

Victory Times



Telling the United States Forces - Iraq story

Vol. V, Issue 4

April 5, 2010



Freedom Rest offers service members place to ‘get away’

Story by Spc. Britney Bodner
United States Forces-Iraq Public Affairs

A new facility opened on Camp Victory March 30 where service members in United States Division-Center can relax when given a four-day pass.

Freedom Rest is a new ‘get away’ designed to provide service members a place to escape from the pressures of their deployment.

Command Sgt. Maj. William Johnson, USD-C and 1st Armored Division command sergeant major, cut the ceremonial ribbon officially opening the facility and said the facility is easy to get to, but still takes them away from their bases.

The Freedom Rest complex consists of two buildings. The first is a three story guest residence that can house approximately 36 guests, said Maj. Harry Foster, Camp Victory deputy mayor. The second building, a former boathouse, has several amenities on both floors that can keep service members entertained for the duration of their stay

The first floor has a small billiards room with two pool tables, a gym with a view of a lake and a furnished deck. Green Beans Coffee and a Subway sandwich shop are also located on the grounds.

The second floor boasts a large movie theatre with leather seats that can also be used for karaoke, he added. There is also a computer lab with internet access and a game room with several gaming systems and video games available.

If the service members don’t feel like staying inside, they can also enjoy an afternoon hanging out at the Freedom Rest swimming pool.

Future plans for Freedom Rest involve the addition of equipment for fishing, biking and a golf driving range, Foster said. They are also looking at adding canoes and kayaks so service members can get out on the lake to relax, he added.

With expectations that Freedom Rest will soon become

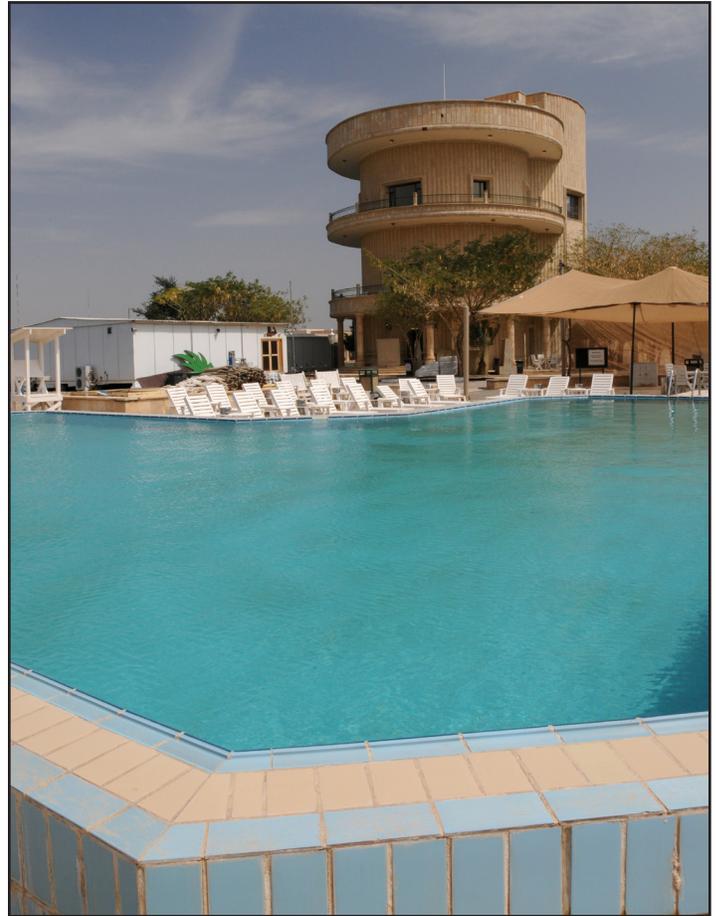


Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Roger Dey

A swimming pool is one of the many amenities awaiting Soldiers in USD-C at Freedom Rest, a new ‘get away’ for Soldiers who receive a four-day pass. The complex, which opened at Camp Victory, March 30, features lodging for 36 service members and also includes a billiards room, game room, internet room and gym.

a destination of choice for service members, Foster said that priority will be given to those who work away from the main bases.

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Unconditional love available for you

By Chaplain (Lt. Cmdr.) Marcus Lawrence
United States Forces-Iraq Jewish Chaplain

One Sunday the Archbishop of Paris was preaching in Notre Dame Cathedral.

He told of three young men who were in the cathedral many years before. Two of them dared the third to go into the confessional booth and to make a bogus confession to the priest.

