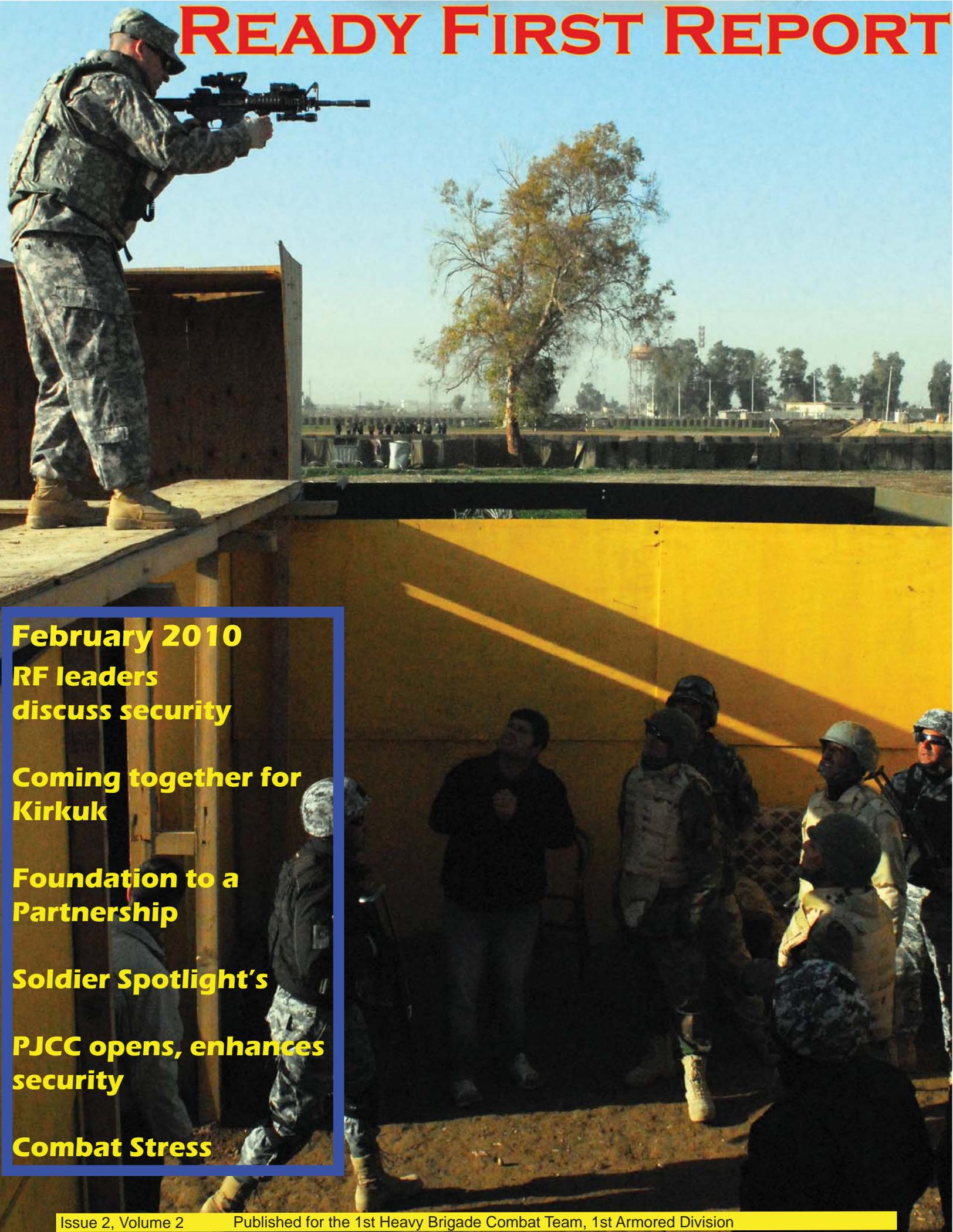


READY FIRST REPORT



February 2010
RF leaders
discuss security

Coming together for
Kirkuk

Foundation to a
Partnership

Soldier Spotlight's

PJCC opens, enhances
security

Combat Stress

READY 6

COL. LARRY SWIFT

READY FIRST COMBAT TEAM COMMANDER

Ready First Soldiers, Family and Friends,

Since arriving at Forward Operating Base Warrior, Kirkuk, Iraq the Ready First Combat Team has made a significant difference

in the lives of the citizens of Iraq. By successfully training another elite security element to protect the city; the Combined Security Force. In a short time we have enabled this force to be the premier security element for Kirkuk.

I am very impressed with the amount of dedication that has gone into the training of our partners, we have fully prepared these soldiers to protect the citizens of Kirkuk in the future.

Also remember, as you are dutifully executing your mission with your partners, take the time to keep in touch with your Family and friends.

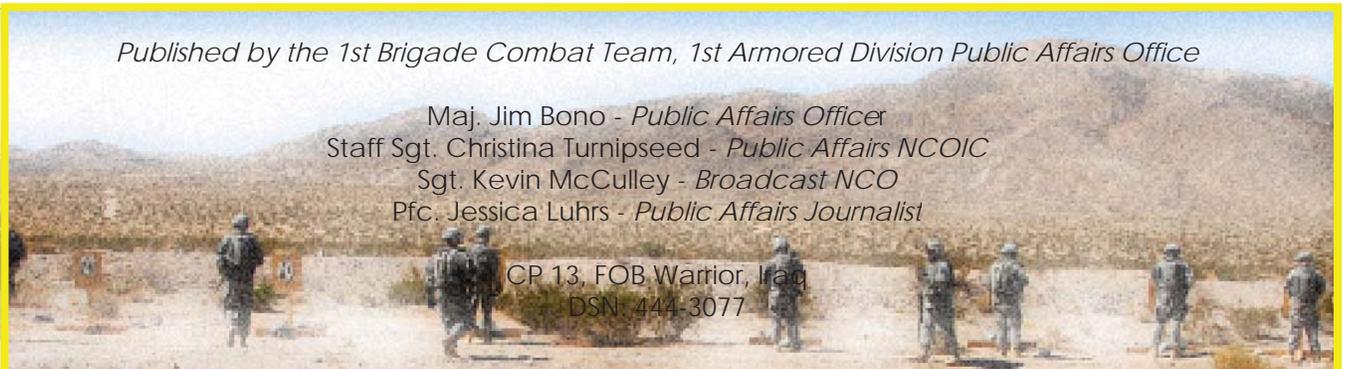


Ready First!

Published by the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division Public Affairs Office

Maj. Jim Bono - *Public Affairs Officer*
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Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 37th Armor, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, "Dragons" of Fort Bliss, Tx. along with their Iraqi Army partners search for weapons caches during a joint patrol with the Iraqi Army outside of Kirkuk, Iraq, Dec. 30.



