

# The Expeditionary Times

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

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Wagonmasters deliver school supplies to Iraqi children

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## Tune-up



Louisiana maintenance team keeps vehicles on road

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## Recovery team



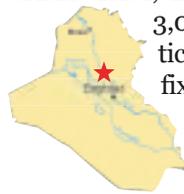
Guardsmen recover vehicles throughout northern Iraq

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# More than 3,000 Soldiers moved in first-fixed-wing redeployment out of Taji

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

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – More than 3,000 Soldiers participated in the first fixed-wing redeployment operation out of Camp Taji, Iraq, Jan. 27.



Traditionally, Soldiers would be transported via helicopter to Joint Base Balad, Iraq, or Baghdad International Airport in Baghdad before they departed to Ali Al Salim Air Base in Kuwait, said Staff Sgt. Rufus Brumfield, the senior enlisted adviser with the 384th Movement Control Team, 49th Transportation Battalion (Movement Control), 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

“We are able to move numerous (passengers) straight from here and they don’t have to stop at another installation like BIAP,” said Brumfield, a New Orleans native. “They can fly from (Camp Taji) straight to Ali Al Salim and then to the states. We can cut out a lot of travel time and moving back and forth.”

This major redeployment involved the transportation of more than 3,000 Soldiers in roughly  
**SEE WING ON PAGE 4**



Redeploying Soldiers with the 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, file onto a C-17 Globemaster III Jan. 26 at Camp Taji, Iraq. More than 3,000 Soldiers left Camp Taji in a 16-day period, marking the first-fixed wing redeployment operation from Camp Taji, Iraq.

# Use of US dollar to be eliminated in Iraq

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE BASRA, Iraq – United States currency may soon become difficult to find in Iraq as part of an effort to protect Soldiers and increase the value of the Iraqi dinar.



Sgt. Brittany A. Raimer, a dispersing manager with the 368th Finance Management Company, out of Wichita, Kan., 36th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), said eliminating the use of U.S. currency on the battlefield will help to  
**SEE CASH ON PAGE 4**

The contents of the cash drawer Jan. 27 at the finance office at Contingency Operating Base Basra, Iraq. The use of U.S. cash is being eliminated in Iraq.



## Balad Blotter

### January 21 - January 28

#### **THEFT OF GOVERNMENT PROPERTY:**

A complainant entered the Law Enforcement Desk and reported a Humvee had been stolen. Law enforcement officials responded and assisted the complainant in writing a statement via Air Force IMT 1168 from location. The complainant said he combat parked the vehicle at 7:30 p.m. Jan. 20 adjacent to Pennsylvania Avenue. He said the rear doors were combat locked and the front two doors were locked with padlocks. There are two sets of keys to the padlocks – his set and the set belonging to the motor pool. The complainant contacted personnel at the motor pool who said they did not move or take his vehicle. The complainant said he and a fellow service member locked their Army combat helmets and improved outer tactical vests inside the vehicle for the next day of duty. The complainant discovered the Humvee was missing at roughly 6:30 a.m. Jan. 21. He searched for the Humvee and evidence the locks had been cut but found nothing.

#### **SEIZED CONTRABAND:**

A mitigation check was conducted and a contraband external media storage device was seized from the subject via Department of Defense Form 4137 Evidence/Property Custody Document. The subject said he bought the contraband from a Soldier more than a year ago at the Iraqi Free Zone. The subject said the device contained only music and he did not know the item was considered contraband. The patrol transported the device to the Law Enforcement Desk for safe keeping.

#### **SEIZED CONTRABAND:**

A complainant telephoned the Law Enforcement Desk and said a contraband phone was found during a checkpoint search by security personnel. A patrol was briefed and dispatched. The patrol arrived on the scene and made contact with the subject and seized the contraband via Department of the Army Form 4137 Evidence/Property Custody Document. The subject said he purchased the phone in Kuwait and took it with him to India. When he came back from India, he realized he could not have it and kept it in his room. The subject said he was leaving for India again in three days. The subject said he did know the item was considered contraband. The patrol transported the phone to the LED for safe keeping.

NIPR: 443-8602  
SIPR: 241-1171  
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# Chaplain's Corner: finish with honor

By CAPT. CARLOS MOLINA  
13TH ESC CHAPLAIN



As the responsible drawdown approaches and more of us prepare to return home, we can be exhausted from the long deployment.

Perhaps others are anxious about the employment prospects when they get home. Still others might be struggling with the realization that their marriages are coming to an end.

The bottom line is that we all face some kind of situation in our lives that tends to wear us out. This sentiment of exhaustion can be more prevalent during the last leg of our deployment.

It is during this period that you and I need to monitor our hearts closely so we do not fall prey of unreasonable thought patterns, which would lead us to unhealthy feelings that can be expressed with erratic behavior.

How do we do that? How can we take care of ourselves so we can finish with honor? The first thing that I want you to consider is those things you know to be true.

When we go through a crisis, we tend to question everything and even doubt what we know to be true. It's OK to have questions and doubts, but don't allow yourself to deny the principles and truths that have guided you up to this point.

The second exercise that will help you survive during difficult times is to remember the good events you have experienced in the past. Remember when you achieved real success, how you overcame similar situations or how you resolved previous stressful situations.

Granted, every situation is different and you may not have the same resources that you had in the past, but you remain the same. And you are the only one

who can decide to rise above the turmoil and let your true colors shine through.

The third exercise is similar to the second, except this time I want you to focus on the future. Think about your plans and where you want to be.

If you do not where know you want to go, how will you know when you have reached your destination?

If you do not state your goals clearly, you will abandon them before you reach them.

Last but not least, recognize when it is out your control. Life is hard.

Sometimes events happen that we cannot control. Learn to recognize these situations and do not beat yourself up for what you cannot control.

This not an excuse for not doing what you should, but it is a realization that we are but human beings who need each other, and there are some factors we just can't control.

As a Christian chaplain, I am encouraged because I know that God has got my 6 – and my 3, my 9, and my 12 for that matter.

One passage from the scripture highlighted in my Bible is found in the book of the prophet Isaiah, chapter 40:28-31.

"Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."

Yes life is hard, but is nice to know that you can count on someone greater than you to help you through it all.



## EXPEDITIONARY TIMES

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

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

# The Weekly Standard: shoulder sleeve insignia

By LT. COL. PAUL BIRD  
13TH ESC DETAILED INSPECTOR GENERAL



There are several all-Army activity messages concerning what former wartime service shoulder sleeve insignia Soldiers wear.

However, none of these messages specifically addressed what SSI Indi-

vidual Ready Reserve Soldiers should wear as their current SSI. Many assumed they should wear the SSI of the unit they deployed with, but there was an apparent discrepancy.

Army Regulation 670-1 Chapter 28-16 d. 11 (e) states IRR Soldiers will wear the IRR patch. It does not specify when they will wear the patch, whether in a stateside tour, outside of the continental United States, or on an overseas

contingency operation. A review of the personnel policy guidance and several ARs did not provide the answer.

After much discussion, the Department of the Army personnel command policy and programs division clarified the issue.

IRR Soldiers wear the SSI of the company sizes unit they deploy with based on their orders. If they deploy as an IRR unit of at least company size,

they wear the IRR patch.

If they are mobilized as individuals and cross trained, attached to or assigned to, or temporarily stationed with a unit for a deployment, the IRR Soldiers wear the patch of the first company level unit they belong to.

The AR 670-1 information means when an IRR Soldier is not in one of those situations, they should wear the IRR SSI.

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Sgt. 1st class Alexander Arce

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Master Sgt. Richard Faust

Lt. Col. Paul Bird

## Better yourself, your career

By STAFF SGT. ROBERT J. FAULKNER  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



For the first time in more years than I'm willing to admit, I am taking classes – not college classes, but online classes through

Army e-Learning.

You might actually be surprised to find out what is available to you, at no charge, just for being a Soldier.

The MyEducation link on Army Knowledge Online brings up a portal of online opportunities. Most notably are Army e-Learning and The Army Institute for Professional Development, which hosts the Army Correspondence Course Program.

Army e-Learning is tailored toward information technology, business management and foreign languages, while ACCP focuses on military occupation specialty proficiency and soldiering skills.

Both programs require a valid AKO e-mail address and a quick registration.

Army e-Learning has a vast catalog of courses. If you're an amateur user of the Microsoft Office suite, this is the place to be. You can take beginner through advanced courses on any of

the Microsoft Office products.

You'll also find basic finance, accounting, business management, communication and personal development as part of the curriculum.

Many of these skills can easily be applied to your career in the military as well as after you return to civilian life.

An interesting benefit of these courses is the certifications you can attain through your studies. Soldiers who want to get into an information technology profession when they return to civilian life can get a head start by earning certifications from leading computer and networking companies.

It's not going to replace years of work in the industry, but it will demonstrate that you have a solid foundation in those areas of expertise and may give you a leg up over other applicants.

The ACCP is another great program that can help you stay on top of the skills you use in your military occupational specialty.

Finding exactly what you're looking for can be a little tricky on this Web site, so be sure to try a few different keywords when you search for a course.

Once you enroll in a course, you'll have to wait until you receive a verification e-mail to actually take the exam, but you can get started immediately by

downloading the study guide and preparing for the test.

You can take courses in your MOS or in most other job skills. Personally, I'm interested in learning to weld, so I signed up for the metal worker course. While I will still need to practice my welding technique, I learned the basics and can operate a welder with minimal supervision.

Possibly the biggest benefit of the programs are that you'll earn promotion points and possibly college credit for your efforts. For every five credit hours of correspondence courses you complete, you will earn one promotion point. It may not sound like a lot, but believe me, it can add up quickly.

Specific Army e-Learning curricula have also been approved by the American Council on Education for college credit. Check the e-Learning portal on AKO for a complete listing and instructions on how to get credit.

Self-development is a growing trend in the Army. Fortunately, Uncle Sam provides opportunities that carry over to civilian careers in addition to the benefits to your military career.

Of course, your own personal interests will determine what is valuable to you, but no matter what you're interested in learning, there's probably a correspondence course available.

### Sexual Assault

### Response Coordinator

**Do you know your reporting options?** An unrestricted report is made when a victim wants to participate in the military justice process or when the chain of command or law enforcement becomes involved. A victim advocate is assigned, command and law enforcement are notified, and medical care is provided. Active duty victims have the option of making a restricted report. Restricted reports are kept confidential – command and law enforcement are not notified. The victim can access care and services without participating in the military justice system. Call the Joint Base Balad sexual assault response coordinator at 443-7272 or contact via pager 443-9001, 159 for help. Army members should seek assistance with their unit victim advocate or deployed SARC; Soldiers may also call 443-7272 or 443-9001, pager 122/135 for assistance.

1. Power strips are free of debris and clothing.

2. Electrical devices not in use are unplugged.

3. Power strips and outlets are not overloaded.

### Check CHUsdays

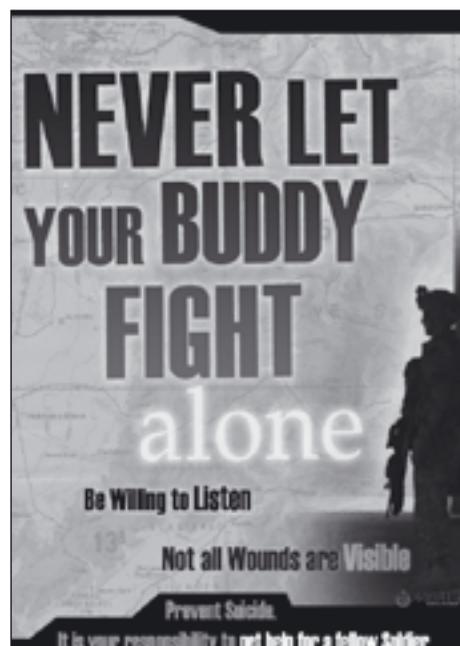
Each TUESDAY

check the following  
in your CHU

4. Smoke detector is operational.

5. Fire extinguisher is serviceable (in the green)

6. Room is neat and orderly



# Fixed-wing flights reduce travel time out of Iraq

## WING FROM PAGE 1

two weeks, said Capt. William Bailey, commander of the 384th MCT.

"Soldiers get to Kuwait faster by offering a fixed-wing solution out of Taji, as opposed to having to connect somewhere else," said Bailey, a Huntsville, Miss., native.

Roughly 200 to 300 Soldiers were moved each night, he said.

The Soldiers are moved in a Boeing C-17 Globemaster III or a Lockheed C-130 Hercules out of Camp Taji, said Bailey. Their gear is palletized and loaded onto the plane, he said.

The operation had been in the initial planning stages since August, said Maj. Richard Michaels, division transportation officer with the 1st Cavalry Division.

The 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cav. Div. and the 30th HBCT redeployed at the same time, said Michaels, a Jefferson City, Tenn., native. With two heavy brigade combat teams being redeployed at once, BIAP would have had more than 800 Soldiers a day bound to Ali Al Salim, said Michaels.

This would have caused heavy congestion in the terminal and complicated the redeployment process, he said.

To mitigate travel flow congestion, they decided to use the flight line at Camp Taji to conduct a mass redeployment of 1st Cav. Div., he said. The 30th HBCT would leave the Baghdad area through BIAP, said Michaels.

"Redeploying the 30th and 1st Cav. was 8,000 Soldiers leaving Iraq at the same time," said Michaels

The operation out of Camp Taji reduced the units' overall travel time by four days, said Michaels. With two to three flights flying out a night, the operation took roughly 16 days, said Michaels.

"This allowed us to keep the Soldiers in the battle space doing (transition training) with the incoming unit, for two days longer," said Michaels. "This gained them a little more efficiency with their (relief in place) and their efficiency of getting out of Iraq."

Several units assisted in the process, Michaels said. The MCT, the Air Force logistics teams on the flight line and the senior airfield authority combined with expertise from the 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, made for quick and efficient operation execution, said Michaels.

"The ease and smoothness of this op-

eration is about 10 times better than any brigade redeployment or deployment we've experienced out of BIAP," said Michaels. "Having a whole C-17 dedicated to a redeployment has been huge to the mission's success."

The operation was a major success due to cooperation with the different military branches and groups that played a role, said Michaels. The success at Camp Taji was a testament to what can be accomplished when the branches come together in the aid and support of one another, he said.

