaux to pay tribute to their fallen comrade, Sgt. Timothy Boyce held Dec. 21 at the Forward Operating Base Sykes Multi-Use Facility. Boyce was remembered for his love and devotion to family, his happy demeanor and for being an outstanding noncommissioned officer.

By Sgt. 1st Class

Donald Sparks

NCOIC, 3rd ACR Public Affairs

A cool, crisp wintry breeze outside could not chill the warm and loving thoughts which the troopers of Maintenance Troop shared for one of their fallen comrades – Sgt. Timothy Boyce.

Boyce, from North Salt Lake, Utah, died of a brain aneurysm Dec. 16 at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Landstuhl, Germany.

The troopers who served alongside Boyce paid their final respects to him during a Memorial Ceremony held at the Forward Operating Base Sykes Multi-Use Facility on Dec. 21.

See **BOYCE**, Page 27

BOYCE from Page 26

Boyce was remembered for his infectious laugh, wide smile and a spirit that lit up any room he entered by Lt. Col. Richard O'Connor, commander, Support Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment.

O'Connor revealed after speaking with Boyce's fellow Troopers in the days following his death the same words and phrases came up in every conversation.

"He was always happy," O'Connor said. "He smiled no matter what the circumstance. He helped them through difficult times. They had never seen him unhappy, even when he was going through rough patches."

Maintenance Troop Commander, Capt. Brian Kneriem, started his tribute by reading from an article published by the *Colorado Springs Gazette* about his trooper.

Before Boyce deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom, he allowed a *Gazette* reporter and photographer to spend time with him and his family to document what life is like for a soldier heading off to war.

"At the time, Boyce joked that he might not be the most exciting subject," Kneriem said drawing some laughter from the audience.

More than anything else Kneriem recalled how much Boyce loved and cherished his family.

"Boyce was the kind of guy who'd rather hang with family than anyone else – a guy who affectionately called his grandmother 'Grammy,'" Kneriem said. "'Hi Grammy,' he [Boyce] said to her during a phone call before he headed to Iraq. Don't worry about a thing. We'll be out of the military and bugging you more than ever," he said, also referring to his brother."

Boyce joined the U.S. Army on Feb. 5, 2000 and after graduating Basic Training at Fort Jackson, S.C., he next completed Advanced Individual Training at Redstone Arsenal, Ala., becoming a TOW/Dragon Missile Repairer.

He arrived to Fort Carson on Oct. 4, 2002 and deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom I as part of the Missile Team for 3rd CST. He deployed in support of OIF III in March 2005 as the Missile Team Chief for 1st CST.

A devout Mormon, he cherished time spent with his wife, Sharon, his son Ammon, 5, Gracelynn, who was born in September. Boyce was able to come home for a couple weeks shortly after Gracelynn's birth.

So much in love with his family, Boyce proudly showed pictures of his children to his supervisor and friend – Sgt. 1st Class Cathlyn Patterson.

"His wife, son and daughter were in his thoughts at all times," Patterson said. "It was always a treat when mail came to watch the proud papa running around showing off pictures."

Patterson was brought to tears as she talked about her relationship with Boyce's wife. She shared a story about Sharon bringing a dish of lasagna, salad and cake to the entire section one night as the crew was



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks
Sgt. 1st Class Cathlyn Patterson, Maintenance Troop, Support Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, consoles a trooper during the memorial ceremony for Sgt. Timothy Boyce who died from a brain aneurysm on Dec. 16.

working late.

"It may not seem like much, but it meant the world to all of us that she cared enough to make sure we all had a good meal to eat," said Patterson choked with emotion. "It had been the third or fourth night in a row we had to work late and she told me that she rather cook us dinner than have us live off pizza. She too, is a very dear friend."

The final tribute came from Boyce's Soldier, Spc. Luis Garcia who met his supervisor for the first time in Kuwait.

"From the first day I got to the missile shop, I heard only good things about Sergeant Boyce, what a great guy he was, how funny he was and just what an all around great guy to know – it was all true," Garcia said.

School's in Session

AVIM Troopers adopts, renovate Iraqi schoolhouse

By Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks
NCOIC, 3rd ACR Public Affairs

Throughout the United States the Adopt-a-School program provides volunteer classroom assistance at local public schools. Volunteer efforts are tailored around the specific needs of the teachers and students and in many cases business and civic leaders donate money and supplies.