Ready First leaders discuss security with IP



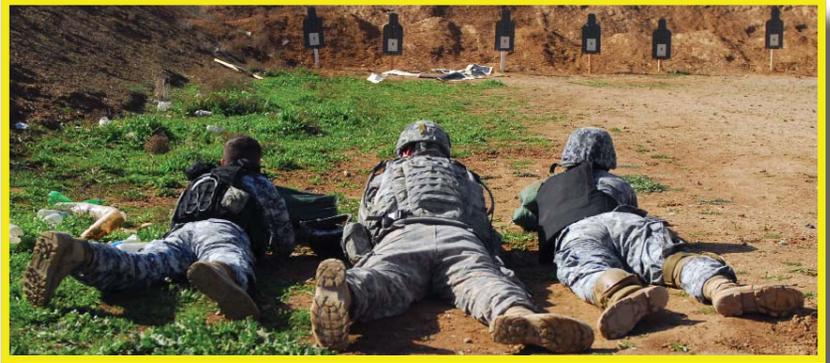
U.S. Army Story and Photos by Pfc. Jessica R. Luhrs
1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq

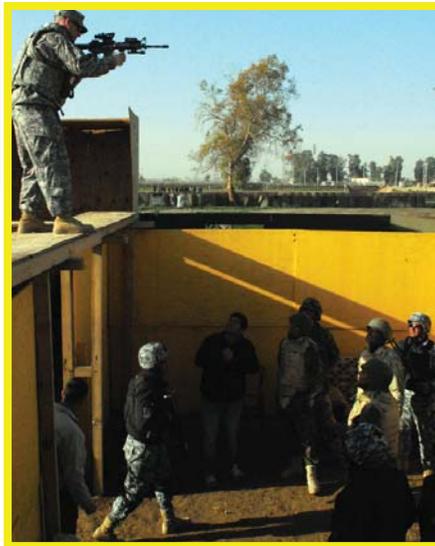
The commander and command sergeant major of 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, also known as the 'Ready First Combat Team' out of Fort Bliss, Tx., along with the commander of B-Co., 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, known as the 'Barbarians', met with the police chief for the Adallah Iraqi Police Station, Jan. 14, to discuss security in the area for the elections, concerns of the police chief and to tour to district. Col. Larry Swift, commander of the 'Ready First Combat Team' and Command Sgt. Mjr. James Daniels, command sergeant major for the 'Ready First Combat Team' met with Col. Adnan Hameed Saala, police chief for the Adallah IP Station, for the first time as a part of their mission to meet with all police chiefs in the Kirkuk area. During the meeting and patrol Col. Swift's main concern was the level of safety for the people in the area with the upcoming elections. "When I first came to the area, five years ago, there were many cells, Adallah was a terrorist haven," said Col. Adnan. "But through hard work from the IP, with assistance from the U.S. Forces we are in control of the area." Even the citizens of Adallah agree that the area is much safer. During the leaders walk through Adallah, Col. Swift, Col. Adnan, Capt. Andrew Rhodes, the commander of the 'Barbarians' and Command Sgt. Mjr. Daniels, stopped and talked to people in the market about their views of the security in Adallah. One man talked about the area being safe enough for his young son to grow-up in a safe neighborhood and others told the leaders that they felt better about the upcoming elections and would be participating in the elections. The security of the people in the Kirkuk province during the elections is the main concern of the 'Ready First Combat Team' and Iraqi Security Forces, said Col. Swift. Because of this concern for the population Soldiers of the 'Ready First Combat Team' will be assisting the Iraqi Police in the area by doing more joint patrols, assisting in check-point operations and the training of IP, to prevent violence on election day.



A Combined Service Unit soldier, fires at the range Jan. 27, near Kirkuk, Iraq, this soldier is being trained by Alpha Co., 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division out of Fort Stewart, Ga. also known as the 'Gators.'



A Soldier with Alpha Co., 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division out of Fort Stewart, Ga. also known as the 'Gators' shows soldiers of the combined Security Forces how to engage a target from the prone, at the range near Kirkuk, Iraq, Jan. 27.



A Soldier with Alpha Co., 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division out of Fort Stewart, Ga. also known as the 'Gators' shows soldiers of the combined Security Forces how to engage a target while clearing a building, at the Kirkuk Training Center on Forward Operating Base Warrior, Kirkuk, Iraq, Jan. 27.



A Soldier with Alpha Co., 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division out of Fort Stewart, Ga. also known as the 'Gators' shows soldiers of the combined Security Forces how to engage a target while standing, at the range near Kirkuk, Iraq, Jan. 27.

COMING TOGETHER FOR KIRKUK

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



FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq

Three security force's in Iraq, that have historically been at odds with one another for centuries, have joined forces to work together in hope of a secure Iraqi paramilitary election and a safer Kirkuk province.

The additional security unit that was recently formed consists of soldiers from the Iraqi Emergency Service Units, Pesh Murga and Iraqi Army, is known as the Combined Security Force (CSF) or 'Golden Lions.'

The 'Golden Lions' currently have more than 100 soldiers and have been training with Alpha Co., 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division out of Fort Stewart, Ga. also known as the 'Gators' for two weeks, with an expected graduation within the month.

Upon graduation the 'Golden Lions' will have completed training similar to the U.S. Armies Basic Combat Training (BCT).

The training the 'Golden Lions' are receiving from the 'Gators' includes; room clearance, Basic Rifle Marksmanship (BRM), buddy and squad movement, medic training, proper searching techniques, convoy operations and more, according to Lt. Salam Muhammad Amen, the platoon leader for 4th Platoon, CSF.

"I am very impressed with the level of training my soldiers are learning and how quickly they are picking it up," said Lt. Salam.

The leadership of the 'Golden Lions' are not the only ones impressed by the teamwork of the soldiers, their 'Gator' partners are also very satisfied with the results they are seeing. What is being done by the 'Gators' is incredible, they have brought three of Iraq's strongest forces, have them working together and excelling in every training element that is presented, according to Staff Sgt. John King, a Belueville, Ill. native and a squad leader with the Gators.

"For example, today we have these soldiers out at the range, shooting their AK-47, something we have been training them on for a few days and they are already moving down

the range in buddy teams, engaging the target," said Staff Sgt. King.

It is clear the 'Gators' have very high expectations for the CSF. Currently the 'Gators' are putting everything into training these soldiers and expect them to lead the way in security for the Kirkuk province.



A Soldier with Alpha Co., 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division out of Fort Stewart, Ga. also known as the 'Gators' shows soldiers of the combined Security Forces how to operate various weapons.



Modern technology allows Col. Patricia Sellers to share part of her promotion to colonel with her mother and sister.



Female officer has wings

Photos and Article by Staff Sgt. Christina J. Turnipseed
1st "Ready First" Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq

Patricia Sellers has wings now.

On Feb. 3, Lt. Col. Patricia Sellers, the battalion commander of Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, was added to the honorable ranks of the U.S. Army's full-bird colonels.

"It is a glorious day," said Col. Sellers, who has served for 22 years. "I've been truly blessed all my life. This is truly the icing on the cake."

Colonel Sellers states that it has been "a wonderful career with great Soldiers every minute of every day."