"Being able to leverage all the joint capabilities that reside within this theater to redeploy Soldiers and get them out on time is certainly what we have to work for even as the drawdown approaches," said Michaels.

# Iraqi dinar to protect Soldiers, stimulate local economy

## CASH FROM PAGE 1

stimulate the economy of Iraq.

"One of the main focuses of finance is to ultimately eliminate U.S. currency from the battlefield," said Raimer, a Lake Charles, La., native. "Our government is implementing the use of the Iraqi dinar, to both undermine the dependency the Iraqi nationals have on American currency and to back the Dinar, greatly increasing its weight on the market."

The use of electronic fund transfers to pay vendors and contractors, and urging service members to rely on the Eagle Cash Card, rather than cash, are two major changes that have been implemented in Iraq to eliminate the use of cash, said Raimer.

"The Eagle Cash Card enables personnel to have a direct link to the bank account without the hassle of hard cash," said Raimer. "The stored value card has been instrumental in effectively moving toward a cashless battlefield."

Sgt. Toni M. Guillery, a dispersing agent with the 368th FM Co., and a

Lake Charles, La., native, said the Eagle Cash Card is designed to help prevent service members from losing money or being robbed while in country.

"Carrying a single card is better than carrying a wad of money in your pocket, but one concern that I do have is ... on the kiosks, you have to use a pin number in order to access the money, but when you go to vendors, you do not," said Guillery. "If you (fill the card) up to the max, and you lose that card, and somebody picks it up and finds it and they are a dishonest person, they can go and spend that money."

Guillery said the unit only disburses U.S. cash to service members who are about to go on mid-tour leave or redeploy.

Guillery said the unit disburses less than \$10,000 in U.S. cash per month, but disburses more than 351,000,000 IQD, the equivalent of roughly \$300,000, per month.

The current exchange rate is 1,170 IQD to \$1, said Guillery.

Raimer said the transition away from the U.S. dollar has aided the progres-



Pfc. Scott A. LeBert, cashier with the 368th Finance Management Company, out of Wichita, Kan., 36th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Lake Charles, La., native, assists two Soldiers with a transaction Jan. 27 at the finance office at Contingency Operating Location Basra, Iraq.

sion of the banking industry in Iraq.

Raimer said, "The progression (away from U.S. currency) has greatly sup-

ported the modernization of the banking system, thus improving and instilling trust in the local economy."

## Where are my photos?

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--Select "PAO" from the JBB homepage

--Select "Provider Common" in the left hand column

# Wagonmasters deliver school supplies to Iraqi children

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

JEDELLAH SOFLA, Iraq – Members of the 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) delivered boxes of school supplies to Iraqi children Jan. 20 in Jedellah Sofla, a small village near Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq.

Soldiers delivered boxes filled with pens, paper, crayons and other supplies to the school of roughly 100 children, said Maj. Scott Wadyko, an operations officer with the 15th Sust. Bde.

“It’s building partnership, it’s building bridges,” said Wadyko, a Jacksonville, Fla., native. “Helping these children learn and making a better life for themselves is our ultimate goal.”

The supplies were donated by family and friends around the 15th Sust. Bde.’s home station of Fort Hood, Texas, said Col. Larry Phelps, the brigade’s commander and a Greenville, Ala., native.



Lt. Col. Paula Lodi, the commander of the Special Troops Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Franklin, Mass., native, talks to Iraqi students during a visit to their school Jan. 20 in the village of Jedellah Sofla, Iraq.

“Everything we brought here today was donated from our families, our friends, in central Texas and from

last the school two or three years, and the brigade plans to bring more items to the school, including soccer balls, in the coming months, Phelps said.

For some Soldiers, the trip was an opportunity to get away from the daily business on the base.

“It’s really interesting – different,” said 1st Lt. Meghan Flynn, an operations officer with the Special Troops Battalion, 15th Sust. Bde.

Flynn, a Blairstown, N.J., native, said the best part was handing out the supplies, especially the stuffed animals, and being around the children.

“The kids are adorable,” she said.

“(Iraqi children) are the future of Iraq,” Phelps said. “We’re doing what we can to assist with the future.”

Phelps said he is confident the supplies will be put to good use, and explained that the local Iraqis, led by a local doctor, have done an excellent job with the children and the school.

“Looking in those eyes, you can see that the future of Iraq is in good hands,” he said.

# Retention sergeants work to better Soldiers’ careers



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Naveed Ali Shah

Sgt. Jose Graulau, the executive chauffeur for the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Bayamon, Puerto Rico, native, takes the oath of reenlistment from 13th ESC commanding general Paul L. Wentz.

BY SGT. KEITH S. VAN KLOMPENBERG  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Soldiers deployed overseas count down to the day they can return home to their families and friends.

With the troubled economy and uncertainty of civilian jobs, Soldiers should take this time to make a plan, said Sgt. 1st Class Lloyd Bowers, a forward deployed career counselor with the National Guard Bureau out of Arlington, Va.

“I would encourage all the Soldiers out here ... while you’re out here and have some downtime, make it constructive,” said Bowers, an Elkhart, Ind., native.

Bowers said his job allows him to travel the country and assist Guardsmen who are looking at continuing their education or extending their military service.

“We basically try to put our finger on the pulse of the units,” he said.

Army career counselors can help Soldiers get the education they need for promotions and find bonuses for Soldiers interested in reenlisting, said Master Sgt. Charolette Harvey, the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) career counselor and a Clarksville, Tenn., native.

Harvey said her job is to assist any active Army Soldiers with their retention needs by helping them get what they want in reenlistment contracts, such as tax-free bonuses, permanent change of station wishes, and education benefits, including the new

Post 9/11 Montgomery G.I. Bill.

“My mission is important because I’m helping Soldiers, and I’m helping meet the Army end strength,” said Harvey.

Bowers said benefits such as the new G.I. Bill have made his job a bit easier.

“That really benefits a lot of younger Soldiers who are looking for that bachelor’s (degree),” said Bowers.

He said the education benefits also help older service members who may already have a college degree by allowing them to pass it on to their spouse or children.

Harvey said one of the biggest concerns with Soldiers looking to reenlist is the possibility that bonuses could decrease or disappear because enlistment numbers are up.

“If they hear something, they come running,” she said.

Bowers said because bonuses are constantly changing and unit retention representatives may not always have the latest information, he travels the country to provide assistance to the Soldiers and their noncommissioned officers.

“Everyone likes to get a little bonus,” said Bowers.

Though their main mission is to retain Soldiers, Harvey said Army career counselors can also assist Soldiers with planning their education and careers after they leave the Army, and that they want to help Soldiers in general.

“When I see Soldiers happy, I’m happy,” said Harvey.

# Chemical company provides security for United Nations, state department in Baghdad

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. JOHN STIMAC  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION PROSPERITY, Baghdad – The 301st Chemical Company, 155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team deployed to Baghdad to provide personal security, United Nations security and act as a quick reaction force in the country's capital city.

They received special training at Camp Shelby, Miss., to be certified to complete their mission in Baghdad.

First Lt. Joey E. Todd, 3rd platoon leader with the 301st Chem. Co., 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) said the week-long course, called Raven training, was taught by Triple Canopy, a civilian contractor with the U.S Department of State.

"We went through the training and cleared buildings and performed other security aspects of what we would be doing here," said Todd. "After that, we were Raven certified."

Todd, a Flemingsburg, Ky., native, is in charge of two Raven teams that perform personal security detail missions for state department personnel, and act as embassy and UN security in Baghdad.



**Spc. Michael D. Mullins, gunner for the 301st Chemical Company, out of Morehead Ky., 155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and an Alexandria, Ky., native, scans the area at Baghdad University, in Baghdad.**

"Every third day, we rotate a team to provide quick reaction force security for the embassy in case of attack," said Todd. "If anything happens, we go out and secure the embassy and all the state department offices."

Todd said this company is the only military PSD team conducting missions in Baghdad.

Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Smith, section leader with the 301st Chem. Co., said he enjoys doing the QRF at the embassy.

"We stage in this little apartment

building and standby, ready to react if anything happens," said Smith. "We take all our command from the Regional Support Office and they inform us what to do and where to go."

Smith, a Morehead, Ky., native, said they have six sections that pull 12-hour shifts every third day. He said they appreciate the break they sometimes get while on QRF detail.

Smith said he has been on roughly 120 missions, not including the QRF missions.

"We go out on PSD missions with the provincial reconstruction team and we have a good rapport and they call us when they are ready to go on missions with them," said Smith.

Capt. Richard Huber, commander of the 301st Chem. Co., said his company was tasked with this mission in November 2008.

"Most of the Soldiers were deployed previously as (military police officers)," said Huber.

Huber said the operating environment has changed since 2005 and 2006, when the company was deployed here last.

"It is much more of a political environment and we are working with not opposing the Iraqi government," said Huber.

He said he enjoys working with the Iraqi people in Baghdad and has taken part in such missions as protective services for actress Angelina Jolie and securing the International Zone for Vice President Joe Biden's visit in August.

The 301st Chem. Co. conducts operations out of Al Salam palace, in Baghdad.

"It took quite a bit of damage, but this palace is historical and it is a beautiful place to come to work every day," said Huber.

Huber said he is proud of his 301st Chem. Co. Dragon Warriors and their professionalism throughout this deployment.

## Adder hosts equal opportunity course

BY SGT. CANDACE WESTLUND  
41st IBCT

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE ADDER, Iraq – For the first time in two years, a unit Equal Opportunity Leaders' course was held at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq, graduating 19 students Jan. 8.

Capt. Jason Lunceford, Adder's equal opportunity adviser with the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team and a Tigard, Ore., native, organized the class, which provides graduates

with promotion points and a lifetime qualification to be an equal opportunity leader.

"These people are the eyes and ears of the command," said Lunceford. "They are helping solve problems with morale and cohesion within the unit."

Lunceford said the goal of the Army is to provide quarterly EO training to each unit, and for each unit to have two trained EO leaders to facilitate awareness and resolve complaints at the lowest level.

The class is 60 hours and focuses on big picture concepts, such as cultural values, attitudes and behavior.

Staff Sgt. Manny Rodriguez, a pla-

toon sergeant and operations non-commissioned officer for the 412th Aviation Support Battalion and a Katterbach, Germany, native, assisted Lunceford with the course. She taught the concepts of culture and effective listening components.

"I'm doing the personnel in my battalion justice," said Rodriguez.

Rodriguez said she hopes to see more integration of different observances to increase Soldiers' awareness of other cultures.

Master Sgt. Shane Ruppel, the operations noncommissioned officer in charge with 3rd Battalion, 141st Infantry Regiment and a Weslaco,

Texas, native, also assisted Lunceford with the course.

"The current challenges are concerning Soldiers that practice the Muslim faith, open homosexuals and females in combat arms," said Ruppel.

Lunceford said the class assists with these challenges by offering leaders a better understanding of racism, sexism and religious accommodations, as well as the history of equal opportunity.

"The Army is a microcosm of the United States and diversity is one of its greatest strengths," said Lunceford.

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# Alaska unit leaves Task Force 38

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
STAFF SGT. JEFF LOWRY  
TASK FORCE 38 PUBLIC AFFAIRS

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – An aviation company with Task Force 38 left Joint Base Balad, Iraq, as part of the upcoming drawdown.

The Alaska-based A Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment Tomahawks left the desert and headed home after a year-long deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"Overall, it's been a wonderful year with a great group of professional Soldiers," said Capt. Russ Vander Lugt, the company commander and a Breezy Point, Minn., native. "We really got a great group of Soldiers here, and they make my job easy."

Vander Lugt and 1st Sgt. Gary Sanders, the unit's senior noncommissioned officer, said the unit comprises new Soldiers and Soldiers from other units.

"We started off with a really young group of Soldiers," said Sanders, a Cincinnati native. "(The Army) put us together and sent us on our way – new crew chiefs, new pilots. They all learned their jobs and were ready to go."

While in Iraq, the unit flew special forces Soldiers, high-ranking generals and ambassadors, and battlefield circulation flights throughout Iraq.

Vander Lugt spoke positively of their Soldiers and of their troops' tenacity.

"It shows you exactly what kind of Soldiers we have," said Vander Lugt. "We kept driving our Soldiers – maybe

it's stubbornness and refusing to quit. There's no quit to the Tomahawks."

Sanders said his Soldiers came together as a team, even though it was newly assembled.

"When you look in the dictionary for team players, you'll see A Co.," said Sanders.

Spc. Michael Baker, a crew chief and mechanic, and a St. Petersburg, Fla., native, reiterated Sanders' statement.

"We're always working together, always as a team, especially when we leave the ground; that's when it's game time," said Baker. "We're really tight knit."

While in Iraq, the unit moved twice: from Baghdad to Basra and then to JBB.

"Every organization we went to, we became part of that organization and helped them and they helped us," said Sanders.

Task Force 38 was one of its headquarters units. The TF 38 Soldiers helped A Co. through the loss of Spc. Michael Cote, a crew chief with the company who died in a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter crash Sept. 19.

Sanders praised the leaders too.

"A lot of battalions (and headquarters units) could've just checked the block, but the sergeant major made sure what we felt we wanted was put into the ceremony," Sanders said.

Command Sgt. Maj. John Watson said he was honored to help with the ceremony that helped the A Co. Soldiers move through the grieving process of Spc. Cote's death.

"We did something that was necessary to give them the best professional, military ceremony that we could," said Watson. "We made sure that ceremony



First Sgt. Gary Sanders (center), A Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment's senior noncommissioned officer, salutes Capt. Russ Vander Lugt (left), the unit's commander, during the company's end-of-tour awards ceremony Jan. 22 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Vander Lugt, a Breezy Point, Minn., native, and Sanders, a Cincinnati native, led the UH-60 Black Hawk company that flew 4,100 aircraft hours, more than 14,000 crew member hours, and roughly 1,200 missions during its year-long deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

was done right for Spc. Cote, his unit and all the task force Soldiers."

The A Company Soldiers moved past the event and continued their deployment with the aid of their fellow Soldiers, the unit's family readiness group and families.

"If it wasn't for them taking care of things back home, our guys would be going crazy," said Sanders.

Team work, families and the Soldiers' attitude made A Co.'s deployment successful, said Vander Lugt.

"We're known for having a high esprit de corps because we enjoy what we do, and (Sanders) and I enjoy leading the troops because of the group we have," said Vander Lugt. "There's a trust between the Soldiers and command, and I can trust them to get the job done."