To make the dare more interesting, there was a bet with money riding on whether or not he had the nerve. So, to win the bet, the young man went into the confessional and tried to fool the priest.

However, the priest sensed his arrogance and knew that the confession was a lie.

The priest said, "My son, every confession requires a penance. Your penance will be to go into the chapel and to stand before the crucifix where you can look into the face of the crucified Christ. Then you will say, 'All this you did for me, and I don't care.'"

The young man swaggered out of the confessional to

claim his bet, but his friends insisted that he must complete the penance.

So, he went into the chapel, looked into the face of Christ on the cross, and said, "All this you did for me, and I...and I..." He could not finish his sentence.

In fact, he never finished that sentence. It began for him a painful experience that changed his life and finally led him into the priesthood.

The Archbishop paused, leaned over the pulpit, and said, "That young man was this man who stands before you today preaching in this beautiful Notre Dame Cathedral."

What happened to that young man? He looked into the face of the crucified Christ and he never was the same again.

The good news is that this April every Christian church or chapel, every Christian chaplain holding service in the field, will read a love letter addressed to every person present.

The letter tells about God's unconditional love for us, the cross his son carried and died on for us, and the new hope we have in His resurrection. This is the height, width, and depth of God's love for us.

All of this Christ did for you, and you...



SARC Smarts



In all relationships, you have the right to set limits, feel safe and get support. You also have responsibility to trust your instincts and model respectful behaviors. Every person has the right to say no and change his or her mind.

Call the USF-I Deployed Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (DSARC) at 485-5085 or 435-2235 for help. Army members should seek assistance with their Unit Victim Advocate (UVA) or DSARC.



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The Victory Times welcomes columns, commentaries, articles and letters from our readers. Please send submissions, story ideas or comments to the editorial staff at roger.dey@iraq.centcom.mil. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit for security, accuracy, propriety, policy, clarity and space.



Facility, from Page 1

“USD-C will manage these slots with priority going to the service members that live in a more austere environment,” said Johnson.

And while a four day pass can be a great tool to help service members take a break from the daily grind while deployed, Maj. Sharon Trotter, Freedom Rest operations officer, said the Freedom Rest complex also allows units to put their troops on pass knowing they won’t be away for an extended period of time.

Previously, Soldiers on a four-day pass traveled to Qatar, which also meant additional travel days, sometimes taking a week or longer to move back to their units.

“A four day pass won’t stretch to nine days because of travel,” Trotter said. “Here, you’re in and out on time and for a third of the cost to the government.”

While the proximity to the service members who will use it make it a great option for leaders, the troops receive the greatest benefit by having a place to relax. Sgt. Roger Anderson, a member of Johnson’s personal security team, said Freedom Rest is a great idea for the troops.

“It’s a chance for them to come over (to Camp Victory) and just get away from the environment they are in and just enjoy a little bit of peace and relaxation,” he said.



Photo by Sgt 1st Class Roger Dey
Command Sgt. Maj. William Johnson, United States Division-Center command sergeant major, gives the opening speech at the grand opening of Freedom Rest on Camp Victory March 30.

ALL STARS WIN GARRISON MARCH MADNESS TOURNNEY

1st Lt. Frankie Jackson from Wilmington N.C., with 38th Human Resources Company passes the ball to a teammate during the final game of the Victory Base Compound Garrison March Madness tournament.

The All Stars defeated the Thunder Cats 64-59 to take home the championship. Fourteen teams competed in the double elimination tournament.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Dan Yarnall

Benefits for re-enlisting still available

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Roger Dey
United States Forces-Iraq Public Affairs

For Soldiers looking to re-enlist, deployment to Iraq or Afghanistan has been a great opportunity to receive additional, tax free bonus money to continue their service.

During the past few years, there has been ample bonus money available for Soldiers who choose to re-enlist in the Army, but the trend of huge bonuses appears to be coming to a close.

With the Army, Army Reserve and Army National Guard all at or near their authorized end-strength and an abundance of Soldiers remaining in service significant changes to re-enlistment bonuses are expected to take effect soon.

Based on past experience, Soldiers expected April to be the month that would bring reductions to deployment bonuses for active duty troops. However, Master Sgt. Richard Culley, United States Forces – Iraq retention sergeant major, says there has not yet been an announcement to that effect.