However one is not to assume that earning wings in the U.S. Army has been an easy task for this battalion commander, who always seems to sport a brilliant smile.

"There have been a lot of walls," she said. "But with a smile on your face, you can handle anything."

During her speech, Col. Sellers recalls "There have been a few obstacles along this journey such as being passed over for major the same day that I graduated from an Army Master's program. But, just like I tell my Soldiers, when something bad happens, we have choices. I chose to continue working hard, keeping my head up and soldiering on."

"It's all about your decisions, what you choose to do with whatever is available and whatever comes your way," said the smiling Col. Sellers. "So my message to all the youngsters in the room - know that you can achieve whatever you want in life both in and out of the Army. Maintain a positive attitude, be proactive and be responsive."

Colonel Sellers also took the time to thank Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo, the Task Force Marne Commanding General, for taking time out of his schedule to pin her wings on.

She also thanked her senior enlisted advisor, Command Sgt. Maj. Dana S. Mason Jr. the 1-1 STB command sergeant major.

She thanked other officers, her company command teams, the 1-1 STB Soldiers, her fellow 1-1 battalion commanders and those who have befriended her over the years.

"To my friends here and all around the world who are my extended Family, many who are still serving either in or out of uniform, thanks for being great friends and an awesome support network," she said.

Colonel Seller's mother and her sister Janice were able to view part of the winged promotion by computer.

"And of course, to my immediate Family, mom and my sister Janice who are on the line here, thanks for being supportive of my career. Thanks for not giving me too much of a hard time when I'm not there for important life events, and thanks for visiting me in all the great places that I have been stationed. I love you all!"

Colonel Sellers said she earned her wings with the help given to her over the years and what she was able to "bring to the table."

"My contributions to getting me this far in the military were tenacity, strong character, and a dedicated work ethic."



Colonel Patricia Sellers cuts her cake after her promotion ceremony.

Lieutenant Colonel Patricia Sellers is pinned Col. Patricia Sellers by Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo, the Task Force Marne Commanding General after Command Sgt. Maj. Dana S. Mason Jr. the 1-1 STB command sergeant major unpins the Lieutenant Colonel rank.



FEBRUARY 2010



"Punisher" Soldiers of 3rd Platoon, Delta Co., 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, and their partners from 46th Brigade, 12th Division Iraqi army train on loading and unloading a Blackhawk for an air assault at their shared compound, Patrol Base Gaines-Mills, Jan. 20. This training is a part of the Commando training that the "Punisher" Soldiers are teaching their Iraqi counterparts.

Soldiers live, work, train with IA partners

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



FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq

A single blue door separates the 46th Brigade, 12th Division Iraqi army and the "Punisher" Soldiers of 3rd Platoon, Delta Co., 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, at their shared compound, Patrol Base Gaines-Mills, and the Soldiers stationed here would not have it any other way.

The "Punishers" have many more opportunities than other elements within Kirkuk, according to Pfc. Michael Crownover, a Colorado Springs, Colo. native and a gunner for the "Punishers." Since we live with our partners we can train or go on missions anytime the IA wants to; within minutes.

This is a true advantage for the "Punishers" and their IA partners; the numbers can prove it. Together they have been on more than 45 missions, discovered 9 separate caches and captured many insurgents that were involved in planting of Improvised Explosive Devices, since they arrived here nearly 2 months ago.

Living together not only gives the partnership an advantage with missions but also allows the training of IA soldiers to be more in depth and personable.

"I think they respect us more because we live with them," said Pfc. Crownover. "It allows us to assist them anytime they need it."

Assisting their IA partners is exactly what these Soldiers do on a daily basis.

At Gaines-Mills the infantry Soldiers are able to train the IA Commando Company in everything from basic weaponry to how to conduct air assaults, the leadership for the "Punishers" is able to provide assistance to their IA counterparts and mechanics are able to give hands-on training to the IA mechanics.



"Punisher" Soldiers of 3rd Platoon, Delta Co., 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, and their partners from 46th Brigade, 12th Division Iraqi army after receiving combat patches.

Capt. Muhammad Husan, the Commando Company commander spoke very highly of the Commando training that the "Punishers" hold for his soldiers.

"The class that is being held today is on the last day," said Capt. Muhammad. "I am very confident that they have been trained so well that they will be able to come back and teach other soldiers in the company what they have learned." These are the results the "Punishers" are looking for; they want the IA to be able to stand on their own and because we train, work and live together this mission will be accomplished at a different level than other elements in the area, according to Sgt. Rodney Owens, a Long Beach, Calif. native, and a gunner for the "Punishers."



"Punisher" Soldiers of 3rd Platoon, Delta Co., 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, and their partners from 46th Brigade, 12th Division Iraqi army.



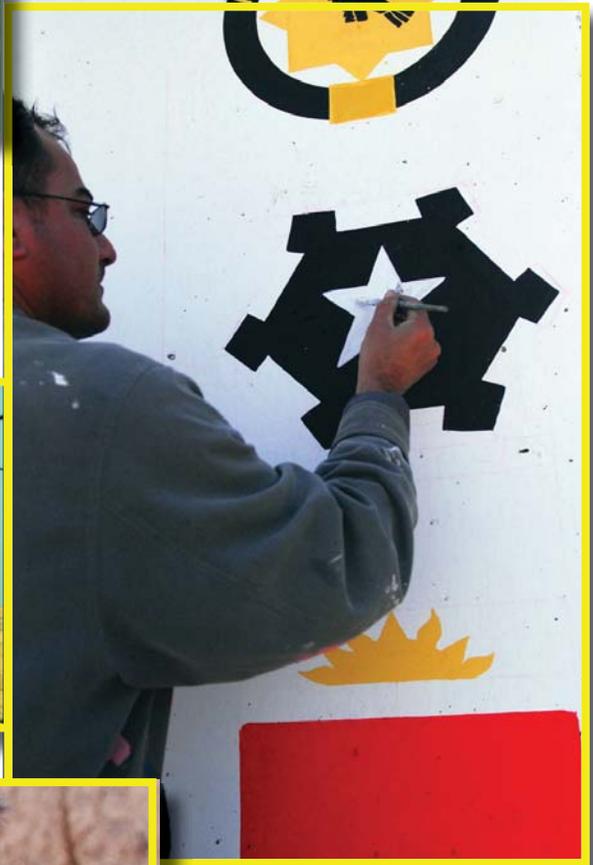
"Punisher" Soldiers of 3rd Platoon, Delta Co., 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, and their partners from 46th Brigade, 12th Division Iraqi army train on loading and unloading a Blackhawk for an air assault at their shared compound, Patrol Base Gaines-Mills, Jan. 20. This training is a part of the Commando training that the "Punisher" Soldiers are teaching their Iraqi counterparts.



Around the



e Battlefield



FEBRUARY 2010





A non-commissioned officer with 1st Battalion, 37th Armor of the Ready First Combat Team that reenlisted on Feb. 3 is congratulated by I Corps Command Sgt. Maj. Frank A. Grippe during his visit to Joint Service Station McHenry.