A Co. flew 4,100 aircraft hours, more than 14,000 crew member hours, and roughly 1,200 missions during its year-long deployment, he said.

"The Army got its bang for its buck with us," said Vander Lugt.

# Army leaders meet to discuss drawdown plans

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. JOHN STIMAC  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) command staff hosted a conference to discuss training and logistic operations in the next six months

Jan. 26 at the Oasis dining facility in the Sgt. Audie Murphy room at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

The meeting, called the security forces rehearsal of concept drill, featured 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) subordinate leaders from contingency operating locations throughout Iraq.

Col. Fredrick Brown, the operations officer in charge with the 13th ESC, said the purpose of the ROC drill was to synchronize the relief in place and transfer of authority for the 155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, which will be replaced by the

278th Armored Cavalry Regiment out of Knoxville, Tenn., and the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, which will be replaced by the 256th Brigade Combat Team out of Lafayette, La.

"This is to make sure that we cover all processes so we can have a seamless transition," said Brown.

He said all incoming units must be properly trained and outgoing units should understand all processes of turning in theater-provided equipment in a timely manner. This drill was designed to accomplish that, he said.

"We have to ensure all security forces understand the timeline and sequence," said Brown.

Lt. Col. Edwin N. Gomez, the counter-improvised explosive device training officer in charge with the 13th ESC and a Ceiba, Puerto Rico, native, said part of the process is getting all incoming personnel trained on C-IED level two training within the first 60 days of getting in country.

"This is a United States Forces –

Iraq requirement for this training to occur, but we want to get as many people as we can trained up in Kuwait before they get here," said Gomez.

Gomez said the big training pushes are scheduled to cover three-week periods in February and March to coincide with the arrival of the incoming personnel.

"We have approximately 5,000 Soldiers that need to receive the C-IED Level II training by the end of March and our goal is to be at 100 percent by the end of the RIP TOA," said Gomez.

He said the intent is to train them and give them the skills they need to operate safely before getting to Iraq, so they will already know the threat indicators, instead of waiting the 60 days to finish the training.

"We have had great support from everybody," said Gomez. "Task Force Troy in Kuwait is sending two additional trainers to assist us."

Lt. Col. Sidney J. Loyd, the Kuwait 13th ESC liaison officer in charge, discussed the training plan for the

BCT's as they go through Camp Buerhing, Kuwait, between February and March.

Loyd said he plans for the reception staging, onward movement and integration of roughly 7,000 Soldiers who will conduct security escort missions for the 13th ESC in Iraq.

Brown said he enjoys being involved at the most critical time in the responsible drawdown of equipment and personnel in Iraq.

"There are a lot of moving parts," said Brown. "We are moving non-essential and essential assets out of theater and it takes a lot of planning."

Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz, commanding general of the 13th ESC, said now is the time to start working with the contingency operating locations to get everyone on the same page in preparation for the drawdown.

"We had a great session today," said Wentz. "Clearly, everybody is moving down the right path and we just have to work on some details now and iron things out."

# Mississippians recognized for safety record

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE  
Q-WEST, Iraq – Mississippi  
Guard members received  
recognition for helping to  
maintain their battal-  
ion's safety record in a  
ceremony and cookout



Jan. 20 at Contingency Operating Base  
Q-West, Iraq.

Company safety officers, safety non-  
commissioned officers and fire war-  
dens with 2nd Battalion, 198th Com-  
bined Arms, out of Senatobia, Miss.,  
received certificates of recognition  
from the battalion commander at the  
base defense operations center.

"In the more than 87,000 miles this  
battalion has traveled across Iraq in  
the last seven months, there have been  
no major accidents, no fatalities or  
permanent disabilities," said Lt. Col.  
Kerry Goodman, battalion commander  
and a Meridian, Miss., native. "The  
same is true here at Q-West in the liv-  
ing and working areas. We owe thanks  
to the safety officers and NCOs and the  
fire wardens for leading the way for us  
to achieve this high level of accident  
prevention."

Capt. Robert P. Sayle, the battalion  
safety officer who organized the event,  
said he was grateful to the company  
safety representatives.

"They have done a great job on the  
many tasks placed on their shoulders  
during this deployment," said Sayle, a  
Lake Cormorant, Miss., native. "They  
helped educate their units on prevent-

ing accidents and helped  
ensure that buildings,  
vehicles, equipment and  
companies maintained  
safety standards. They  
also submitted accident  
reports on all injured Sol-  
diers placed on light duty  
or profile, and submit-  
ted reports on damaged  
equipment."

Sayle said the safety of-  
ficers attended monthly  
safety council meetings,  
conducted required train-  
ing for their Soldiers, and  
ensured their units met  
the Occupational Safety  
and Health Administra-  
tion standards and 155th  
Heavy Brigade Combat  
Team, 13th Sustainment  
Command (Expedition-  
ary) guidance. The fire  
wardens attended train-  
ing with the Q-West Fire  
Department and met the  
Army policy of conducting  
monthly fire safety inspec-  
tions on every building, including the  
proper documentation.

Sgt. George S. Welch, a truck com-  
mander and safety NCO with B Com-  
pany, 2/198 CAB, out of Greenwood,  
Miss., said the recognition surprised  
him.

"I didn't expect to be congratulated  
for the safety work I did, which was an  
additional duty," said Welch, a Jack-  
son, Miss., native. "My job was to make  
sure the company working and living  
areas maintained safety standards and



Capt. Robert P. Sayle (left), a battalion safety officer and a Lake Cormorant, Miss., native, reads a certificate of recognition as Lt. Col. Kerry Goodman, commander of 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, out of Senatobia, Miss., and a Meridian, Miss., native, presents a certificate to Sgt. George S. Welch, a truck commander and safety noncommissioned officer with B Company, 2/198 CAB, out of Greenwood, Miss., during a ceremony Jan. 20 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

report deficiencies. This was a lot of  
extra work, important work that I am  
glad the battalion recognized."

Sgt. 1st Class Joseph A. Williamson,  
operations and safety NCO and fire  
warden with C Company, 2/198 CAB  
out of Oxford and Indianola, Miss.,  
said the recognition was gratifying.

"It made me feel good to get the  
certificate, because it represents a lot  
of work we did with the vehicle crews,  
giving classes, inspecting them, their  
equipment and their vehicles, making

sure they followed safety procedures  
and used their safety equipment prop-  
erly and, at all times, wearing their seat  
belts and harnesses, their personal  
protection equipment," said William-  
son, a Senatobia, Miss., native.

Williamson said the safety repre-  
sentatives had a lot of help.

"The real recognition goes to the  
Soldiers because they maintained stan-  
dards on post and out on the roads,"  
said Williamson. "They kept us free of  
major accidents and injuries."

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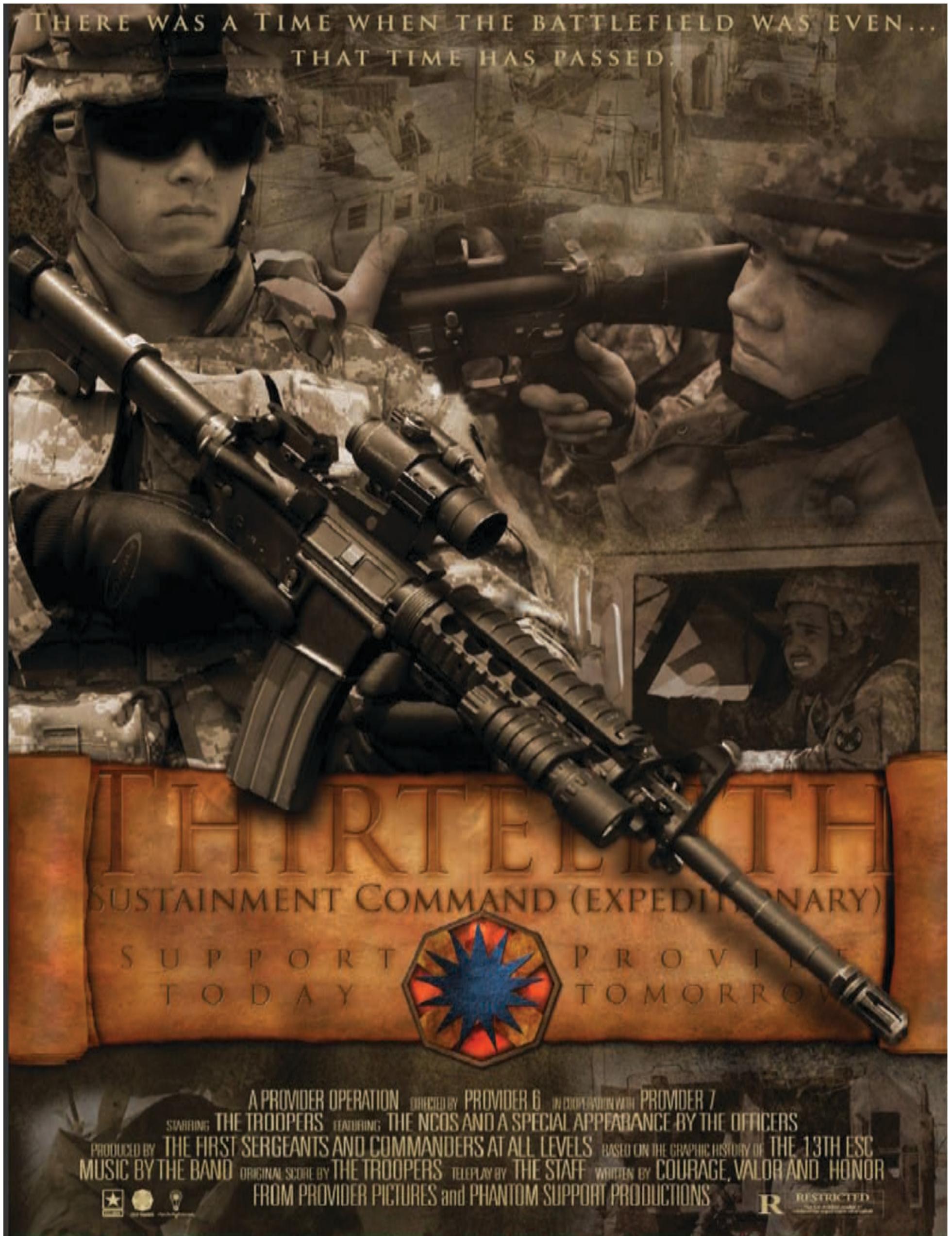
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# Louisiana maintenance team keeps vehicles on road

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE BASRA, Iraq – The 546th Maintenance Support Team out of Fort Polk, La., keeps vehicles at Contingency Operating Base Basra, Iraq, mission ready and on the road.

First Lt. James A. Kenney, the officer in charge of the 546th MST, 36th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Clarksville, Ind., native, said the maintenance Soldiers work primarily on vehicles, but the unit is also equipped to repair weapons and generators.

He said they provide maintenance support to military transition teams, border transition teams and port of entry transition teams in their area of operation.

“We do all levels of maintenance for them,” said Kenney. “Vehicles (are) primarily what we do, but we can also do weapons, generators, pretty much anything that breaks. ... Ninety-five percent of our workload is vehicles.”

The unit is on call 24 hours a day to do emergency repairs, said Kenney.

“We do a standard 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day – we take Sundays off – but

we are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week,” said Kenney. “If a vehicle breaks down in the middle of the night and it is supposed to be rolling out on a mission the next morning, if (the teams) need it fixed fast, they can get a hold of us. We have not had to do that yet, but we are ready.”

Spc. Benjamin M. Wood, a small arms artillery repairman with the 546th MST, and a Lapine, Ore., native, said this deployment has been a learning experience for him.

“(The) 546th (MST) is based around maintenance on vehicles, not so much weapons, and I am a weapons guy,” said Wood.

Wood said he has kept himself busy by becoming the unit mail handler, information management officer and learning some of the vehicle maintenance.

“I am not a certified mechanic; I have not been through the (advanced individual training) or the school to become a mechanic, but I am always working with a mechanic, and they are always showing me and teaching me,” said Wood. “When something comes in that is not working properly and I take it apart, I look at it, I fix it, put it back together and it is working perfect, I get a lot of satisfaction out of doing that. It is a good feeling.”

Sgt. 1st Class Robert L. Delaney, the noncommissioned officer in charge of



Spc. Darryl R. Saffell, a utility equipment repairer with the 546th Maintenance Support Team out of Fort Polk, La., and a Fairbanks, Alaska, native, and Pfc. Matthew J. Caudle, a utility equipment repairer with the 546th MST, and a Lebanon, Mo., native, work together Jan. 25, to replace the windshield of a vehicle at their workshop at Contingency Operating Base Basra, Iraq.

the 546th MST, and a Beaufort, N.C., native, said his unit handles all types of maintenance on the vehicles belonging to the transition teams they support.

“We are tasked with ... anything from changing a light bulb to fixing an engine,” said Delaney.

Delaney said he is proud of the efforts of his Soldiers and appreciates the

teamwork they demonstrate on a daily basis.

“I like the team we have and the output of work that they do,” said Delaney. “(They) are very consistent. At first I thought (our mission) was going to be a little difficult, but we managed ... and it is running smoothly.”

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# Mechanics keep New Mexico unit mission-ready

By SGT. CANDACE WESTLUND  
41ST IBCT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE ADDER, Iraq – With the high number of miles the Army's Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicles log on the roads in Iraq, the mechanics with the New Mexico National Guard's 720th Convoy Security Company, out of Las Cruces, N.M., at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq, work overtime to keep their unit's vehicles fully mission capable.

The 720th mechanics, with 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) work in the motor pool, but also go on missions because the unit is shorthanded.

Spc. Brent Pirtle, a mechanic and a Las Cruces, N.M., native, has served as a mechanic for six years.

"I have been tasked out to be a gunner and a driver on missions here," Pirtle said.

He said he was proud to have had no serious breakdowns on the road.

If any incidents occurred during a mission, they have been fixed by the mechanics, he said.

"It is like maintaining a successful relationship," Pirtle said. "You get to know the vehicles very well and if you treat them right they will never give you a problem."

There is no higher level of maintenance; everything is performed at the unit level, he said.

"There is civilian support, but we can do in one day what they do in one month," Pirtle said.

The 720th CSC mechanics are trained to work on each kind of MRAP the unit has. Pirtle said the main-

tenance is implemented differently on each type of truck, but the parts are the same, so it is easy to learn each system.