When the opportunity for several 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment troopers to make a difference in the lives of school children in the Iraqi village of Three Weiset,

they were more than happy to volunteer their efforts.

On Dec. 21, more than 30 Soldiers assigned to Aviation Intermediate Maintenance Troop and Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, Fourth Squadron, 3rd ACR took part in renovating the town's school to improve the educational needs of the village's 140 school children.

The effort was the idea of Maj. Craig Benson, AVIM Troop commander and was organized by Staff Sgt. Michael McAvoy.

McAvoy, from Twin Falls, Idaho, made his initial visit to the school in September where he made an assessment of work to be completed.



Photo by Pfc. Natasha Williams

Sgt. Joseph Stodola, AVIM Troop, hammers a nail while building one of the 30 desks for the students.

He admitted the school was the absolute worst condition for any child to attend.

“Desks and chalkboards were few and far between and those they had were very old,” McAvoy said.

“Many of the doors and windows were broken or needed repair. The plumbing wasn’t working because it was never properly installed. And there was no power to the school, although there is power in the town.”

McAvoy mentioned the building did not have heating or cooling systems and it lacked a soccer field for recreation and physical activities.

Also, two of the three teachers at the school trav-

According to McAvoy the school was the absolute worst condition for any child to attend.

soccer field, Sgt. Thomas Harrison headed a team to assemble soccer goals and collect school supplies, Sgt. Lamont James led a team to build a water tank; Sgt. Joseph Stodola managed the window repair team and Cpl. Kevin Eshelman directed a team to build desks.

Although Eshelman didn’t have carpentry skills, he did get special help from his father who owns a cabinet shop in Dayton, Minn.



Photo by Chief Warrant Officer David Hughes

AVIM Troop Soldiers prepare to move the desks into the classrooms at the Three Weiset Primary school.

eled from Mosul (100 kilometer drive) to teach and had to live in a store room for their two-week period. The building did not have proper bathing facilities or refrigeration capabilities to store food.

Benson was committed to restoring the school and with the support of his Soldiers; the unit decided much of the restoration could be done internally.

“A lot of the troopers had asked family members back home for supplies, so we had a lot of stuff that was sent that would have to be delivered there anyway,” said Chief Warrant Officer David Hughes.

Within 48 hours the unit organized a plan and created teams for the reconstruction work needed.

Sgt. 1st Class Ben Parker led the electrical repair team, Sgt. Alma Villegas was in charge of building the

“He designed blueprints with exact measurements for building the desks,” Eshelman said. “We didn’t know if the desks would fit through the door until we got there. Thank God they did, because we would have to knock out a wall to get them in.”

His team built 30 desks in less than a week – enough to seat 120 students. Whereas the students were crammed five to a desk, the new desks would allow three students per desk to sit together comfortably.

In November McAvoy visited the school to meet the school’s headmaster, Ali Ibrahim Hamad.

He received input from him on how he thought the Coalition Forces could aid the school and explain what the unit wanted to do.

“I showed him a list of what we were putting inside

the student kits, but we wanted him to have a say-so,” McAvoy said. “We didn’t want to force it on him and he was more than cooperative.”

According to McAvoy the mission received a major boost of support from Harrison’s mother.

His mother, Debbie a school teacher in Wasilla, Alaska, raised \$7,000 in school supplies which was enough for 200 student kits, 200 soccer balls, and teacher kits.

“She went to a town hall meeting where they surprised her as the town’s Volunteer of the Year,” McAvoy said. “Harrison’s mother in her acceptance speech requested donations for the school. She couldn’t have timed it any better having all the town’s media and chamber of commerce leaders in audience.”

As the troopers prepared for the day to go to the school, the mission was nearly scrapped two days before the scheduled road march.

The convoy’s original route was changed and AVIM Troop’s first sergeant, 1st Sgt. Craig Davis, was considering canceling the mission due to uncertainty of the enemy’s threat along the new route and for the safety and concern of his Soldiers.