Self-destructing coin, motivates Soldiers

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

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq

The I Corps Command Sgt. Maj. Frank A. Grippe, continues to raise morale in junior-enlisted Soldiers with a visit to Forward Operating Base Warrior and Joint Service Station McHenry, where he and Command Sgt. Maj. James Daniels, command sergeant major of 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, recognized outstanding Soldiers, patrolled Hawija and attended a reenlistment ceremony for Soldiers of the Ready First Combat Team, on Feb. 3.

Command Sgt. Maj. Grippe reminded the Soldiers that they were a part of a very important mission in Kirkuk and that he is very proud of each of them for choosing the path of the Army.

To show his true appreciation to some outstanding Soldiers Command Sgt. Maj. Grippe handed out his First Corps coin with a promise that the coin will "self-destruct" unless a promotion of the Soldier occurs within six months.

The Soldiers that received these coins were elected by their leadership.

Six of the Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment of the RFCT, that received a coin were a part of the patrol unit that took Command Sgt. Maj. Grippe and Command Sgt. Maj. Daniels throughout Hawija.

During this patrol the command sergeant major's were able to speak to citizens of Hawija about how they felt about security in the area.

All of the citizens responded in the same way, the help of the U.S. Forces is no longer needed in the area the Iraqi Security Forces are in the lead.



I Corps Command Sgt. Maj. Frank A. Grippe speaks to Soldiers before his visit to Hawijah, Iraq on Feb. 3.

A Soldier with 1st Battalion, 37th Armor of the Ready First Combat Team is rewarded with a coin from I Corps Command Sgt. Maj. Frank A. Grippe during his visit to Joint Service Station McHenry, after going on a patrol through Hawijah.



After the patrol Command Sgt. Maj. Grippe was able to witness the reenlistment of three Soldiers of the RFCT.

After this reenlistment Command Sgt. Maj. Grippe spoke to the Soldiers about the importance of seasoned Soldiers staying in the military.

Saying, "these are the Soldiers we need in our Army today, these Soldiers will be great leaders because they will have many opportunities to interact and train other Soldiers and Iraqi Security Forces."

According to Soldiers from HHC, 1-37 AR this day will not be one they forget.

The Soldiers spoke of how they now know how truly important their mission here is and how they will work even harder to keep their coins from self-destructing by getting promoted as soon as they can.

Pfc. Matthew Zumbrun, a Baltimore, Md. native, and a scout dismount with 2nd Platoon, Alpha Troop, 6th Battalion, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division also known as "House of Pain", was recently named the Task Force Marne Hero of the North, for an outstanding performance during a dismounted patrol, near Kirkuk, Iraq.

A hero to fellow Soldiers

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

*1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division
Public Affairs*



FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq

A San Antonio, Tx. native was named the Task Force Marne Hero of the North this week at Forward Operating Base Warrior, Kirkuk, Iraq.

Pfc. Albert Chapa, a gunner for the lead truck with 2nd Platoon, C-Company, 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, also known as the "Warpigs", of Fort Bliss, Tx., received this recognition for having the ability to communicate with the convoy he leads and the dismounts within the trucks.

I have never considered myself a hero, I just do my job to the best of my abilities, said Pfc. Chapa. To be recognized for doing my job lets me know I am doing everything right.

This junior-enlisted duty that most with he has only been months, according to Sgt. 1st Class John Irvine, Pfc. Chapa's non-commissioned officer who recommended him for Task Force Marne Hero of the North.

***"He saves countless lives."
-Sgt. 1st Class Irvine***

Soldier does not have a his time in service would; in the Army for about 17 months, according to Sgt. 1st Class John Irvine, platoon sergeant and the officer who recommended him for Task Force Marne Hero of the North.

Because Pfc. Chapa is the lead truck he is responsible for notifying the entire convoy of danger and being the eyes for the convoy, this is a job that usually requires a non-commissioned officer, Sgt. 1st Class Irvine added.

Pfc. Chapa has proven that he is more than qualified for the position, during a patrol on Dec. 26, 2009; he led the convoy in the dark and located a Iraqi local national that had been killed in action and took the convoy in to secure the area for the other 'Ready First' unit that was present, according to Sgt. 1st Class Irvine.

Also, on numerous convoys with the company first sergeant and commander, Pfc. Chapa has been praised and recognized for 'being on point and a very squared-away Soldier,' Sgt. 1st Class Irvine added.

By Pfc. Chapa making the convoy aware of their surroundings he saves countless lives and gets the convoys back to Joint Service Station McHenry, Iraq, safely, no matter what he thinks; Pfc. Chapa is a true hero to his fellow Soldiers.

Soldier learns foreign system to assist IA

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



FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq

A junior-enlisted Soldier with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, plays a key role in the training of 4th and 12th Iraqi Army (IA) Division soldiers on firing mortar rounds.

Spc. Kaesey Child, a Salt Lake City, Utah native and a mortarman with HHC, 2/504th PIR, has been at the Kirkuk Training Center (K1) since October assisting the military transition team (MITT), Military Professional Resources Inc. (MPRI) and fellow Soldiers in the training of IA mortarman.

Since arriving to K1 Spc. Child had seen and assisted in the graduation of 10 IA platoons, in the most recent class he was able to watch his former students, Non-commissioned officers (NCO) of the IA, successfully teach and lead a course.

During the courses Spc. Child was assigned an IA platoon, to instruct how to engage a target using the "direct lay" method.

The "direct lay" method is when a gunner adjust the point of fire in increments after receiving orders from forward observers and the fire direction center, without previously seeing the target. The courses Spc. Child is assisting with however are a lot different then what he learned during his Advanced Individual Training.

He is currently teaching IA soldiers to fully operate a weapon system that was foreign to

him, but is now second nature.

"That is one of the most impressive factors to me, he [Spc. Child] came here and learned to operate a completely new system and is now teaching it to IA NCO's," said Marine Maj. Thomas W. Parker, MITT senior advisor of the 1st Battalion, 12th Marines.

Spc. Child is not just instructing though, he is setting an example and also learning.

"By having him [Spc. Child] in front of IA soldiers, he is able to set an excellent example of how to be a professional junior-enlisted," said Maj. Parker.