Spc. Jaun Barela, a mechanic and a

Santa Rosa, N.M., native, said, "Without us, they don't roll."



Spc. Jaun Barela, a mechanic with the 720th Convoy Support Company, 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Santa Rosa, N.M., native, checks the fluids in his Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle at a motor pool Jan. 24 at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq.

## Providers enforce uniform policy at JBB

STORY AND PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY  
SGT. JOHN STIMAC  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The proper wear of uniform is not only paramount in being a Soldier in the Army, but here at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, it is a matter of safety.

Noncommissioned officers with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) set out to observe Soldiers and civilians for nine days in mid-December to make sure they adhered to U.S. Army regulation 670-1 and United States Forces – Iraq Memo 11-1.

Sgt. Maj. Oliver B. Chisholm, the operations sergeant major with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Montgomery, Ala., native, said the NCO patrol was put in place to alleviate command concerns that Soldiers were not wearing reflective belts as part of their uniforms when visibility is low.

"With this being a transient installation, some people don't know the actual standards of JBB," said Chisholm.

The NCO patrol was set up at hot spots throughout JBB, he said.

"We identified the post exchange, dining facilities, Morale, Welfare and Recreation centers and the gyms as high traffic areas, and we posted NCOs there for a nine-day stretch," said Chisholm.

First Sgt. Francis J. Halmsteiner, the first sergeant with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 13th ESC and a Harker Heights, Texas, native, said everything went well, aside from a few easily corrected small infractions.



Senior leaders with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) make sure Soldiers and civilians adhere to the uniform policy at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Noncommissioned officers were posted at dining facilities, post exchanges and Morale, Welfare and Recreation centers for a nine-day period.

"We let the Soldiers know that there still is an Army standard that we need to adhere to," said Halmsteiner. "We are also concerned for the Soldiers safety. If you look around at night, there aren't any street lights on."

He said this served as a reminder to senior NCOs that making on the spot corrections is part of their job.

Chisholm said force protection procedures still apply at JBB and Soldiers have no excuse for failing to keep a magazine with ammunition with their weapon at all times.

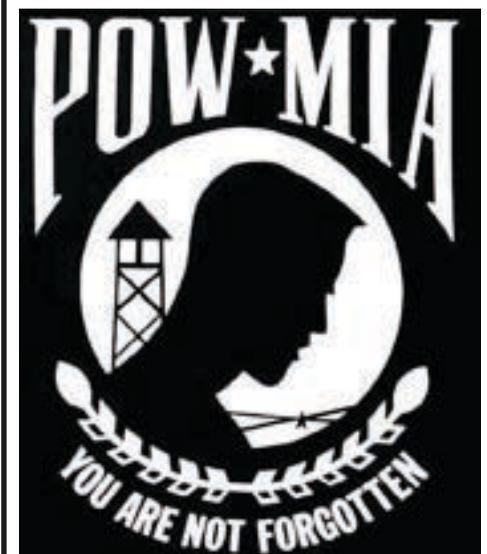
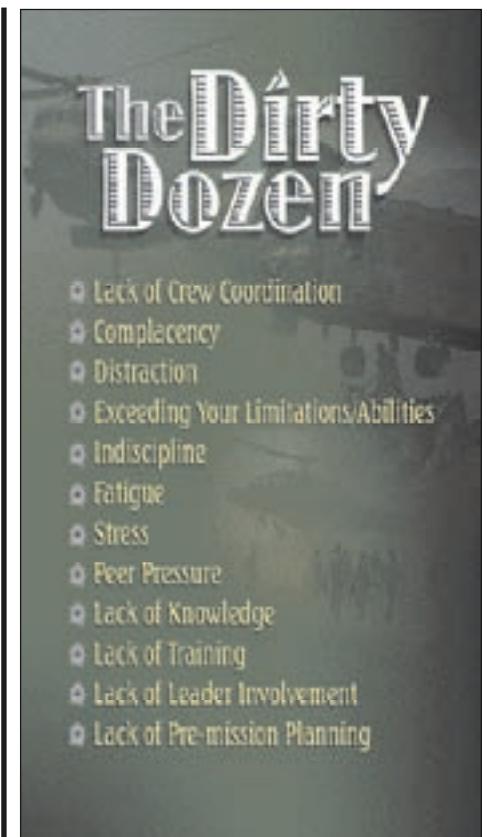
"This also means locking your weap-

on in your vehicle before you enter the PX," said Chisholm. "If you don't have a weapon on you, you're not going to get in."

Civilian personnel must also wear their reflective belts during times of low visibility and must adhere to the same United States Forces – Iraq policy that Soldiers do.

For now, the patrols have stopped, said Chisholm.

"If we feel that things are reverting back to the way they were, we will turn to NCO leadership to make sure the standards are being met," said Chisholm.



# Guardsmen recover vehicle

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq – Mississippi Army National Guardsmen conducted a record number of vehicle recovery missions Jan. 18 to Jan. 19 at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq.

The quick reaction force for recovering vehicles – a small detachment of Soldiers from C Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, 155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, out of Oxford and Indianola, Miss., 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) – completed six recoveries in two days with only a few hours of sleep.

During their first 30 days of the recovery mission, from mid-December to mid-January, C Company Soldiers conducted 16 recovery missions, nearly doubling the 60-day record of 10 missions for the previous unit, said Staff Sgt. Douglas S. Kilgore, a section leader and a Burnsville, Miss., native.

“Sometimes we’re very busy, especially when the weather gets bad, and sometimes we are waiting for a mission,” said Kilgore. “Three, four days we might do nothing but wait. Then we might have three or four missions in one day. The operational tempo can be extreme at times, but this has been a good mission, and so far we’ve had no hostile contact, though we have recovered vehicles damaged by improvised explosive devices.”

The recovery QRF has to be ready to move on a moment’s notice, and this means long hours inspecting and maintaining the gun trucks, said Kilgore.

“We get a mission, we have 40 minutes to be out the gate,” said Kilgore. “With the convoy security mission, we prepared vehicles 24 hours before rolling out the gate, whereas here we have to be ready to roll at all times. So we spend a lot of time taking care of our gun trucks, and it’s essential that everyone does their preventative maintenance, checks and services thoroughly.”

Kilgore said, functioning as a detached element from the company, the recovery QRF has a lot of independence.

“We’re over here working and living in a separate

building, and the Soldiers like having their own space,” said Kilgore. “It helps build team cohesion, and as long as we are completing our missions and meeting Army standards, nobody bothers us.”

C Co. received the Q-West recovery responsibility well into its deployment, so the unit had to re-assign Soldiers from other tasks to fill the new requirement, Kilgore said.

“Our team is made up of any available or willing Soldiers,” said Kilgore. “Some came from the company command post and had never been outside the wire. Some came from the maintenance shop. Others came from the convoy security platoons. About half my people deployed to Iraq with the 155th Heavy Brigade in ’05, and that gives us a lot of experience. The Veterans were a big help with the challenge of building cohesion and getting everyone on the same page. Everybody is doing great, and they all like this mission.”

Sgt. Demarquis T. Maybell, a truck commander and a Hollandale, Miss., native, said he enjoys the mission.

“Before this mission, I was in the company command post and never got off the base,” said Maybell. “It’s real fun going (outside) the wire. Sometimes our route takes us through cities and we can see how the people interact in the market.”

Another reason Maybell said he preferred the mission was that he saw tangible results.

“I like helping people on the road, and this mission helps people,” he said. “We go out to help recover a vehicle, and the Soldiers waiting for us are happy to see us. ... When we take care of them, we can see the results of our efforts. We go out and we see the people we’re helping.”

Sgt. Joshua Tharp, a team leader, a Grenada, Miss., native, and a veteran of the 2005 deployment, said the operational tempo of the recovery mission brought back memories.

“This reminds me of the old days, back in ’05, when we’d just lay out a map and say, all right, this is where we’re going and this is how we’re getting there, let’s go – simple as that,” said Tharp.

The mission has its challenges as well, said Tharp.

“The other night when we ran 30 hours straight with no rest,” said Tharp. “A lot of missions, the weather (is) cold and nasty, and when the weather gets bad, we get busy. We’ve recovered vehicles damaged by (improvised explosive devices) and breakdowns, but lately it’s been weather-related recoveries – vehicles stuck in the mud.”

When the operational tempo increases, sleeping becomes an issue, said Pfc. Allen R. Stidmon, a driver and a Hernando, Miss., native.

“When things get busy, the biggest challenge is getting enough sleep,” said Stidmon. “In the past few days, we’ve been lucky to get four hours of sleep, but that’s part of this job. I can live with less sleep. I like going out on the road, being out there doing a mission instead of staying on the base.”

Staff Sgt. Daniel L. Ramseur, a gun truck commander and an Independence, Miss.,



Soldiers with 3rd Platoon, 204th Military Police Company vehicle mired in a sinkhole in Ninewa province, Jan. 18. Members of the Q-West quick reaction force for recovering vehicles – manned by C Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, 155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, out of Oxford and Indianola, Miss., 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) – recovered the vehicle.

native, agreed.

“This mission reminds me of 2005 – get a mission and move out,” said Ramseur. “This is completely different from the convoy security mission. We spend less time planning, and we haven’t got a set schedule. Most of us spent months doing the CS mission, and that’s good because we know all the roads. We know where we’re going.”

Spc. Arthur Carpenter, a gun-truck gunner, said he prefers recovery QRF to the convoy security mission.

“I like this a lot better than the convoy security mission,” said Carpenter, a Cordova, Tenn., native. “Every mission is a turn-and-burn; we go out, recover the disabled vehicle and come back to base. We’re not gone three, four days, staying in transient housing on other bases. Also, we don’t have to deal with our Convoy Readiness Center, the long process to go on a mission, which is necessary but takes a long time.”

Soldiers who previously served in convoy security platoons said they are happy they no longer deal with the long planning process of the CRC, said Spc. Michael T. Hawkins, a gunner and a Greenwood, Miss., native.

“The best thing about the recovery mission is that we don’t have to spend all that time preparing to go out the wire, doing final checks and long briefs at the CRC,” said Hawkins. “We get a mission, and we have to go as soon as possible. We get a quick brief and we roll.”

The convoy security missions restricted Spc. Undrae S. Ratliff’s view of the Iraqi countryside, said Ratliff, a Soldier on his first deployment.



A shepherd walks his flock past a Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle mired in a sinkhole in Ninewa province, Jan. 18. The gun truck belongs to Soldiers with 3rd Platoon, 204th Military Police Company, 519th Military Police Battalion, out of Fort Polk, La. Members of the Q-West quick reaction force for recovering vehicles – manned by C Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, 155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, out of Oxford and Indianola, Miss., 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) – recovered the vehicle.

# es throughout northern Iraq



(Above) Spc. Jesse A. Jenkins (left), a gun truck driver and a Bruce, Miss., native, and Staff Sgt. Daniel L. Ramseur, a gun truck commander and an Independence, Miss., native, tighten an engine panel on their truck during preventative maintenance checks and services, Jan. 20. Both men serve with Q-West's quick reaction force for vehicle recovery, which

519th Military Police Battalion, out of Fort Polk, La., haul a tow cable toward a Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle. Members of Q-West's quick reaction force for vehicle recovery – manned by C Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, 155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, out of Oxford and Indianola, Miss., 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) – recovered the vehicle.

is manned by members of C Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, 155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, out of Oxford and Indianola, Miss., 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary). The recovery QRF conducted a record number of vehicle recovery missions, Jan. 18 to Jan. 19, completing six recoveries in two days on few hours of sleep.

“The convoys could be miles long, and they moved slow, and we always stayed on the hardball roads,” said Ratliff, a gun truck driver and an Indianola, Miss., native. “Those CS missions were always at night and on main highways. With the recovery mission, we go out any time, day or night, and we might be running desert trails. One night, we went into the desert to recover a couple of vehicles out of the mud, and that was the first time I was out in the desert, seeing it close up, instead of from the highway. We were following a desert trail. That was pretty cool.”

mission.

“The biggest difference I noticed is that you’re closer to the other gun trucks with this mission,” said Jenkins. “I can actually see the other gun trucks because we’re escorting only a couple of recovery vehicles. Our security is tight, and the vehicles cover each other. With the CS mission, the gun trucks are separated by all the transport trucks they’re escorting.”

semble the crews, went on a few of the early missions, but that’s it. The NCOs run the show, and they have done a great job with a mission that was thrown in their lap. I help when they need me, but they don’t need me. They have well-trained and motivated Soldiers. They’ve never missed their 40-minute window for rolling outside the wire. They’ve done outstanding.”

Spc. Jesse A. Jenkins, a driver and a Bruce, Miss., native, said he believes he is safer doing the recovery

Sgt. 1st Class Tim Campbell, noncommissioned officer in charge and a Pope, Miss., native, praised his Soldiers.

“I’m proud of these guys,” said Campbell. “When we received this mission, I chose the NCOs and helped as-



Members of the Q-West quick reaction force – manned by C Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, 155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, out of Oxford and Indianola, Miss., 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) – recover a Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle mired in a sinkhole in Ninewa province, Jan. 18. The gun truck belongs to Soldiers with 3rd Platoon, 204th Military Police Company, 519th Military Police Battalion, out of Fort Polk, La.

# Military officials, Muslims renovate mosque at Taji

By SPC. MICHAEL V. CAMACHO  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Two officials with the 155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) began supervising the renovations of the mosque Jan. 1 at Camp Taji, Iraq.

In 2009, Multi-National Force – Iraq put out an order to repair any mosque on an American base to make it usable for the Iraqis when American forces turn the bases over, said Maj. Terry Partin, a religious customs adviser for the project and brigade chaplain with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 155th HBCT, 13th ESC.

The project totaled roughly \$17,000, he said. In addition to the structural repairs, the electrical wiring was redone and the building put on the primary power grid, said Lt. Col. Paul McDonald, brigade engineer with the 155th HBCT.

Reliability Management Solutions, which has the maintenance contract at Camp Taji, was assigned to renovate the mosque, said McDonald, a Jackson, Miss., native.

The mosque renovation would provide a safe religious structure for the Islamic Soldiers in the Iraqi Army, said McDonald.

“The structure would be restored for their use when (U.S. forces) turn over the base in the near future,” said McDonald.

Due to religious and cultural sensitivities, the project was not just a simple home improvement operation, said McDonald.