“We can refer to the bonus message

“YOU HAVE MONEY IN YOUR HAND RIGHT NOW. YOU HAVE A PRETTY GOOD IDEA OF WHAT YOU WANT TO DO WHEN YOU STAY IN, SO YOU MIGHT WANT TO HURRY UP AND RAISE YOUR RIGHT HAND.”

that is out currently, and that is status quo,” he said. “There is a tax-free deployment bonus under the Selective Re-enlistment Bonus Program.”

According to Military Personnel Message 09-222, issued in October, active duty Soldiers meeting bonus eligibility requirements in accordance



Photo by Spc. Kelly Morehouse
Spc. Janice Brown, a Soldier with Company B, United States Forces - Iraq Special Troops Battalion, re-enlists for four years during a ceremony at Al Faw Palace, March 24. Although Brown re-enlisted for a bonus, she said her primary motivation was to take advantage of the education opportunities for active duty Soldiers and felt that a re-enlistment in a combat zone was significant as a personal accomplishment.

with Army Regulation 601-280 who are deployed to Afghanistan, Iraq or Kuwait, in any military occupational specialty are currently authorized a re-enlistment bonus based on rank and length of re-enlistment. Additionally, Soldiers in

amount attached to them will probably decrease.

The feeling that these changes aren't too far down the road is shared by Army Reserve Career Counselor Sgt. 1st Class Michael G. Moore and Sgt. 1st Class Lloyd Bowers, an Army Guard career counselor.

Although reserve component Soldiers aren't eligible for theater bonuses, they can still receive a tax-free, lump sum bonus if they re-enlist in a critical MOS, Moore said.

Moore recently received word that Army Reserve bonuses are going to remain

unchanged into the near future. However he anticipates that at some point, the Reserve, which rates critical MOS' on a three-tiered system, will see a downward trend in the amount of bonus money available.

“The tiers will not change, just the money amount,” he explained.

Bowers said he doesn't expect as much of an impact on Guard MOS bonuses, which were cut from \$15,000 to \$5,000 last year.

“I think our incentive folks at the National Guard Bureau saw the direction things were going. They leaned forward so we wouldn't have to eliminate a bonus,” he said. “I've yet to see any indication from our incentive folks in DC that it is going away.”

For now, money is still available for Soldiers who decide to stay in the military, but that can always change, Bowers said.

“The only factual information you can take away is what is in policy guidance right now, with the disclaimer that everything is subject to change,” he added.

With that in mind, Culley encourages Soldiers who are considering re-enlistment to do it sooner rather than later.

“You have money in your hand right now,” he said.

“You have a pretty good idea of what you want to do when you stay in, so you



Photo Illustration by Sgt. 1st Class Roger Dey

HOW TO GET THE MOST ACCURATE INFORMATION ON THE POST 9/11 GI BILL (CHAPTER 33) “You Need to Come to a Briefing”

- The best way for Soldiers on Camp Victory to receive up-to-date information is for units with at least 40 people to schedule briefings for their troops with Education Service Specialist Robina Tomlinson and Education Service Officer Patricia Davis-Mullins. To do so, e-mail them directly at robena.tomlinson@iraq.centcom.mil or patricia.davismullin@iraq.centcom.mil.
- In the event that service members can't attend their unit's scheduled briefing they are highly encouraged to attend briefings at Camp Victory or Camp Stryker.
 - **Where:** Hope Chapel on Camp Victory or Camp Striker Army Learning Center
 - **When:** Third Wednesday of each month at 9 a.m. (Victory) or every Thursday at 9 a.m. (Stryker)
- The brief addresses every aspect of the new bill, as well as provides the most up-to-date information regarding the benefits package. Tomlinson and Davis-Mullins will answer questions at the end of the brief.

GI BILL BENEFITS AT A GLANCE

- It is available to anyone serving on active duty after September 10, 2001.
- Soldiers have a total of 36 months of benefit eligibility under the Bill. (Correction to March 29 Victory Times Article)
- Service member can transfer unused education benefits to spouse or children
- The percentage of benefits is based on the combined length of active duty service.
- Benefits include:
 - Cost of tuition and fees.
 - A monthly housing allowance at the E-5 with dependents rate, based on school location.
- Soldiers have 15 years from the time they leave active duty to use the benefit, based off their final DD214.
- Eligibility letters received from the VA must be validated by a retention NCO for enlisted troops and career managers for officers.
- Career counselors cannot validate letters.

The chart below indicates the percentage of benefits a service member, with a qualifying discharge, will receive based on his or her total active duty service performed after Sept. 10, 2001.