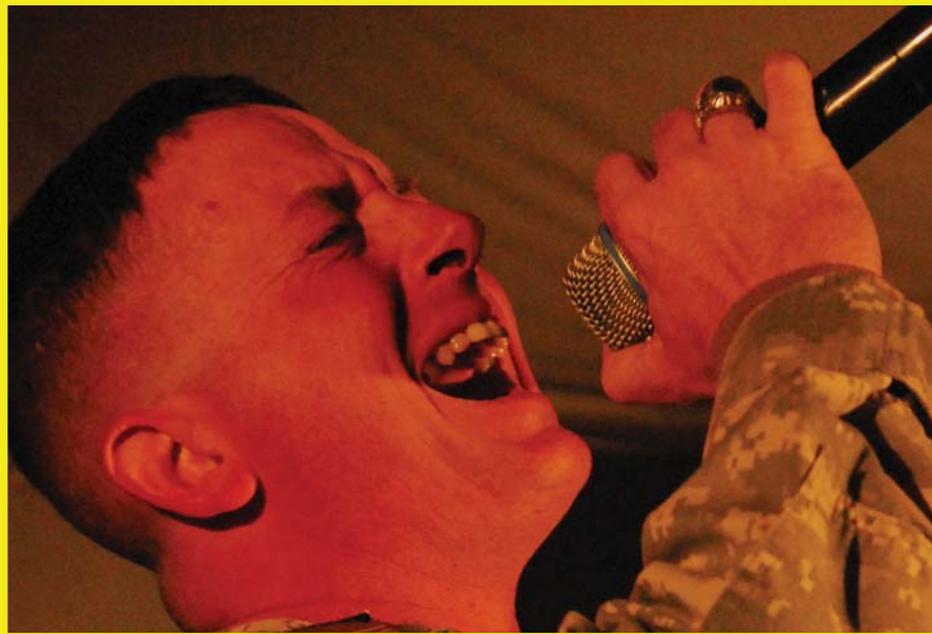
Spc. Child said he has become a student in an aspect too, "I am learning what it takes to be a leader and about a different culture."

"This is a great opportunity to grow as a Soldier," he added.



Spc. Kaesey Child, a Salt Lake City, Utah native and a mortarman with HHC, 2/504th PIR, assisting Iraqi Army soldiers while at the mortar live-fire range, Jan. 25.

Rockin' the Marne



A singer with Sasquatch, a rock band from the 3rd Infantry Division Band, performs for Soldiers at Forward Operating Base Warrior, Jan. 23.



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

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR

After a long day of missions in the desert, the sound of live rock music drew a very curious crowd to the Morale, Welfare and Recreation tent, "Clamtina," here on Jan. 23. To the surprise of Soldiers, upon entering the building, fellow Soldiers of the Army bands Four Horsemen of the Arockalypse and Sasquatch, 3rd Infantry Division Band out of Fort Stewart, Ga., were on stage rocking out. The two bands are unique not only because they are Army rock bands but also because of their ability to cater to the musical needs of all Soldiers, according to Staff Sgt. Kevin Jahn, a Valley City, N.D. native and drummer for Sasquatch. One of the bands, "Sasquatch," covers the country, pop and soft rock while the other "The Four Horsemen of the Arockalypse," a band made-up of junior-enlisted Soldiers, covers all aspects of rock and hard-rock. Because the wide variety of music that the bands can play, during a concert Soldiers will hear music from Zac Brown Band, Big & Rich, Billy Idol, Weezer, Lamb of God and more, according to Staff Sgt. Jahn.

"At first I didn't know what to expect from an Army rock band," said Pfc. Curtis Hutton, an infantryman with B-Co, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division. "I am so glad I

came though, there is no better way to end a work day than to see Soldiers from the 3rd ID jam like that, it was awesome."

It is not only the Soldiers that see the show that look at this as an awesome experience, but the band members feel the same way.

"I have been in a band performing since I can remember and performing for fellow Joes is way more rewarding than playing a random show back in the states," said Spc. Stephen Haaker, a Paradise, Calif. Native and drummer for the Four Horsemen.

The rock bands will be getting a full-year of these rewarding experiences.

These Soldiers are deployed to Command Operating Base Speicher, with a mission of traveling to the various bases in Northern Iraq entertaining the Task-Force Marne Soldiers. Even though they get the opportunity to travel to almost all the bases in Northern Iraq the band members agreed that they cannot wait to do another performance here.

The atmosphere was perfect, according to Spc. Haaker. They had the lights going, we were on a great stage with amazing sound and we had plenty of Soldiers rocking out to our music. The bands are scheduled to return in the spring and are guaranteed plenty of fans that are ready to rock at their next showing. "I am definitely coming to the next performance and bringing every Soldier I can find that likes to jam," said Pfc. Hutton

CSC teaches Soldiers to help one another

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



FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq

To help provide advocacy for Soldiers under stress at Forward Operating Base Warrior, a non-commissioned officer with the 212th Combat Stress Control Medical Detachment, provides Behavioral Health Advocate Training for Soldiers here.

This class is held to educate and train Soldiers to become a responder to combat stress, according to Sgt. Sarah Maze, a mental health specialist with the 212th CSC.

After the BHAT a Soldier will be able to walk up to their fellow Soldier, ask them if they are ok and know how to respond to their answer in the correct way.

During the BHAT, Soldier's learn to help others under stress find their inner strength to face their fears, known as the "Battlemind," according to Sgt. Maze.

They also learn the signs of Combat/Operational Stress, relaxation techniques and different types of referral for combat stress.

It is important that not only medical specialists, non-commissioned officers and chaplains receive this training but also the junior-enlisted.

The junior-enlisted that receive this training see their battle buddies every day, something that CSC and chaplains cannot do, they know when something is different about a fellow Soldier immediately, according to Sgt. Maze.

Studies have also shown a Soldier is more likely to go talk to their battle buddy about a problem they are facing first, rather than going to CSC, because they feel more comfortable.

Since the BHAT is being held the Ready First Combat Team will have Soldier's in each unit trained to deal with combat stress situations and CSC can make sure Soldiers are receiving the help that they need.

FOB Warrior's Combat Stress located at the One Stop is open Mon. – Fri. from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sat. – Sun. from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and can be reached by DSN at 444-2305.



Sgt. Sarah Maze, a mental health specialist with the 212th Combat Stress Control Medical Detachment, teaches a Behavioral Health Advocate Class to the Ready First Brigade Ministry Team at Forward Operating Base Warrior.

FEBRUARY 2010



PJCC opens: Enhances security



Mr. Abdul Rahman Mustafa, governor of Kirkuk, receives a tour during the opening of the Provincial Joint Coordination Center's (PJCC,) on Feb. 3.

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

FORWARD OPERATING BASE
WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq

One of the most critical components to local Iraqi government, Iraqi security forces and coalition forces opened its doors in Kirkuk, on Feb. 3.

The Provincial Joint Coordination Center's (PJCC) opening was celebrated by dignitaries of the Iraqi

Security Forces, U.S. Forces and local government; by having a ribbon cutting ceremony followed by a tour of the facilities at their center.

The opening of the PJCC will allow all elements work side-by-side, which will enhance the coordination and security in the province, according to Col. Larry Swift, the commander of 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, also known as 'Ready First Combat Team,' out of Fort Bliss, Tx.

Col. Swift added, the opening also shows the level of partnership and dedication to Kirkuk that the Iraqi government, ISF and coalition forces have.

Because of the dedication to safety these three elements have the project was complete to assist in the security preparations for the elections in Kirkuk.

The PJCC will without a doubt strengthen the security for the citizens of Kirkuk during and after the elections, according to Mr. Abdul Rahman Mustafa, governor of Kirkuk.