To help ensure respect for Islam, Partin requested that predominantly Islamic contractors repair the

mosque, said Partin, a Richton, Miss., native. Cultural awareness and religious customs were a priority, said Partin.

Partin and McDonald were allowed to special permission enter, observe and make assessments of the mosque on the U.S. Army monitored half of Camp Taji.

“The biggest part of doing it right, is when we have it ready for turnover, it is done to their cultural and religious standards,” said McDonald. “We went through several iterations of plans to make sure we were doing everything properly.”

Partin said there was no major damage inside, but lack of maintenance allowed water to damage the interior.

The goal of the renovation was to keep it safe from any further damage and to make it operational, he said.

“The mosque here has not been vandalized,” said Partin. “It had taken a rocket or mortar round that had hit the roof and it caused some damage to the parapet, which is the wall around the top.”

Cultural affairs liaisons, who were civilian contractors with the 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, gave advice about what was needed to make the mosque meet religious standards, said Partin.

“He made sure we didn’t do anything that might be offensive to (Muslims),” said Partin.

There were no major complications or delays on the renovation process, said McDonald. The process is well within the planned time frame, he said.

McDonald said the renovation is scheduled to be finished in the first week of February.

“Much of the building was good condition,” said



Courtesy photo

Civilian contractors began to renovate a mosque Jan. 1 on the U.S. military monitored side of Camp Taji, Iraq. Military officials with the 155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) were tasked with overseeing the proper renovation of the mosque and ensuring that respect was shown to Islam and the mosque during the reconstruction.

McDonald. “While its structure is not complex, it is a matter of treating their culture and religion with respect and establishing a safe and functioning facility for them.”

## Paratroopers build combined operations center in Iraq

By SGT. 1ST CLASS MONEY, BRIAN A.  
37TH ENG. BN.

DIYALA PROVINCE, Iraq – Iraqi and U.S. Army engineers partnered to construct a new Combined Tactical Operations and Information Center in Diyala province, Iraq, which opened its doors Jan 20.

Lt. Col. Paul Huszar, commander of the 37th Engineer Battalion – Joint Task Force Eagle, out of Fort Bragg, N.C., and a Fayetteville, N.C., native, said this joint construction mission, executed by the 52-Soldier vertical construction platoon and their counterparts from the 5th Iraqi Army Field Engineer Regiment, was significant for two reasons. First, the combined operations center is the first of its kind to be solely constructed from concrete ma-

sonry blocks. Second, it was designed to serve as the nucleus for the upcoming elections which will be monitored by the 5th Iraqi Army Division and demonstrates the growing capacity of Iraq.

First Lt. Courtenay Cullen, vertical construction platoon leader and a New York native, said the month-long project provided the 5th IA FER and the engineers with JTF Eagle an opportunity to cross-train on carpentry and masonry during construction of the 30-by-70 foot concrete block building. This presented a great opportunity for the Soldiers to work together on the technical aspect of construction, using tools and techniques that serve in a critical aspect of structural integrity, Cullen said.

In this building, the division will host intelligence and operations meetings in the Diyala province, Cullen said.

During the construction, the Sol-

diers from both nations shared lunch, drank chi tea, and told one another stories about home on a daily basis, Cullen said.

“While construction continued to progress, so did the relationships of the Iraqi Soldiers and the U.S. paratroopers,” said Cullen.

Capt. Vanessa R. Bowman, company commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company and a Fayetteville, N.C., native, said in the U.S. Army platoon leadership uses construction project management to manage time and resources.

“The Iraqi Army, however, does not currently have vertical construction engineers that serve in a similar capacity for quality control and quality assurance purposes,” said Bowman. “This became an opportunity for JTF Eagle engineers demonstrate their skills and teach their counterparts.”

The Iraqis with prior construction experience enhanced their understanding of concrete walls, wooden trusses, the corrugated steel roof, and how to establish a solid foundation of standards for the future construction projects they take on independently, said Cpl. William Mesing, a senior electrician with JTF Eagle and a Fayetteville, N.C., native.

“It was a great experience working beside the Iraqi Soldiers,” said Mesing. “I feel that, with what I have taught them, they can utilize these skills to make Iraq a better place.”

Huszar said, “The efforts of the Soldiers of the 5th IA FER and the vertical construction platoon resulted in, not only the completion of a tactical operations center for our Iraqi counterparts, but also a partnership that forged yet another superior relationship between the two great nations.”

13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)

“Phantom Support”



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

ON  
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# Iraqi Soldiers test skills in mass casualty exercise at Taji



Iraqi Army medics with the Taji Location Command Medical Clinic Level 2 pull a simulated victim out of a vehicle during a mass casualty exercise Jan. 27 at Camp Taji, Iraq.

STORY AND PHOTO BY SPC. MICHAEL CAMACHO  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – U.S. military medics held a mass casualty simulation for Iraqi Army medics to exercise their combat medicine skills Jan. 27 at Camp Taji, Iraq.

Medics with the 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) conducted two three-day combat medicine courses for the Iraqi Army medics prior to the MASCAL exercise.

The classes built on what the Iraqi medics already knew, said Staff Sgt. Michael Carlson, a medic with the 1161st Transportation Company Task Force, 541st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 96th Sust. Bde., 13th ESC and a Yakima, Wash., native.

U.S. Soldiers and medics with the 96th Sust. Bde. posed as casualties injured in a vehicle hit by an improvised explosive device, said Maj. Joseph Sciammarella, a battalion field surgeon with the 96th Sust. Bde. This MASCAL simulation required the Iraqi Army medics to use the knowledge they learned in a controlled environment, he said.

“They had a chance to practice the skills they learned in the classroom over the past several weeks on patients with simulated injuries,” said Sciammarella, a Lindenhurst, N.Y., native. “This gives them a chance to actually do a hands-on scenario in a life-like situation, so they get the pressure of being at an emergency where things can be a little chaotic.”

The classes taught the ideas and the how to portion, and the practical exercise required quick reactive thought and application of the training, he said.

“A little bit of extra pressure adds to their ability to get their own confidence built up, (so) that they can actually take care of casualties in an emergency situation,” said Sciammarella.

Within 20 minutes, the Iraqi medics went through all of the proper procedures as they evaluated the victims, said Carlson. They provided medical treatment to the injured victims and transported them to medical rescue vehicles, he said.

“They were eager,” said Carlson. “They officially utilized all the training and equipment that was provided to them for this exercise.”

The simulated victims made the training realistic, said Sgt. Maj. Ahmed Jabbar, a lab technician with the Taji Location Medical Command, through a translator. The yells and screams of people in distress increased the intensity of the experience, said Jabbar, a Baghdad native. The training greatly improved the combat medicine knowledge of the medical staff, said Jabbar.

The medical staff of the 96th Sust. Bde. provided in-depth training with life-saving skills for combat situations, said Iraqi Army Maj. Adnan Naji, commander of the Taji Command Medical Clinic Level 2.

Naji, a Baghdad native, said the Iraqi’s are still learning, but their skills are steadily improving with training.

Carlson said the Iraqi’s were provided with educational material like that they were trained with, so they could train their own personnel and strengthen their skills as they do so, he said.

The MASCAL exercise, coupled with the training they received, better prepared the Iraqi medics to save lives, said Sciammarella.

Sciammarella said, “They’ve proven to themselves that they can do these techniques on actual victims.”

# New oil service center to open at JBB

BY SGT. KEITH S. VAN KLOMPENBERG  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – A new oil service center, owned and operated by local nationals, is scheduled to open Feb. 8 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

The relocated and expanded service center, which replaces the center located near the north entry-control point with a location closer to the vehicle maintenance sites and the dispatching office, will provide services to more vehicles on base, said Air Force 1st Lt. Donna Besley, the installation management flight commander with the 332nd Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Wing, 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing.

Besley, an Elmira, N.Y., native, said the old service center maintained mostly small trucks, but the new facility will work on buses and large trucks, such as the trash removal trucks on base. The old service center was responsible for 600 vehicles with the new center taking on roughly 1,700, she said.

The Iraqis perform basic oil and filter changes, as well as windshield wiper changes and other minor maintenance, said Besley, who oversees the operation.

“We have a really good working relationship,” she said.

That relationship also extends to the Iraqi Based Industrial Zone and the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) Soldiers who work closely with local businesses.

Sgt. Maj. Charles Scriven, the sergeant major of the IBIZ, said his team provided assistance and technical expertise on the project.

“We are the sponsors, so to speak,” said Scriven, a Columbia, S.C., native.

Scriven said the new location of the oil service center is going to make a big difference to those on base who need vehicles serviced.

“This puts them in the same area where the maintenance is being done,” he said.

The old location was difficult for some to find and caused some vehicle operators to go too long between oil changes, said Scriven.

“It’s now less complicated to keep up with services,” he said.

Scriven said the new location will have five service bays as opposed to two and they expect the work volume to triple.



Courtesy photo

An Iraqi man details a vehicle at the Joint Base Balad Oil Service Center at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. A new and expanded location is scheduled to open Feb. 8 next to the vehicle dispatch center.

The local shaykh who owns the oil service center has been involved with JBB for years, said Capt. Joseph Ayoub, the officer in charge of the IBIZ.

“He’s been on base a while and has done good work,” said Ayoub.

Ayoub said his team gave the oil center guidance and tips on running

the business as well as help with the construction. The IBIZ also facilitated a partnership that allowed Army civil engineers to construct a hardened roof over the service bays.

“They’ve received help from us (because) they’ve done good work,” said Ayoub. “We make sure they’re happy.”

# Operations company maintains presence at Basra

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE BASRA, Iraq – The 159th Seaport Operations Company, an inland cargo transfer company, is directly responsible for the Central Receiving and Shipping Point at Contingency Operating Base Basra, Iraq.

Sgt. 1st Class Damon L. Norris, the first sergeant for the COL Basra detachment of the 159th SOC, 80th Ordnance Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), out of Fort Story, Va., said the unit's primary mission is to receive, stage and document all incoming and outgoing unit equipment within the COB Basra CRSP yard.

The 159th SOC has been reduced from its original 45 members to 11 members and no longer conducts 24-hour operations or base support operations, said Norris, a Washington native.

"We are responsible for receiving, documenting and staging equipment for supporting units on (COB) Basra," said Norris. "We were doing (COB) support as well, which pretty much entails moving ... containers and bulk stock equipment to different locations on the (COB). As of recently, we do not do the

(COB) support anymore, but we still do the convoy support."

Norris said in about a month, when another group takes over for his unit, the remaining detachment will join the other 34 members of the unit to conduct a similar operation at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq.

All but five of the units' vehicles have already been transferred to Adder, said Norris.

Sgt. Quintin E. L. Jones, the operations noncommissioned officer for the 159th SOC, and a Charlotte, N.C., native, said the unit has proportionally decreased how much cargo it handles because only a quarter of the unit remains at COB Basra.

The unit handles roughly 75 to 100 containers per month, which was the weekly volume when the unit arrived in country, said Jones.

"The convoy stuff still comes through here, we just do not do quite as much base support," said Jones. "The unit (has) to provide their own transportation to get their containers here and out of here, whereas before we used to do it ourselves."

Each container or piece of equipment moved through the CRSP yard goes through a process to ensure each item is tracked properly, said Jones. The requesting unit fills out a transfer movement request with the 159th SOC for the equipment they need moved, specifying the type and dimensions of the equipment being moved. The move-



Sgt. Quintin E. L. Jones, the operations noncommissioned officer with the 159th Seaport Operations Company out of Fort Story, Va., and a Charlotte, N.C., native, ground guides Sgt. Michael R. Cyphert, a squad leader with the 159th SOC and a Middleton, Penn., native, as he uses a 10-K Atlas to load a generator on a truck for a civilian contractor Jan. 28, at the Central Receiving and Shipping Point at Contingency Operating Base Basra, Iraq.

ment request is then sent to the 601st Movement Control Team, which allocates the vehicles to move the equipment.

Each piece of equipment is given a radio frequency identification tag to help keep track of the incoming and outgoing equipment, said Jones.

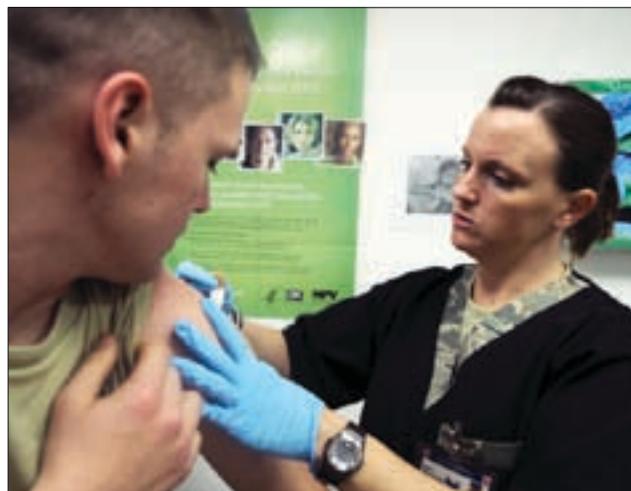
The process is designed to keep an organized and accurate account of where each piece of equipment is at any given

time and ensures that it gets delivered to the right person or unit, said Jones.

Norris said he believes his Soldiers have been working well together to accomplish their mission.

"Anytime you do not have any injury to personnel, you do not have any serious damage to equipment ... and the basic outline of your mission has been successful ... I cannot help but to be pleased," said Norris.

## Clinic staff keeps JBB warriors healthy



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Brittany Y. Bateman

Staff Sgt. Rebecca Bramlett, 332nd Expeditionary Aerospace Medical Squadron noncommissioned officer in charge of immunizations, takes a look at Senior Airman Wesley Carter's small pox shot to ensure it is healing properly Jan. 20 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. The average patient load for the clinic is roughly 350 to 500 people a week.

BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS ALLISON M. BOEHM  
332ND AIR EXPEDITIONARY WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Needle sticks, dressing changes and ointment applications are all in a day's work to keep deployed troops in the fight.

The 332nd Expeditionary Aerospace Medical Squadron Primary Care Clinic contributes to the health and welfare of the inhabitants of JBB. Along with aiding service members, it also takes care of third-country nationals and civilians who work on base.

"We are here for everyone," said Master Sgt. Joseph McCorquodale, 332nd EAMDS primary care clinic flight chief. "We see health concerns before they get to the point where people have to be operated on or evacuated. We are able to treat our patients quickly for the small things, which mitigate the health risks that have the potential to become a bigger issue and become a health hazard."