Photo by Cpl. Kevin Eshelman

Sgt. 1st Class Ben Parker, Aviation Intermediate Maintenance Troop, 4th Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, installs a electrical wire to a new light fixture in one of the classrooms of the Three Weiset Primary School. More than 30 Soldiers participated in a project renovating the school's infrastructure.

After a 30-minute discussion McAvoy was able to convince Davis that the mission needed to go on – especially for the Soldiers.

“They [Soldiers] needed something like this to make their tour much more gratifying and to see something tangible from their efforts,” McAvoy said.

The 10-vehicle convoy departed

on time with an aviation escort from Pegasus Troop, 4-3, until they picked up their ground escort from King Battery, First Squadron, 3rd ACR. King Battery also provided security at the school during AVIM Troop’s nearly seven-hour renovation and repair efforts.

As soon as the unit arrived at the school, the troopers wasted little time getting started as small bulldozers driven by Spc. Richard Merritt and Spc. Nathan Wissner began moving tons of dirt surrounding the school’s walls and paving the soccer field.

“We had to back the trucks up to the school and unload the supplies, consisting of 150 boxes and two pallets of water, like an armored Brinks truck delivering money to a bank,” said Capt. Adam White, from Waukegan, Ill.

The sound of children screaming in excitement filled the school’s classrooms as they rushed to see what was taking place outside. The Soldiers were swarmed with tiny, curious onlookers.

Eventually the headmaster had to release the children from school so the Soldiers could work.

Ironically, one of the Soldiers brought a snow shovel, which they used to remove dirt off the classroom floors.

“Who would have thought a snow shovel being utilized in the desert?” McAvoy said.

Each team went to work on its area of responsibility. Whether it was replacing old windows with new ones, installing junction boxes

The troopers needed this project so they can see something tangible from their efforts in Iraq.



Photo by Capt. Kenneth Woods

Soldiers of Aviation Intermediate Maintenance Troop, 4th Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, unloads school kits which were donated from the town of Wasilla, Alaska.

and ceiling lights, or mounting a water tank, the troopers performed their tasks with enthusiasm.

While the teams were renovating the school, Capt. David Donelson, physician's assistant assigned to HHT, 4-3, treated children in need of medical care.

There was one other special surprise the troopers had for the school. The Soldiers donated two refrigera-

tors – one which was paid for from a \$1 donation by every Soldier in the troop.

At the end of the day, McAvoy said the Soldiers did nearly all the work that would have been in the contract for what a vendor would have been paid approximately \$80,000.

“They [Soldiers] saw the end result of their hard work,” McAvoy said. “They saw the school go from three classrooms to four. They saw running water; they saw new desks being used and children with school supplies.

“When I came here before, not one student was holding a pencil. Now every student has a pencil and paper. It’s something these 32 Soldiers can go back to the States and say, ‘I made a difference in Iraq.’”

He added that not only the Soldiers made a difference, but so did the parents, friends and communities representing the Soldiers took part in adopting the school.

White praised the troopers who took part in what he described as a ‘purely Soldier-driven operation.’

Speaking on behalf of the troopers, White said the mission gave the participants more than personal satisfaction – it also gave the troopers a sense of purpose here in Iraq.

“A lot of us are support guys and we contribute indirectly to the success of the Regiment’s mission here in theater,” White said. “But in reality, we don’t feel much a connection to it because we don’t leave the wire as much.

“This mission gave us a chance to directly assist and rebuild this country. It’s a certain sense of satisfaction knowing we were directly involved in improving the day-to-day lives of the Iraqi people.”

“This mission gave us a chance to directly assist and rebuild this country. It’s a certain sense of satisfaction knowing we were directly involved in improving the day-to-day lives of the Iraqi people.”

Sgt. Thomas Harrison’s mother Debbie raised \$7,000 in school supplies - enough for 200 student kits.



REMINGTON TROOP

By Capt. David Olsen
Remington Troop Commander

Happy Holidays from Camp Sykes! December was truly an exciting month for all of us in Remington Troop. The National Elections were a historic event, and the results were a clear indication that everyone's hard work has paid off.

The huge voter turnout in December left no doubt that the people of Ninewa Province are trying to make democracy work.

About 75 percent of the eligible voters in Regiment's area of operations turned out for the elections, an even greater turnout than we saw for the Constitutional Referendum in October.