This opening lets the people know that the ISF are in control of the security for the province and with the strengthened partnership they will have now with the Iraqi government by working together at the PJCC; security for the citizens will only get better.

"These citizens we (ISF and coalition forces) work so hard to protect can go to bed every night knowing their province is safer their army and police are stronger and we are all working together for one common goal; their safety," said Col. Swift, at the opening ceremony.



Col. Larry Swift, the commander of the Ready First Combat Team discuss the opening of the PJCC on Feb. 3.



On February 3rd, 2010, Headquarters Battery of the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery Regiment, "Hellraisers", conducted a Change of Command ceremony.



Embracing Change – HB, 2-3 FA Welcomes Cpt. Dahl

Photos and Article by Pfc. Kostandina Tsagaris

*2nd Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division
Unit Public Affairs Rep.*

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq

On February 3rd, 2010, Headquarters Battery of the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery Regiment, "Hellraisers", conducted a Change of Command ceremony.

The ceremony kicked off with an invocation by Chaplain Taylor Kim.

Following the Invocation, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Joseph Temple read a brief summary of 2-3 FA's history.

"The commander's presence was not only used to inspire their men but to learn much which could be applied to conserving the lives and building the efficiency of their forces," began Lt. Col. Charles Mills, 2-3 FA battalion commander.

"As a commanding officer, you are at the top of the ladder. How an officer handles the triad and the pressure of command reflects on the character of all who serve in that command, and in a larger sense, our Army," Mills continued.

Capt. Phillip Cole, who has served as the headquarters battery commander since January 2008, relinquished his command to Capt. James Dahl.

Capt. Cole has worked hard to bring out the best in his battery, and for his efforts he was praised by Lt. Col. Mills.

Capt. Dahl, the incoming commander, previously served as the Gunner battalion Intelligence Officer (S2) and, most recently, as an Assistant Operations Officer. Capt. Dahl's hard work paid off, as he was afforded the opportunity to be a battery commander.

During his remarks, Lt. Col. Mills stated, "Phil, I congratulate you for completing your command here in HHB/2-3 FA. Good luck to you as you move on to do wonderful things."

Lt. Col. Mills completed his speech with some final words of wisdom for incoming commander Capt. Dahl.

"As I've shared with your fellow commanders, James, for us who are charged to lead our Soldiers of tomorrow, this means we must produce the right Soldiers with the right skills at the right time for a growing and transforming Army on the move with the goal of making our Army even more effective," Lt. Col. Mills concluded.

The guidon was then passed from the outgoing commander to the incoming commander. Capt. Cole, the outgoing battery commander, then stepped up to the podium, addressing his troops one last time with heartfelt words.

Following Capt. Cole, Capt. Dahl stepped up to the podium to greet his battery as their new battery commander.

Capt. Dahl expressed his appreciation for the Gunner team.

After a few short remarks, Capt. Dahl took his place in the "Hellraiser" command team.



A Soldier with Delta Co., 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, during a joint search of the Aruba district, with the Kirkuk Emergency Services Unit, on Feb. 8.



Disrupting the enemy

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

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq

"Today we will disrupt the enemy," said an Emergency Services Unit leader to his troops before conducting a search in the Aruba District with a purpose of capturing persons of interest and confiscating contraband material, on Feb. 10.

Disruption of the enemy is exactly what happened, because of the partnership between 2nd Plt., Delta Co., 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, out of Fort Stewart, Ga., and the Kirkuk ESU 'Lions', according to 2nd Lt. Oleg Green, 2nd Plt. Leader and a native of Jacksonville, N.C.

He added, during the searches the ESU were able to capture one person of interest and impound two cars that were not properly registered in the city.

Not only did these partners disrupt the enemy but they were also able to show the population of Kirkuk that the ESU are a self-reliant security forces, according to Capt. Jeremiah Fritz, the commander of D-Co.

This was proven because the operation was completely run by the ESU, with the U.S. Forces simply observing what they had taught their partners.

The U.S. Forces observed the 'Lions' properly patrolling an area, clearing multiple objectives and interacting with the population, according to 2nd Lt. Green.

Through interaction with the population the U.S. Forces and ESU were able to find out that the people of Aruba feel very safe in the area and plan on participating in the upcoming elections, according to 2nd Lt. Green.

One man said, he is confident with the security of the area thanks to the Iraqi and U.S. Forces also that he is looking forward to the elections and will be taking his daughter to vote with him.

It is clear that the population understands who is in control of the area and who is here to help them no matter the situation; the ESU, an extremely self-reliant security force, according to 2nd Lt. Green.



An Emergency Services Unit soldier checks the reregistration of a citizen of the Aruba District during a search of the area for contraband and persons of interest, on Feb. 8.

A Kirkuk Emergency Services Unit member during a patrol of the Aruba district, on Feb. 8.



2nd Lt. Oleg Green, 2nd Plt. Leader and a native of Jacksonville, N.C. discuss the operation with leadership of the Kirkuk Emergency Services Unit, after a search in the Aruba District for contraband and persons of interest, on Feb. 8.

Canto, a Patrol/Explosive Detection Dog, plays fetch with his partner, Staff Sgt. Larry Chartier, a Saranac, New York native and a PEDD handler with 230th Military Police Company, 95th MP Battalion 18th MP Brigade.

Foundation to a partnership



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

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq

Sgt. 1st Class Canto, a Patrol/Explosive Detection Dog (PEDD), sits at his handlers feet, Staff Sgt. Larry Chartier, a Saranac, New York native, with 230th Military Police Company, 95th MP Battalion 18th MP Brigade, and waits for his command.

Staff Sgt. Chartier just says, 'watch him' and immediately the dogs attention snaps to the volunteer

bad guy, wearing a bite sleeve, who is moving aggressively towards the pair, a moment later Staff Sgt. Chartier says 'get him' and Sgt. 1st Class Canto is chasing the bad guy and defending his partner.

Soon after Sgt. 1st Class Canto grabs onto the bite sleeve, the bad guy gives up and Staff Sgt. Chartier's tells his partner to 'release' and then throws Sgt. 1st Class Canto what he was working for – a bright yellow tennis ball.

It is so easy to make Sgt. 1st Class Canto a happy dog, he is still a puppy, very playful and smart, my partner already knows he receives a reward for working, said a smiling Staff Sgt. Chartier.

Even though Sgt. 1st Class Canto is just working for his toy, his keen sense of smell and level of training makes him priceless to his fellow Soldiers.