The Air Force clinic, which is made up of bio-envi-

ronmental, public health and immunization sections, and the primary care clinic, takes on the responsibility of seeing 350 to 500 patients weekly.

In doing so, the Airmen who work in the clinic stay busy scouring the base for possible hazards, seeing patients for sick call, giving required immunizations, and managing records to ensure the quality of health at JBB.

"We have a big responsibility here at the clinic," said Staff Sgt. Rebecca Bramlett, 332nd EAMDS Primary Care Clinic noncommissioned officer in charge of immunizations. "If we weren't here, the emergency room would be overrun. For that reason, we are equipped to do any minor procedure. We also have the means to immunize people with 10 vaccines that treat for possible threats determined in deployed locations."

The work the Air Force clinic provides helps keep the mission at JBB going.

"A five-minute sick call may save three weeks worth of work," said McCorquodale. "We expedite and make their quick return back to the fight possible."

## SHOUT OUT!!!

Contact the Expeditionary Times for more information.

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

# Force protection uniform postures

	IBA	Kevlar	Uniform	Conduct PT
<b>U1</b> 	Accessible within 10 minutes.	Accessible within 10 minutes.	DCU/ACU/ service equivalent. PT uniform allowed for PT or off duty and can be worn in DFAC/PX.	No restrictions.
<b>U2</b> 	Worn when outdoors for specified time or event.	Worn when outdoors for specified time or event.	DCU/ACU/ service equivalent. PT uniform allowed for PT only and cannot be worn in DFAC/PX.	Restriction: PT only in hardened facilities. Can run with IBA and Kevlar.
<b>U3</b> 	Worn outside hardened facility.	Worn outside hardened facility.	Same as U2. DCU/ACU/ service equivalent. PT uniform allowed for PT only and cannot be worn in DFAC/PX.	Restriction: PT only in hardened facilities. Can run with IBA and Kevlar.
<b>U4</b> 	Worn.	Worn.	Same as U3, but with ballistic goggles and combat earplugs.	Not authorized.

# Pop singer Keri Noble visits Q-West

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE  
Q-WEST, Iraq – Pop

singer Keri Noble, a Detroit native, sang at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation center Jan. 16 at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq, as part of her two-week Iraq tour for the troops.

Noble and the rest of her Minneapolis-based band performed music from her latest self-titled album, a blend of pop, rhythm and blues, and gospel.

She sang an unreleased song written specifically for deployed service members and their families entitled "You're Home" and written from the point of view of the wife of a Soldier who recently returned from war. Coming to Iraq was a logical step for her, she said.

"I got asked and it didn't even seem like a question," she said about her decision to entertain the troops in Iraq. "Because of what (Soldiers) do, we get the luxury of freedom."

Noble said all Americans should be required to come to Iraq once to see what service members do for them every day.

"The Middle East feels like another planet," she said. "(The tour) is a little peek into some world ... it's an adventure."

Noble rode in a CH-47 Chinook helicopter and the Humvee egress assistance trainer, which simulates a Humvee roll-over, at other U.S. bases in Iraq before coming to Q-West, she said.

"That was super cool," she said.

She noted the difference between seeing Iraq on the news and seeing the faces of service members.

"You see these people who defend us and they're so young – it makes it so real," she said. "I know I'm going to

watch the news differently because (of those) faces."

Noble's tour encountered delays and cancellations due to bad weather.

"Everything has sort of been backed up ... it happens every time (we) go

on tour," said Laurie Ziegler, Noble's manager.

Maj. John Herd, the MWR officer in charge and a Florence, Miss., native, invited Noble back for Q-West's upcoming Super Bowl party.



Keri Noble, a Minneapolis-based pop singer and Detroit native, performs at a concert for the troops Jan. 16 at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq.

# Quartermaster Soldiers tear up gridiron at JBB

BY 1ST LT. HERBERT KARG  
15TH SUST. BDE.

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Soldiers with the 716th Quartermaster Company, 80th Ordnance Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), out of Jersey City, N.J., relieve stress with football games.

Their team, the Dark Knights, gather at Killeen Field at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, to compete weekly in flag football.

One of the Soldiers, Sgt. Marcus Smith, Corps Distribution Center sergeant, with the Supply Support Activity complex and a Pittsburgh native, said he wanted to get in on the flag football action already at JBB.

Together with Staff Sgt. Robert Rivera, the team's coach and Jersey City, N.J., native, the Soldiers formed the Dark Knights.

The team joined late in the already running regular season and played its



Dark Knight's quarterback Spc. Todd Boban, an automated supply specialist with the 716th Quartermaster Company and a Manor, Pa., native, runs the football up the sideline during a game against the Air Force's 49ers Jan. 10 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

first game against the 514th Maintenance Company Bulldogs out of Fort Drum, N.Y., Jan. 3, but lost 13-6.

Rivera said he has seen progress in the team since the first game.

"The team never practiced before

the first game and only lost by a touchdown," Rivera said. "This team has a lot of heart and has the capability to win it all. I see we are getting better game by game."

After finally having a practice, they took on the Air Force's 49ers Jan. 10 and won 13-6.

The team doesn't go into their games alone, there are always Soldiers clapping and cheering from the stands, Rivera said.

"Having a company flag football team is good for morale," Rivera said. "I would like to thank our fans for all of their support so far this season."

The team now practices once a week before each game, he said. They took on Tha Goats Jan. 17, and worked to gain a lead in the first half. A scoring drive in the second half set the Dark Knights back to an 18-13 loss to Tha Goats.

"It's a great thing to come out here and cheer on our team," said 1st Sgt. Nilsa Davila-Aranda, the 716th's senior noncommissioned officer and a Bronx, N.Y., native. "I'm very proud of my Soldiers."

The Dark Knights are now 1-2.

## Do you have a story idea?

Contact us at:

[escpao@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:escpao@iraq.centcom.mil)

# Sudoku

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

**Level: Hard**

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

Last week's answers

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

# TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. In what 1975 blockbuster does Roy Scheider utter: "We need a bigger boat?"
2. What statuesque actress earned a living by standing still in department store windows prior to her film debut in "Tootsie?"
3. What two-word term does The Cynic's Dictionary call: "A movie seen about 50 times by about that many people?"
4. What brand of underwear does Marty McFly wear in "Back to the Future?"
5. What actress scored a record 12 Oscar nominations, winning her first in 1933 and her last in 1981?

1. Jaws 2. Gene Davis 3. Cult film 4. Calvin Klein 5. Katherine Hepburn

## JB BALAD WORSHIP SERVICES

**TRADITIONAL - Sunday**

0200 Air Force Hospital Chapel 0930 Provider Chapel  
 1030 Freedom Chapel (West side) 1100 Castle Heights (Bldg. 7562)  
 1400 Air Force Hospital Chapel 1730 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)  
 2000 Air Force Hospital Chapel

**GOSPEL - Sunday**

1100 MWR East Building 1200 Freedom Chapel (West Side)  
 1230 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

**CONTEMPORARY - Sunday**

0900 Chapel- Next Iraq/MWR East  
 1030 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)  
 1400 Castle Heights (Bldg. 7562) 1900 Freedom Chapel (West Side)

**Wednesday**

2000 Gilbert Memorial Chapel

**LITURGICAL (Episcopal, Anglican, Presbyterian) - Sunday**

1700 Provider Chapel

**SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST - Saturday**

1000 Provider Chapel

**CHURCH OF CHRIST - Sunday**

1530 Castle Heights (Bldg. 7562)

**LATTER DAY SAINTS (MORMON)- Sunday**

1300 Provider Chapel 1530 Freedom Chapel (West side)  
 1900 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

**MASS - Saturday**

1700 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)  
 2000 Freedom Chapel (West Side)

**Sunday**

0830 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)  
 1100 Provider Chapel 1100 Air Force Hospital

**Thursday**

1100 Air Force Hospital

**Mon., Wed., Fri.**

1700 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

**Monday-Friday**

1130 555th Engineer Bde. (Bldg. 7200)

**JEWISH SHABBAT SERVICES- Friday**

1700 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

**Saturday**

0930 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

1700 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

**ISLAMIC PRAYER - Friday**

1230 Provider Chapel

**PAGAN/WICCAN FELLOWSHIP - Thursday**

1900 The Shack

**Saturday**

1900 The Shack

**GREEK ORTHODOX - Sunday**

0900 Provider Annex

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CALL:**

Gilbert Chapel: 443-7703

Provider Chapel: 433-2430

Freedom Chapel: 443-6303

## JB BALAD ACTIVITIES

<b>INDOOR POOL</b> Swim Lessons: Mon., Wed., - 6 p.m. Tue., Thu., Sat., - 6:30 p.m. Aqua Training: Tue., Thu., - 7:30 p.m., 8:30 p.m.	a.m., 5-6 p.m. Edge Weapons & Stick Fighting Combative Training: Tue., Thur., Sat., - 8-10 p.m.	p.m. Caribbean Night: Friday- 8 p.m. Chess & Dominoes Tourney: Friday- 8 p.m. Salsa Class: Saturday- 8:30 p.m. Poker: Saturday- 7:30 p.m.	CC Cross Fit: Monday- Saturday- 10:30 p.m. Cross Fit: Mon., Wed., Fri., - 5:45 a.m., 7 a.m., 3 p.m., 6 p.m. Tue., Thu., - 7 a.m., 3 p.m.	Hold'em: Mon., Fri., - 2 p.m., 8:30 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Tuesday- 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Ping-pong tourney: Tuesday- 8:30 p.m. Spades: Wednesday- 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Salsa: Wednesday- 8:30 p.m. 9-ball: Thursday- 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Karaoke: Thursday- 8:30 p.m. Yoga: Wednesday- 8 p.m. Saturday- 9 a.m., 7 p.m. Boxing: Sunday- 4 p.m. Friday- 8 p.m. 5 on 5 Basketball: Saturday- 8 p.m.	Ping-pong tourney: Tuesday- 8 p.m. Foosball tourney: Tuesday- 8 p.m. Jam Session: Tuesday- 7:30 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Wednesday- 8 p.m. Guitar Lessons: Thursday- 7:30 p.m. Game tourney: Thursday- 1 p.m., 8 p.m. Enlisted Poker: Friday- 1 p.m., 8 p.m. Officer Poker: Saturday- 1 p.m., 8 p.m. Squat Competition: Saturday- 8 p.m. Darts: Saturday- 8:30 p.m.	Friday- 7 p.m. Aerobics: Monday, Wednesday, Friday- 7 p.m. Body by Midgett Toning Class: Tue., Thu., - 7 p.m. Dodge ball Game: Tuesday- 7:30 p.m. Furman's Martial Arts: Mon., Wed., Sun., - 1 p.m. Gaston's Self-Defense Class: Fri., Sat., - 7 p.m. Open court basketball: Thursday- 7 p.m. Open court soccer: Mon., Wed., - 7 p.m. Zingano Brazilian Jui Jitsu: Tue., Thu., - 8:30 p.m.
<b>EAST FIT-NESS CENTER</b> Open Court Volleyball: Sunday- 6 p.m. Aerobics: Mon., Wed., Fri., - 5:30-6:30 a.m. Yoga Class: Mon., Fri., - 6-7 a.m. Step Aerobics: Mon., Wed., Fri., - 5:30 p.m. Conditioning Training Class: Mon., Wed., Fri., - 7:15-8 p.m. Brazilian Jui-Jitsu: Mon., Wed., Fri., - 8-9 p.m. Abs-Aerobics: Tue., Thu., 6-7	<b>EAST RECREATION CENTER</b> 4-ball tourney: Sunday- 8 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Monday- 8 p.m. Karaoke: Sunday- 8 p.m. Monday- 8 p.m. p.m. Swing Class: Tuesday- 8 p.m. Table Tennis: Tuesday- 8 p.m. Plastic Models Club: Wednesday 7 p.m. 9-ball tourney: Wednesday- 8 p.m. Dungeons & Dragons: Thursday- 7:30 p.m. Poetry Night: Thursday- 8 p.m. 6-ball tourney: Thursday- 8	<b>H6 FITNESS CENTER</b> Spin: Sunday- 9 a.m. Monday, Wed., Fri., - 2 a.m., 8 a.m. 2 p.m., 7 p.m., 9 p.m. Tue., Thu., - 5:45 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Saturday- 9 a.m., 7 p.m. Boxing: Sunday- 4 p.m. Tue., Thu., - 2 p.m. Boot Camp: Sunday- 8:45 a.m. Tue., Thu., - 7 p.m. Power Abs: Mon., Tue., Thu., - 8 p.m. Friday- 9 p.m.	Monday- Saturday- 4:30 a.m., 4 p.m., 10 p.m., 12 a.m. Soccer: Tue., Thu., - 8 p.m. Wednesday- 8 p.m. MACP Level 1: Friday- 8 p.m. 5 on 5 Basketball: Saturday- 8 p.m. <b>H6 RECREATION CENTER</b> Bingo: Sunday- 8 p.m. Texas	Monday- Saturday- 8:30 p.m. 9-ball: Thursday- 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Karaoke: Thursday- 8:30 p.m. Dominos: Saturday- 8:30 p.m. Darts: Saturday- 8:30 p.m. <b>WEST RECREATION CENTER</b> Green Bean Karaoke: Sun., Wed., 7:30pm 9-ball tourney: Monday- 8 p.m.	Friday- 7 p.m. Aerobics: Monday, Wednesday, Friday- 7 p.m. Body by Midgett Toning Class: Tue., Thu., - 7 p.m. Dodge ball Game: Tuesday- 7:30 p.m. Furman's Martial Arts: Mon., Wed., Sun., - 1 p.m. Gaston's Self-Defense Class: Fri., Sat., - 7 p.m. Open court basketball: Thursday- 7 p.m. Open court soccer: Mon., Wed., - 7 p.m. Zingano Brazilian Jui Jitsu: Tue., Thu., - 8:30 p.m.	