Everyone in the Regiment has worked toward the goal of a successful and peaceful election since the moment we set foot in Ninewa Province, and it has been

great to see it all come to fruition.

Everyone in Remington Troop did their best to enjoy the holidays, and our Troopers celebrated the season as best they could being this far from home and loved ones.

On Christmas Day, we assembled in the gymnasium to hear General Casey, the commanding general of Multi-National Corps – Iraq, speak to us about the effect that our work here in Ninewa Province has had on the overall mission in Iraq.

General Casey was joined by Command Sgt. Maj. Mellinger from MNC-I and Maj. Gen. Rodriguez and Command Sgt. Maj. Pring from Task Force Freedom, who handed out gifts to the Soldiers after the speech.

We had several more promotions to celebrate this month. Spc. Joshua Mills was promoted to Sergeant, and Spc. Tamara Narvaez was laterally promoted to Corporal in recognition of her hard work and leader-



Photo by Capt. David Olsen

Santa Greene

1st Sgt. Rodney Greene, first sergeant, Regimental Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, dressed up as Santa Claus during the unit's Holiday party. At the event he passed out goodies to his troopers whether they were naughty or nice.

ship potential.

We also held a special ceremony at the Regimental Headquarters for Maj. Gen. Rodriguez and Col. McMaster to promote Lt. Col. Joel Armstrong to Colonel and Maj. James Daniels to Lieutenant Colonel.

Maj. Mike Scott, the Longknife Squadron Commander, was also promoted to Lieutenant Colonel at this ceremony.

Lastly, I would like to congratulate Command Sgt. Maj. Jonathan Hunt, who was selected for and is now serving as Tiger Squadron's Command Sergeant Major. We wish him all the best in this challenging new assignment.

The big news on Camp Sykes is the completion of the large Multi-Use Facility and the new Chapel, both of which formerly opened this month.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks

Eyes of an Eagle

Col. Joel Armstrong, deputy commander, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, was promoted by Maj. Gen. David Rodriguez, commanding general, Task Force Freedom during a promotion ceremony held Dec. 2 on Forward Operating Base Sykes, Iraq.

“We all truly appreciate everything that our families and friends have done to make our holidays bright out here.”

The Chapel has already drawn more than double the usual number of attendees at each service and was completed just in time for the holidays.

The new fitness center is larger and more comfortable than the old facility and has been very popular, as have the recreation rooms, library, and larger phone and Internet center.

I know that future units will appreciate the work that the Regimental S-4 shop and the Mayor's Cell put into making this facility a reality.

Our Troopers have continued to reenlist this month, with many of them signing up to stabilize at Fort Carson for another year.

Sgt. 1st Class David Henderson, Staff Sergeants Keith Brown, Shanan Harris, and Eunice Melendez-Brana, Sergeants Colby Greene, Lisa King, and Gina Street, Specialists Tomekia Brevard, Lakisha Cunningham, Thomas Dillard, Nicholas Saucedo, and Joshua Stanley, and Privates First Class Christian Loftis and Cassandra Purdy all took the oath this month.

First Sergeant Rodney Greene and I are grateful that these fine Soldiers are continuing to serve our country when they are needed most.

Finally, three of our Troopers participated in a very special event this month. Sergeant Arias and Specialists Adams and Gabriel traveled to Baghdad with other members of the Regiment to become United States citizens in a naturalization ceremony for Soldiers from all over Iraq.

Col. McMaster and Command Sgt. Maj. Burns joined in the celebration with all of these new citizens. We are extremely proud of all of the Regiment's Troopers who were able to complete this process while they are serving our country here in Iraq.

We all truly appreciate everything that our families and friends have done to make our holidays bright over here. All of their gifts have gone a long way towards making this season both enjoyable and memorable.

We look forward to seeing them all again soon! Brave Rifles!

Remington 6



Above: The colors bearer for 2nd Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment, holds his unit colors under Old Glory during the awards ceremony. Right: A paratrooper pins the Combat Infantryman's badge on his Soldier. At the ceremony 24 Bronze Star Medals, 242 Army Commendation Medals, 3 Army Commendation Medals for Valor, 67 Combat Action Badges, 153 CIB's, 9 Combat Medical Badges and 10 Purple Hearts was presented to the paratroopers of the unit.