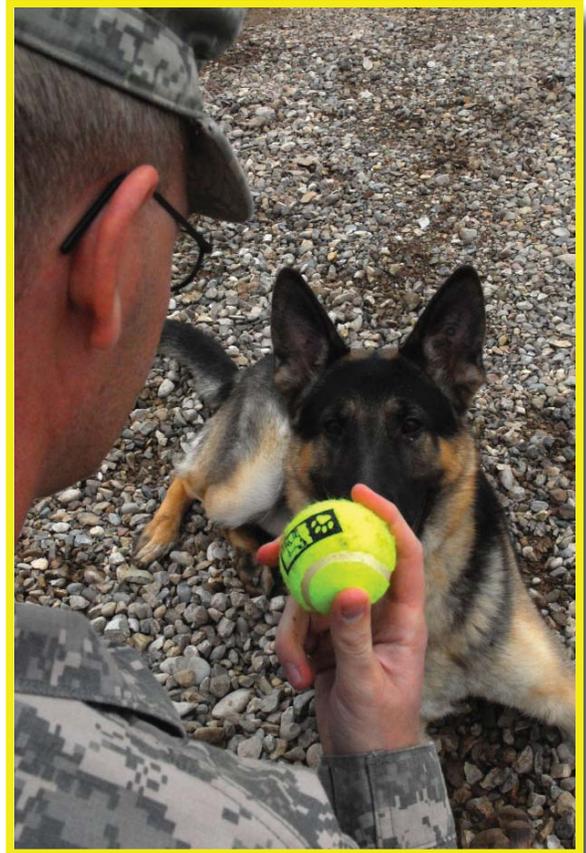
"Sometimes I wish these Military Working Dogs knew how important they were to our mission," said Staff Sgt. Chartier.

Sgt. 1st Class Canto is the key to keeping Soldiers safe during a patrol, according to Staff Sgt. Chartier. This MWD is able to pick-up on explosives during a patrol before the Soldiers go into a life-threatening zone.

When Sgt. 1st Class Canto does locate anything dangerous Staff Sgt. Chartier knows immediately. "It shows the relationship we have I can tell when he has found something and he can tell if I need his protection in some way," said Staff Sgt. Chartier.

To get to this point it takes a lot of trust and respect for one another and even though the partners cannot hold a conversation with one another the trust and respect they have for each other is clear. The relationship the two have can be credited a lot to their deployment, while deployed they train, sleep, eat and play together.

This relationship will continue to grow throughout the rest of their deployment to Forward Operating Base Warrior, while they assist the Soldiers of 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, along with their Iraqi Security Force partners, in the search for explosive devices and the capturing of insurgents.



Partners and Friends

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



FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq

"I want us to work not only as partners, but also as friends," said Lt. Col. Geoffrey Catlett, the commander of 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, to the Sons of Iraq leaders during their meeting at Joint Service Station McHenry, Jan. 14.

This meeting was the first Lt. Col. Catlett has hosted as commander of JSS McHenry and is one of many he plans to have in the future. "I plan to have these meetings monthly, to discuss the security in the area and the progress the Sol is making," said Lt. Col. Catlett.

This first meeting served as an opportunity for the leaders to discuss the upcoming elections and security levels in Kirkuk; also the role the Sol will play in the two.

The Sol and Ready First are entering a critical period for upcoming elections the lot of their focus on the provide.

"We must defeat the insurgents."

-Sheik Abdul Razza

Combat Team are entering Iraq, according to Col. of the RFCT. With the citizens of Kirkuk will put a Sol and the security they

Additionally the insurgency partnership the U.S. Forces and Sol have.

gency will try to split the

"We [Sol and RFCT] must not let this happen, we must defeat the insurgents," said Sheik Abdul Razza, a Sol leader.

In order to do this the Sol and RFCT must work together to improve the security of Kirkuk, Sheik Abdul added.

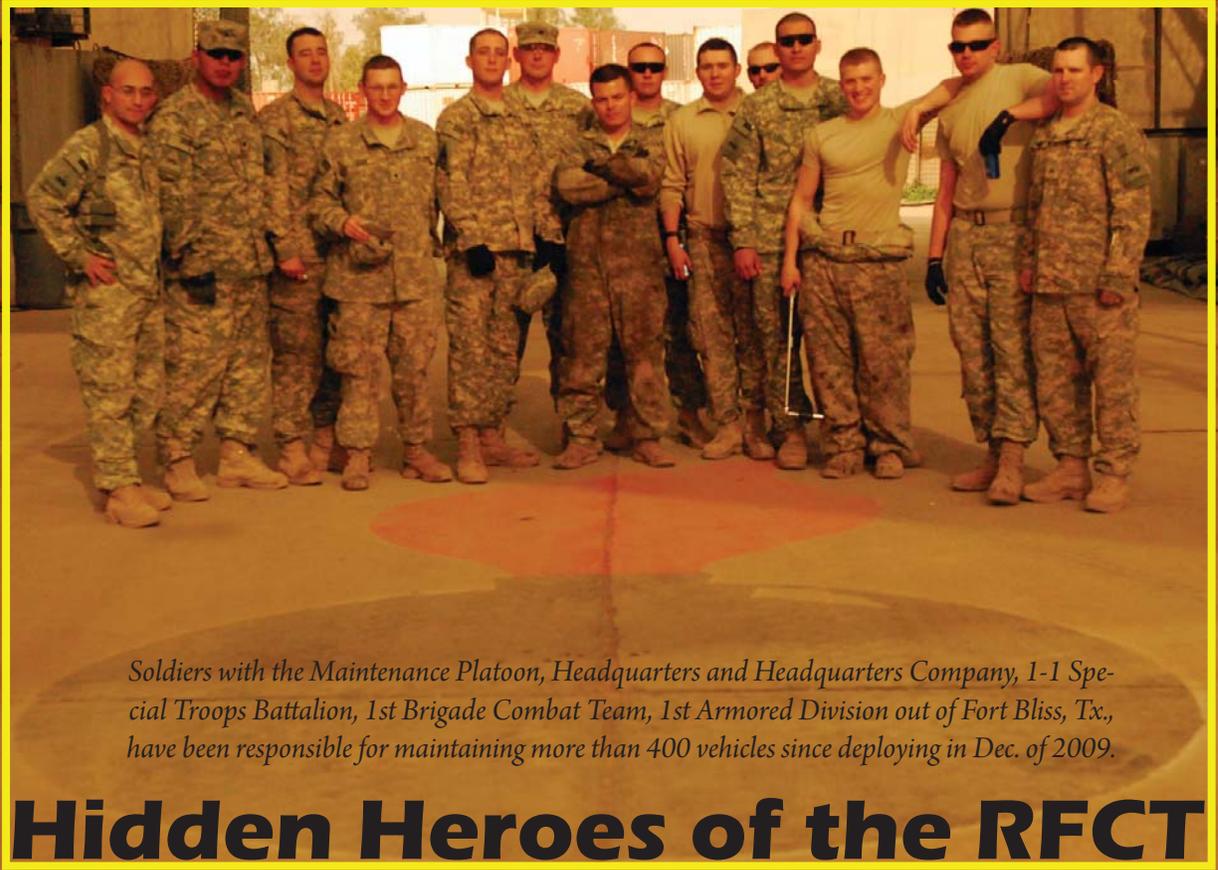
One of the biggest security issues the Sol are currently facing is alertness at the checkpoints. Because of this issue 1st Batt., 37th Armor Reg., will be doing more extensive training at the checkpoints and Lt. Col. Catlett will be doing evaluations on the leadership.