## UPCOMING SPORTS ON AFN



**Thursday 02/04/10**

Wednesday Night Hoops: DePaul @ Marquette, Live 3 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 NBA Wednesday: Miami Heat @ Boston Celtics, Live 4 a.m. AFN/sports  
 Wednesday Night Hoops: Kansas @ Colorado, Live 5 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 NBA Wednesday: Portland Trail Blazers @ Utah Jazz, Live 6:30 a.m. AFN/sports

**Friday 02/05/10**

NBA on TNT: Miami Heat @ Cleveland Cavaliers, Live 4 a.m. AFN/sports  
 NBA on TNT: San Antonio Spurs @ Portland Trail Blazers, Live 6:30 a.m. AFN/sports  
 Thursday Night Showcase: Teams TBD, Tape Delayed 11 a.m. AFN/sports  
 NFL Total Access @ The Super Bowl, Tape Delayed 2:30 p.m. AFN/sports

**Saturday 02/06/10**

Atlanta Thrashers @ Washington Capitals, Live 3 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 NBA Friday: Chicago Bulls @ Atlanta Hawks, Live 4 a.m. AFN/sports  
 Phoenix Coyotes @ Chicago Blackhawks, Live 5 a.m. AFN/prime pacific  
 NBA Friday: Denver Nuggets @ Los Angeles Lakers, Live 6:30 a.m. AFN/sports

**Sunday 02/07/10**

Gonzaga @ Memphis, Live 12 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 Texas @ Oklahoma, Live 12 a.m. AFN/sports  
 Detroit Red Wings @ Los Angeles Kings, Live 12 a.m. AFN/prime atlantic  
 New Jersey Devils @ New York Rangers, Live 3 a.m. AFN/prime atlantic  
 UFC 109: Relentless, Live 6 a.m. AFN/xtra

**Monday 02/08/10**

Super Bowl XLVI: Teams TBD (Land Shark Stadium, Miami, FL), Live 2 a.m. AFN/sports  
 2009 Fed Cup: USA vs France - Day 2: Rubber 3, Tape Delayed 6 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 UFC 109: Relentless, Tape Delayed 10 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 Super Bowl XLVI: Teams TBD (Land Shark Stadium, Miami, FL), Tape Delayed 12 p.m. AFN/sports

**Tuesday 02/09/10**

NHL on VERSUS: New Jersey Devils @ Philadelphia Flyers, Live 3 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 NBA on TNT: New Orleans Hornets @ Orlando Magic, Live 4 a.m. AFN/sports  
 NBA on TNT: San Antonio Spurs @ Los Angeles Lakers, Live 6:30 a.m. AFN/sports

**Wednesday 02/10/10**

Super Tuesday: Tennessee @ Vanderbilt, Live 3 a.m. AFN/sports  
 NHL on VERSUS: Detroit Red Wings @ St. Louis Blues, Live 4 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 Super Tuesday: Purdue @ Michigan State, Live 5 a.m. AFN/sports

# Arts & Entertainment

## 'Eli' is no 'Road Warrior'

BY SGT. JAYSON A. HOFFMAN  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



"The Book of Eli" has solid action and is well-paced, but the whole time I watched the movie I couldn't help thinking, "What would Mad Max do?"

"The Road Warrior," Mad Max, would have made this film much more entertaining and he would have destroyed every ounce of product placement in the film.

The movie takes place in the distant future, after an unstated apocalypse has turned America into a barren desert wasteland. Eli (Denzel Washington) is a nomad heading west with a book he vowed to protect with his life. While on

his westward journey, Eli runs through a town run by a man known as Carnegie (Gary Oldman), who is looking for a book, the same book Eli is carrying. Then, through a tussle between Eli and Carnegie's men, Carnegie finds out about the book and sends Solara (Mila Kunis), his lover's daughter, to seduce Eli for the book. The attempt fails, but Eli and Solara head out west, and much action ensues as both sides battle for the book.

I will admit, I liked this movie more than I thought I would. I mean, it was entertaining enough, but very flawed.

The cinematography did a good job of making the world look very barren, and gave everything a slight tinge of gray. The problem it had was that there were too many close-up shots of characters' faces with very bad green screen

effects in the background. It was very distracting.

The movie had solid action scenes. The first time the audience gets to see Eli's fighting skills is a very well-choreographed scene. It was pretty awesome to get to see Washington ("Training Day") have over-the-top fight scenes. After this movie, I wouldn't be surprised if he gets more action movie offers.

Washington played the role very well. He was a noble man who was completely dedicated to his cause of protecting the book. He was tough, but very humble, which isn't always easy to pull off. If there were any issues I had with the character, it's that he was too tough. I blame that on direction, not acting, though.

Oldman ("The Dark Knight") was a great egomaniac, as always. This role

seemed like a combination of the characters he played in "The Professional" and "The 5th Element," a little over-the-top, but wholly believable.

Kunis ("Forgetting Sarah Marshall") was OK. She was about as middle of the road with this role as she could be. She wasn't memorable or forgettable, just OK.

The hands down, worst part of this movie was the product placement. Everyone had expensive, name-brand sunglasses and electronics accessories galore. There was an apocalypse ... right? Many movies do it, but with an apocalypse storyline, it tends to stand out.

"The Book of Eli" overall was not a bad movie, but as I've said through this whole review, just watch "The Road Warrior."

## 'Contra' does not pick up where Vampire Weekend left off

BY SGT. KEITH S. VAN KLOMPENBERG  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



Two years ago, Vampire Weekend exploded onto the indie-rock scene with its self-titled debut album.

Fusing African sounds with string arrangements, trebly guitars and smart lyrics, they were a surprise hit and became a mainstay on satellite radio.

I don't think there is a song on their first album that I didn't love, but that might not be a good thing for the band. How do you follow such a good album?

In the case of "Contra," the band seems to have tried to do the same as the Yeah Yeah Yeahs and Julian Casablancas by buying a bunch of synthesizers and making an L.A. indie rock album. How weird

that three awesome New York bands would feel like they have to fit in with the Los Angeles crowd.

Now that I think about it, how weird is it that indie-rock is making the East Coast, West Coast split? Lucky for us, all these guys are way too skinny and nerdy to get violent.

So "Contra" sounds different than Vampire Review's self-titled first album and I certainly don't predict as many singles as their debut, but it's not entirely a bad album.

The African pop is still there, along with the same guitar sound, but they've added synthesizers and everything sounds just a bit more produced.

Overall, this album feels less energetic than the last.

In 2007, the members of Vampire Weekend were all working full time jobs and writing and recording on the week-

end. Maybe the desire to leave behind monotonous day jobs filled the band with a sense of urgency that came through in their music, or maybe back then the music was just for fun, and as such, the music was more fun. Either way, that energy is lacking in "Contra."

That being said, a couple of songs stand out as winners.

My favorite track is definitely "Holiday." It's full of jangly guitars and definitely would have fit in on their debut. A close second is "Giving up the Gun," a big synthesizer track with a solid beat and clear vocals. This is the only track where I consider embracing the new Vampire Weekend.

"Contra" debuted at number one in the Billboard 200 charts in its first week, likely riding on the strength of the first album rather than the two songs, "Horchata" and "Cousins," that we're released early.

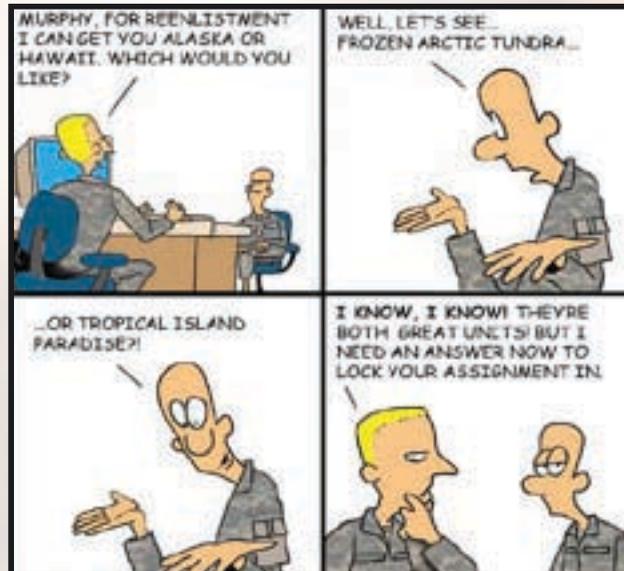
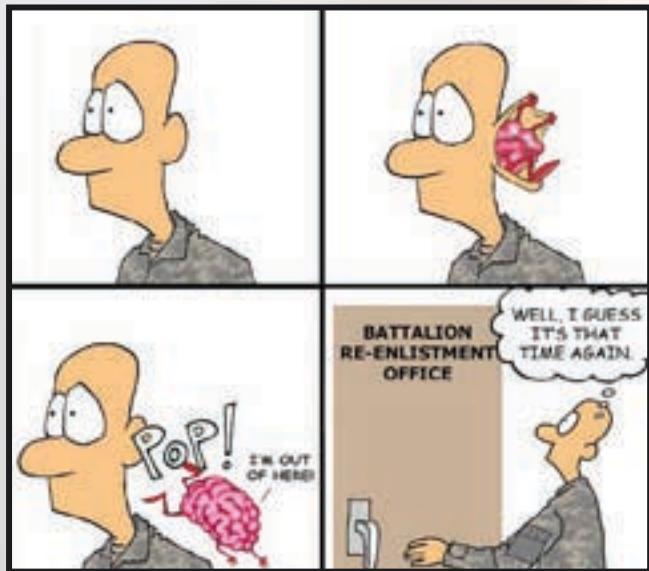
I think this album will be remembered as one of those that, while not bad, could not match the magic of the one that preceded it. I have to wonder how many out there are as disappointed as I am.

If this album did anything for me, it made me remember just how good the band's debut was, and I'm listening to it every day again.

Indie-rock is really going in two different directions, with some artists picking up synthesizers and moving to L.A., while others are moving to the country, growing beards, and aligning themselves more with country and folk.

If you like the more electronic stuff, pick up "Contra," but if you prefer your indie-rock with do-it-yourself production values, listen to Vampire Weekend's self-titled album and enjoy what will probably end up being the best work of the band's career.

### PVT MURPHY



### Sustainer Reel Time Theater

#### Wednesday, Feb. 3

5 p.m. The Princess and the Frog  
8 p.m. Brothers

#### Thursday, Feb. 4

5 p.m. Brothers  
8 p.m. Legion

#### Friday, Feb. 5

2 p.m. It's Complicated  
5 p.m. Invictus  
8:30 p.m. Edge of Darkness

#### Saturday, Feb. 6

2 p.m. Invictus  
5 p.m. Edge of Darkness  
8 p.m. It's Complicated

#### Sunday, Feb. 7

2 p.m. Edge of Darkness  
5 p.m. It's Complicated  
8 p.m. Invictus

#### Monday, Feb. 8

5 p.m. Edge of Darkness  
8 p.m. It's Complicated

#### Tuesday, Feb. 9

5 p.m. Invictus  
8 p.m. Edge of Darkness

#### Wednesday, Feb. 10

5 p.m. Edge of Darkness  
8 p.m. Ninja Assassin

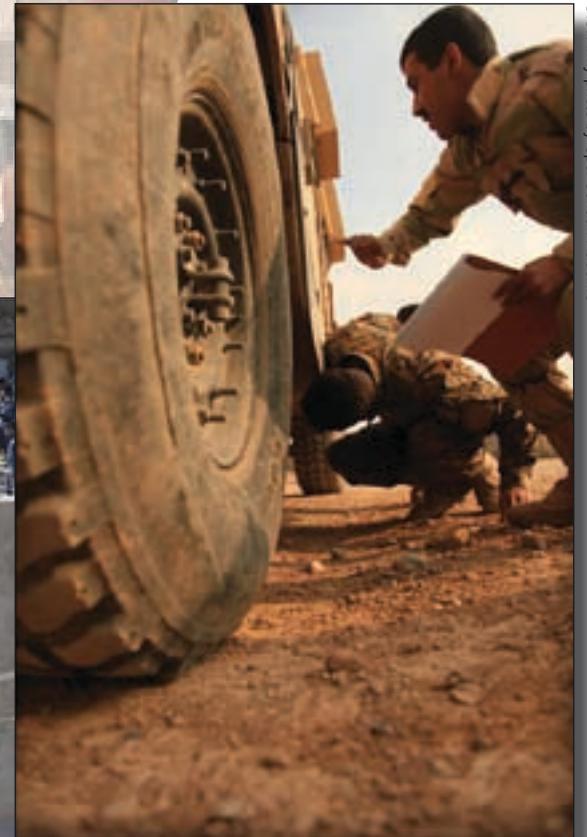


# PHOTOS AROUND IRAQ



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Spc. 2nd Class Matthew D. Leistikow

(Below) A group of Iraqi Army Soldiers assigned to 4th Battalion, 16th Iraqi Army Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division, conduct hands-on training in their compound Jan. 16 at Tuz Qada, Iraq.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Canaan Radcliffe

(Above) First Sgt. Kevin Donegan, with the 1st Armor Division, struggles with an Iraqi Soldier with 3rd Battalion, 49th Iraqi Army in an arm wrestling match Jan. 11 at Dibbis, Iraq.



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

(Above) Iraqi police officers march on the street behind the Provincial Joint Command Center Jan. 4 at Nasiriyah, Dhi Qar, Iraq.



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Spc. 2nd Class Matthew D. Leistikow

Spc. Timothy Miller, with 1st Armor Division, jukes past an Iraqi Soldier from the 49th Iraqi Army, during a soccer game Jan. 11 at Dibbis, Iraq.



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Spc. 2nd Class Matthew D. Leistikow

A young girl is happy to see The Lion of Kirkuk, portrayed by Spc. Brandon Smith with the 3rd Infantry Division, during a humanitarian aid drop at the Emergency Response Unit compound Jan. 18 at Kirkuk, Iraq.

# NEWS AROUND IRAQ

## Sister services teach comrades valuable lifesaving skills

BAGHDAD – A U.S. Soldier and Airman from United States Forces – Iraq, deputy commanding general of Advising and Training, Health Affairs, taught critical first-responder skills to fellow service members and civilians Dec. 30 in Baghdad.

Combat lifesaver training is a three-day, hands-on course during which participants learn how to apply tourniquets, stop bleeding and stabilize the injured until they can be cared for by professional medical personnel.

While their primary mission in Iraq is to train and equip the Iraqi security forces' medical healthcare systems, Air Force Master Sgt. Krystal Marks and Army Sgt. Donell Hughes teach a CLS course that draws students from both military and civilian organizations deployed in Iraq.

"We are all in this together – no service goes to war alone," said Marks, USF-I deputy commanding general and A&T Health Affairs senior enlisted medical adviser. "The way combat has evolved, we have to be able to talk to each other and convey the same ideas. If everyone is taught the same way to save people, then it brings us together."