Maroon berets adorn the more than 700 paratroopers assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment from Fort Bragg, N.C. The unit served with distinction following Operation Restoring Rights in the Sarai District of Tal Afar and helped restore security to the city which was once a terrorist safehaven.

“WHITE FALCONS” BID FAREWELL

2nd Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment makes history in Tal Afar

Story and Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks

Paratroopers from the 2nd Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment donned their signature maroon berets en masse signaling the completion of their tour with the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen.

Maj. Gen. David Rodriguez, Task Force Freedom commander, and Col. H. R. McMaster, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment commander, presented the

“White Falcons” their service awards Dec. 26, recognizing their contributions in Tal Afar following Operation Restoring Rights.

Lt. Col. Christopher Gibson, commander, 2nd Bn., 325th AIR, proudly thanked the two officers for their support during his unit’s tour.

The unit arrived on Sept. 11 with the mission of providing security leading

up to the October and Decemeber elections and establishing friendly relations with the citizens of Tal Afar.

During an impromptu speech prior to the award ceremony, McMaster told the paratroopers to be proud of their accomplishments in Iraq citing that the, “White Falcons made history in bringing security to the people of Tal Afar.”



Lt. Col. Chris Gibson, commander, 2nd Bn., 325th AIR, listens as Col. H.R. McMaster praises his unit.

Don't be disturbed about your failures

Compiled by Chaplain (Maj.) David Causey
Regimental Chaplain

Few men have had as many strikes against them as John did. He was born in Scotland to an unwed mother. He worked briefly as an actor at the age of 11 in the West Indies.

At 13, he shipped out aboard a slave ship. The slave trade and piracy went on to blemish his career at sea. He was wanted by the authorities for two separate murder charges and he was later tried, but acquitted, for rape.

His later years were spent in bitter anonymity and failing health. He died penniless in France and was buried in an unmarked grave. But we do not remember John Paul Jones for his checkered past.

Instead, he is immortalized in U.S. history as the Father of the United States Navy, as the formidable commander of the "Bonhomme Richard" that defeated the far superior "Serapis" off the coast of Flamborough Head.

We remember him for his reply to the captain of the Serapis when asked if he wished to surrender, as Jones' own ship was sinking: "*Sir, I have not yet begun to fight!*"

The "Richard" sank the next day, but John Paul Jones had already captured the "Serapis" and taken 500 British prisoners.

John Paul Jones went on to help organize the infant United States Navy, advise Congress on the training of its officers, and to command its squadrons.

After the Revolution, John Paul Jones won his most stunning successes as an admiral in Catherine the Great's navy during its war against the Turks – destroying 15 warships, killing 3,000 and capturing 1,600 of the enemy. For these things we remember John Paul Jones.

And what about the "bad things" in his life? Are we naïve? No, we are not naïve. We acknowledge the man's dark side, but we simply refuse to define his life by his failures.

A pastor once held up a large sheet of plain white poster board before his congregation. Then he drew a black dot in the center of it and asked, "What do you see?" Invariably, they all replied, "We see a black dot."

"Does no one see a sheet of white poster board?" he asked. Then the pastor admonished, "Don't define this sheet by the dark blotch made upon it, nor define a person's life by any stain it has."

The Scripture reminds us that "All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God," (Romans 3:23) yet "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks

All are welcome

Chaplain (Maj.) David Causey, Regimental chaplain, speaks to a crowd of worshippers at the grand opening of the new Forward Operating Base Sykes Chapel held Dec. 18.

Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks



Col. H. R. McMaster, commander, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, passes lollipops to Iraqi children in Tal Afar on Dec. 15.



A Tal Afar citizen displays his ink-stained finger to show he took part in the country's National Elections held Dec. 15.



Sgt. Lisa King, a medic assigned to Remington Troop, patches an Iraqi girl's finger after she received an abrasion.



Spc. Kosal Casey, Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, left, poses with Gen. George Casey, commander, U.S. Forces in Iraq, during a Christmas Day visit to Tal Afar.



December's Fallen Troopers

Dec. 12- Spc. Jared Kubasak, 3/3

Dec. 16 - Sgt. Timothy Boyce, RSS