After Col. Swift and Lt. Col. Catlett made the Sol aware of these issues, during the meeting, they assured them the RFCT will do everything it can to work together with the Sol leaders to solve any problems.

"Our work is not finished here, we still have a long way to go to ensure security of the area," said Lt. Col. Catlett. "I will do anything in my power to make sure the elections are successful and the people of Kirkuk are safe."

Sheik Abdul Razza, a Sol leader, address his fellow leaders of the Sol and leaders of Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, during a meeting at Joint Service Station McHenry, Jan. 14.





Soldiers with the Maintenance Platoon, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-1 Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division out of Fort Bliss, Tx., have been responsible for maintaining more than 400 vehicles since deploying in Dec. of 2009.

Hidden Heroes of the RFCT



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

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq

Grease and oil stain these Soldiers coveralls and boots, they have their tool boxes open and wrenches out ready to start another day of performing maintenance on the Ready First Combat Team's vehicles that have already begun lining up at their motorpool on Forward Operating Base Warrior, Kirkuk, Iraq.

This is just another typical day for these Soldiers the motorpool, according to Pfc. Ryan Stabile, a mechanic with 1-1 Special Troops Battalion, 1st Team, 1st

“These mechanics are the hidden heroes of the brigade.”

-Sgt. 1st Class William Evans

1-1 Special Troops Battalion, 1st Armored Division. These 15 Soldiers are mechanics with the Maintenance Platoon, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-1 STB, Ready Team, out of Fort

they have been responsible for maintaining more than 400 vehicles since deploying in Dec. of 2009.

“Our days usually include performing routine maintenance on anywhere from five to ten vehicles and any other repair issues that come up throughout the day,” said Pfc. Brett Billingsly, a mechanic with 1-1 STB.

At any given moment the motorpool is full of tactical vehicles receiving upgrades, being disassembled, fixed then reassembled and those receiving a typical tune-up.

are mechanics with the Maintenance Platoon, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Armored Division, out of Fort Bliss, Tx., and





A Soldier with the Maintenance Platoon, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-1 Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division out of Fort Bliss, Tx., using a plasma cutter to make a stand to go on a MRAP.



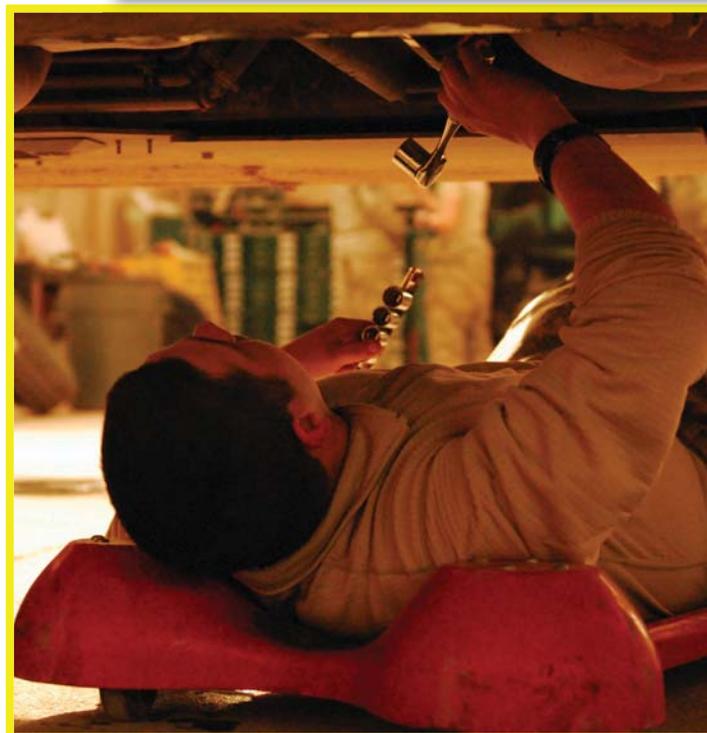
All of this work is a part of the mission of these Soldiers.

The mission of the Maintenance Platoon, while deployed, is to ensure all of the vehicles that come through their motor pool leave fully mission capable, according to Sgt. 1st Class William Evans, the platoon sergeant for the Maintenance Platoon and a native of Eugene, Ore.

These Soldiers have really come together to ensure they complete their mission, he added.

Every one of the Soldiers takes great pride in what they do, the leadership reminds them every day they are they are the reason the brigade continues their mission.

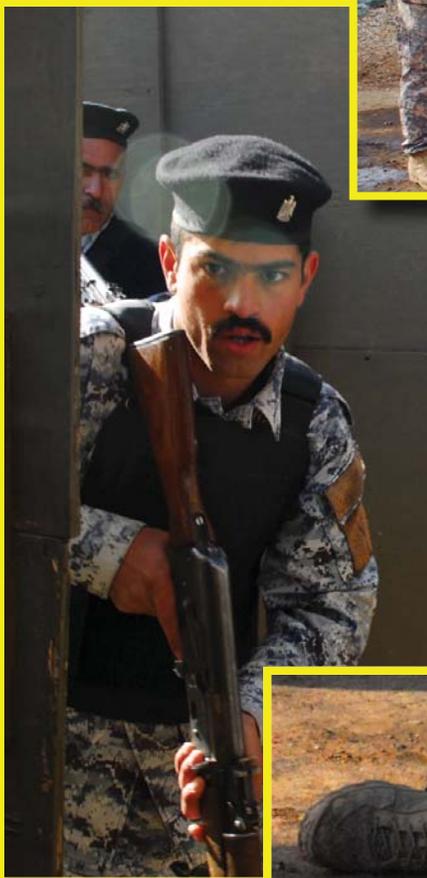
“Without the teamwork, dedication and pride these Soldiers put into everyday the rest of the Ready First Combat Team would not be able to complete their mission,” said Sgt. 1st Class Evans. “These mechanics are the hidden heroes of the brigade; they work every day behind the scenes to keep the RFCT rolling.”



A Soldier with the Maintenance Platoon, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-1 Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division out of Fort Bliss, Tx., performing maintenance on a Humvee.



Around the



FEBRUARY 2010

Battlefield



FEBRUARY 2010



Congratulations to these Ready First Soldiers that were named Task Force Marne Heroes of the North

The intent of the "Task Force Marne Hero of the North" is to share some of the stories of what we see our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Civilians do. Daily, Task Force Marne leaders select one individual from across the task force to be recognized by the entire organization because of their duties and actions, this particular military professional exemplified the best that the Armed Services has to offer.



Sgt. Jason Robb
HHC, 1-37 AR
Billings, Mont.
Feb. 5, 2010



Cpl. Sergio Williams
C-Troop, 6-1 Cav.
Lebanon, Tenn.
Feb. 3, 2010



Pfc. Albert Chapa
HHC, 1-37 AR
San Antonio,
Texas
Jan. 13, 2010