At the end of the course, students are required to take a written test and successfully insert an intravenous line to earn CLS certification.

"We don't teach our students to be combat medics," said Hughes, a combat medic and USF-I, DCG, A&T Health Affairs medical training adviser. "They are trained to stabilize the patient and call in a report, so medical personnel know what to expect and how to care for them."

Because the sister services train together, USF-I, DCG, A&T civilians and military members receive congruent training.

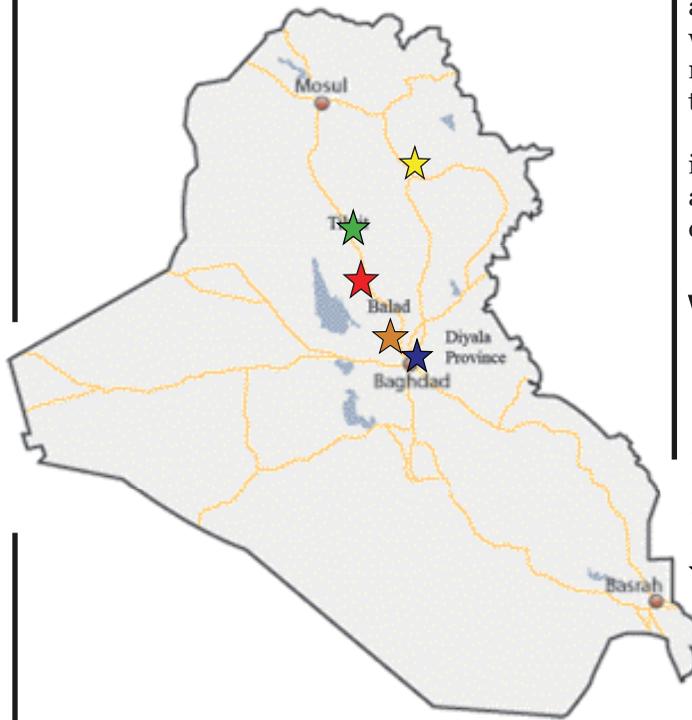
"If someone recognizes a life-threatening wound, knows the signs and symptoms and applies the skills learned here, then deaths can be prevented," said Marks.

## Iraqi Security Forces target northern Iraq explosives cells, arrest 6

BAGHDAD – Iraqi Security Forces arrested six individuals Jan. 23 during two joint security operations conducted to arrest suspected al-Qaeda in Iraq explosives-cell members in northern Iraq.

In the city of Hit, roughly 145 km northeast of Baghdad, ISF and U.S. advisers searched a residential building for a suspected AQI explosives-cell member believed to be involved in staging vehicle-borne improvised explosive device attacks and kidnappings in the region.

Preliminary questioning results and evidence collected at the scene led ISF to identify and arrest the wanted individual and two suspected criminal accomplices.



During a separate security operation in Baqubah, roughly 54 km northeast of Baghdad, the 3rd Emergency Response Unit and U.S. advisers searched a building for an AQI member believed to be involved in IED attacks, assassinations and kidnappings in Diyala province.

Evidence collected at the scene led Iraqi Police to arrest three suspected criminal associates of the warranted individual.

## Iraqi Security Forces operate against suspected extremist leader

TIKRIT, Iraq – Iraqi Security Forces, partnered with U.S. forces, conducted an operation against the suspected cell leader of a Shi'a extremist group Jan. 20 in the Diyala province.

The ISF-led force targeted an individual who is accused of crimes against Iraqi citizens and security forces. The ISF believe the individual is responsible for carrying out numerous kidnappings of Iraqi civilians. He is also suspected of coordinating, ordering and carrying out improvised explosive device attacks in the region as well as rocket attacks against local security forces.

The alleged cell leader is believed to be associated with other criminals responsible for improvised explosive device attacks on the ISF.

## Iraqi Security Forces capture senior Promised Day Brigade member

BAGHDAD – Iraqi Security Forces captured a suspected senior Promised Day Brigade member Jan. 23 and two suspected criminal accomplices during a joint security operation in northeast Baghdad.

Based on credible intelligence tips, ISF and U.S. advisers searched two residential buildings associated with a suspected PDB official believed to coordinate military operations and attacks for the terrorist group throughout the capital city.

After questioning those at the scene and examining the evidence within the buildings, ISF identified and arrested the wanted individual and two suspected criminal accomplices.

## Vice President Biden visits Iraq

BAGHDAD- Vice President Joe Biden arrived in Baghdad to visit U.S. troops and meet with Iraqi leaders Jan. 22.

It is Biden's third trip to Iraq in the last year. He will visit with United States Forces – Iraq service members partnering with the Iraqi Security Forces as they prepare for the upcoming elections.

Imagery and video of the Vice President's visit can be accessed on the Digital Visual Information Distribution System Web site at <http://www.dvid-shub.net>.

## 1 killed, 9 arrested in security operations in Baghdad

BAGHDAD – Iraqi Security Forces arrested nine suspected terrorists Jan.22 during two joint security operations in northern Iraq targeting suspected al-Qaeda in Iraq members.

One additional suspected terrorist was killed during one of the security operations.

ISF executed both operations pursuant to warrants issued by Iraqi courts.

In northwest Mosul, Iraq, ISF and U.S. advisers searched a residential building for a suspected AQI member wanted for facilitating the illegal entry of hundreds of foreign fighters into Iraq. In addition, the warranted AQI member is also suspected of distributing weapons and money to other terrorist-group members.

Following preliminary questioning and examination of evidence at the scene, the security team arrested a suspected criminal accomplice of the warranted individual.

As the security team conducted further examination of the scene, the suspected terrorist freed himself from his restraints and attacked his guard. The security team member shot and killed the suspected terrorist.

In a separate security operation conducted in Sharqat, roughly 102 km west of Kirkuk, Iraq, ISF and U.S. advisers searched residential buildings for an AQI leader believed to be involved in conducting improvised-explosives device attacks and help foreign fighters gain entry into Iraq.

Evidence collected at the scene resulted in the arrest of nine suspected criminal accomplices of the warranted individual.

## US forces return Samarra hotel to Iraqi government

SAMARRA, Iraq – The Iraqi Receivership Secretariat signed for a patrol base from U.S. forces during a ceremony Jan. 22.



Lt. Col. Sami Gayath, the Iraqi Army's director of the Samarra Joint Coordination Center, said it was an important day and the turn-over of the hotel to the Iraqi government was a good indication that Iraq Security Forces were capable of maintaining security in Iraq.

"We are very proud of our security, and we hope to continue what we have accomplished here in cities and villages throughout Iraq," he said.

Soldiers with the 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division out of Fort Riley, Kan., signed Patrol Base Olsen over to Sameer Al-haddad, the Iraqi Receivership Secretariat during the ceremony.

Before turning over the former patrol base the Soldiers completely demilitarized the hotel, removing barriers and restoring it closely to its previous condition.

The patrol base was actually an old hotel called Albohera, which means hotel by the lake. The hotel boasts a scenic lake view and from its roof, the famous Al-Askari golden mosque can be seen in the distance.

## Sunni Endowment donates tools

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – The job-skill training offered to detainees at the Taji Theater Internment Facility and Reconciliation Center got a boost with the addition of scores of new tools donated by the Sunni Endowment of Iraq, Jan. 15.



Shaykh Ahmed Abdul Khafour al-Samara'e, head of the endowment, and Shaykh Mahmoud Ali Ahmed al-Falahi, director of the endowment's human rights office, visited Camp Taji to present the tools to Rear Adm. Lothrop Little, special assistant to the deputy commanding general for detainee operations. Also on hand to receive the gifts were Col. John M. Huey, commander of the 89th Military Police Brigade and Task Force Griffin, and Lt. Col. Richard Johnson, commander of the 211th Military Police Battalion, who directly oversees the vocational and technical training provided to detainees at the Taji TIFRC. Taji Warden Hassan Al-Mohammadawi, of the Iraqi Corrections Service, represented the Government of Iraq at the event.

"Thanks to Dr. Ahmed and the Sunni Endowment; their contribution of tools is going to allow the Ministry of Justice to train detainees for a better life in Iraq," said Little.

During the ceremony, al-Samara'e extolled the virtues of hard work and articulated that the first step toward a better life for the detainees is to train and teach them job skills they can use upon their release. He said the vocational training provided here is an effective way to prevent many of the detainees from returning to violence. He said he believed many who are responsible for violence in Iraq have not been afforded the opportunity to learn peaceful and productive job skills.

"Education and vocational training for detainees is a topic upon which there is total consensus among

Americans and Iraqis, regardless of religious affiliation, politics or ideology," said Lt. Col. Richard Johnson. "Providing detainees with improved literacy, job skills and a positive self-image prior to release will enhance their prospects to successfully re-enter Iraqi society, support their families, support the rule of law and avoid a return to violence."

This is the second time in two months new tools have been donated to the TIFRC by the Sunni Endowment. The increased amount of tools, such as saws, hammers, rakes, shovels, drills, levels and screwdrivers, means more detainees will receive hands-on training in agriculture, carpentry, HVAC repair and masonry.

The presentation ceremony included displays focused on each of the subjects taught here, as well as finished products, including a full-size picnic table complete with a roof.

The Soldiers with the 211th Military Police Battalion have worked to improve the job skills training programs here and ensure they are running efficiently upon the transfer of the TIFRC to the Government of Iraq in early spring of 2010.

## Academy sets new standard for senior noncommissioned officer course

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – The Iraqi Noncommissioned Officer Academy began its fifth Senior Noncommissioned Officer Course at the national training facility Jan. 18.



This is the first senior NCO course to use the newly-published "Art of Leadership" manual that combines both leadership and small group interaction.

The senior NCO course is 45 days of standards-based training that covers qualification and certification in many areas including leadership, ethics, physical training, basic computer application, land navigation and marksmanship. It also covers staff planning, tactical operations, military law, training management and basic instructor training.

The primary objective of this course is to give the students the knowledge and skills to lead and train Soldiers at their home units, and is a prerequisite for NCOs to earn promotions to pay grades E-7 and higher.

"This is a big step for the academy," said Iraqi Army Sgt. Maj. Ahmed, senior enlisted NCO to the academy. "It will be the first time that the students have published doctrine to use throughout the course."

The NCOA staff and instructors held an opening ceremony for the students and Col. Alaa, the NCOA commander and guest speaker, who stressed the importance of the training.

"The staff and instructors here continue to improve this course each time," Alaa said. "We are working diligently to establish the Senior NCO Course as one of the premiere training courses of the Iraqi Army."

The senior NCO course graduation is scheduled to be held Feb. 28.

## Iraqi Army Soldiers begin mortar training

KIRKUK., Iraq – Iraqi Army Soldiers from the 4th and 12th divisions began training to sharpen their skills as mortar men Jan. 13 at the Kirkuk K1 Training Center.



During the first week of training, the four

platoons from the 4th and 12th IA divisions successfully completed a literacy and mathematics exam to ensure they possess the requisite skills to serve as mortar men.

Initial team training focused on advanced military instruction in land navigation, terrain association and map reading.

In the second week of training, the mortar platoons learned the intricacies of the forward observer, fire direction control and how to properly set up and fire the mortar.

This indirect fire process demands that all Soldiers on the mortar team have expert knowledge on multiple military disciplines, to include target identification, map reading, navigation and precision math skills.

Brig. Gen. Abdulla, commander of the K1 Training Center, addressed the students on the first day of training.

"This rigorous training program designed by the K1 Training Center tests each Iraqi Soldier's ability to perform under pressure while achieving the accuracy necessary to effectively engage targets several thousand meters away," he said.

After these Soldiers complete mortar training and graduate Jan. 28, platoons will be able to provide their battalions with an indirect fire capability ranging nearly 5,000 meters.

When the scheduled fielding and training are completed later this year, all IA brigades will have an organic mortar capability, serving as a combat multiplier for Iraqi infantry units.

## Iraqi Army Commandos complete warrior training

KIRKUK, Iraq - The 4th Iraqi Army Division's Commando Battalion completed three weeks of intensive training at the K-1 Training Center Jan. 14 in Kirkuk, Iraq.

The commandos performed air assault training and learned rapid movement techniques that enable them to function as a quick reactionary force or as an operational reserve against unsuspecting enemy forces.

The training began with battalion physical training.

Then the noncommissioned officers focused on advanced leadership training and squad and platoon tactics while the officers learned staff policies and procedures.

Advanced training for individuals included countering improvised explosive devices, performing communication procedures and land navigation.

Physical conditioning continued throughout the course as the battalion began practicing air mobility training, identifying types and characteristics of helicopters, and planning for air assault missions, which were supported by the Iraqi Air Force Military Intelligence 17 Squadron out of Camp Taji, Iraq.

As the training progressed, the focus transitioned to platoon and company level operations conducted in a simulated urban town called a MOUT facility.

The commandos completed the training by planning and executing a series of raids against simulated enemy forces with air assault support provided by the Iraqi Air Force.

The 4th Division Commandos are now fully capable of conducting air assault operations in addition to the variety of new critical skills acquired in the Warrior Training Program.

"This is a good day for our great country," said Brig. Gen. Abdulla, commander of the Kirkuk Training Center. "The training received in the Warrior Training Program is vital to our efforts in maintaining a safe and secure Iraq."

# Phantom Support



U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Lisa A. Cope

A woman and two children walk down a dirt road, Jan. 18, near the Euphrates River near Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq.



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

Soldiers, led by noncommissioned officers and guidons, take off running during the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. 5K run Jan. 16 at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq. "The NCOs ran today to show appreciation to Dr. King and all he's done for society," said Command Sgt. Maj. Nathaniel Bartee Sr., the 15th Sustainment Brigade senior NCO. "Let all of us remember to be united as one."



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Keith S. VanKlompberg

(Above) Country music singer Sheila Marshall sings during an acoustic performance for service members Jan. 21 at Sami's restaurant before holding a larger, full-band concert at Morale, Welfare and Recreation west at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

A Soldier with Task Force Atlas with the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team prepares for a Convoy Security Mission at Al Asad, Iraq.

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Cory Grogan



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Anita VanderMolen

A Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle with a 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team convoy heads down the road shared with Iraqi civilians Jan. 7 near Al Asad. The share the road policy allows Iraqi drivers to travel through and pass military convoys.