(Based on information from www.gibill.va.gov)

Total number of months of active duty service	% of Maximum Benefit Payable
At least 36 months	100
At least 30 continuous days and discharged due to service connected disability	100
At least 30 months < 36 months	90
At least 24 months < 30 months	80
At least 18 months < 24 months	70
At least 12 months < 18 months	60
At least 6 months < 12 months	50
At least 90 days < 6 months	40

For more information, contact the VA by calling 800-827-1000 or visit their Web site at www.gibill.va.gov

Alabama National Guard helps Iraqi Highway Patrol

Story by Sgt. Rebekah Lampman
United States Forces-Iraq Public Affairs

A blue police truck rolls up to the scene. With sirens blazing and an Iraqi flag displayed prominently on the doors, the vehicle comes to a screeching halt.

With weapons at the ready, three Iraqi Highway Patrol officers jump out, yelling “get out of the car” and “put your hands where I can see them.”

As the training scenario continued, National Guard Soldiers from the 217th Military Police Company from Birmingham, Ala., oversaw the action, ensuring the highway patrol officers followed proper procedure.

For the past six months, the MPs have been assisting 16 IHP officers from seven Iraqi police stations in Baghdad as they

conduct a variety of training events, said Sgt. Matthew Glassford, an MP with the 217th and a deputy sheriff in Sheldon County, Ala.

“We don’t have bombs or Improvised Explosive Devices back in the states so it’s challenging,” said Glassford. “When we train we have to go into more details, but the basics are still the same.”

The IPs are perfecting their basic police skills such as properly conducting a traffic stop, serving a search warrant and writing tickets. As the highway patrol officers move through their training process, 2nd Lt. Joseph Bennett, a platoon leader with the 217th MP Co., said the IHP are dedicated to the training and have dramatically improved their skills.

“You can see that they take the training

to heart,” said Bennett. “They really enjoy the hands on portion of the training more than the classroom. When we get to that part of the training they really seem to shine.”

After a few more weeks of practical exercises, Glassford and the rest of his platoon will conduct a ride along with the IHP out in the streets of Baghdad putting their months of training to the test. And the Iraqi police say they are ready to serve the public.

“For the 217th, all of the hard work they’ve done for us, we will not fail,” said Brig. Gen. Muhamed Kutafa Mashlesh, commander of the seven Iraqi Police stations involved in the training.

“We will not forget what they have shown us and we will be better for our country and our people,” he said.



Photo by Sgt. Rebekah Lampman

Sgt. Matthew Glassford, a Military Police officer assigned to the 217th Military Police Company from the Alabama National Guard, supervises an Iraqi Highway Patrol Officer during a training scenario March 17 in Baghdad. The 217th has worked with the IHP for six months on basic police skills such as traffic stops, search warrants and ticket writing.

OPERATION LAST DROP

To avoid drastic water rationing as weather becomes hot and dry, Victory Base Complex residents need to adhere to water conservation policies.

**Effective immediately
and until further notice:**

Mark your water bottle. Finish drinking it before taking another.

Turn off water while brushing teeth or shaving.

Take "combat showers" lasting no more than five minutes.

No vehicle washing, except to keep windows clean for safety.

Do not use water for landscaping, washing buildings or sidewalks.

Only wash full loads of laundry.

**Please cooperate and do your part.
Remind others to conserve water as well.**

For More information, contact Lt. Col. Colby Jewell at 485-2467

VBC Facility Operating Hours

Coalition Cafe DFAC
Breakfast 5:30 - 8:30 a.m.
Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Dinner 5 - 9 p.m.
Midnight Dining 11 p.m. - 1 a.m.

Sports Oasis DFAC
Breakfast 5:30 - 8:30 a.m.
Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Dinner 5 - 9 p.m.

Education Center
8 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Camp Liberty Post Exchange
8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Camp Victory Post Exchange
8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Paul Smith Gym
Open 24 Hours

Victory Main Post Office
Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Saturday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sunday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

**USF-I Unit Mail Room
Customer Services/Mail Call:**
Daily 3 - 6 p.m.

Al Faw Palace Post Office
Wednesday and Sunday
12:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Golby TMC Sick Call
Monday - Friday 7:30 - 11:30 a.m.
Saturday & Sunday 9 - 11:30 a.m.

Mental Health Clinic
Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Saturday 9 a.m. - noon

Pharmacy
Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - noon;
1 - 4:30 p.m.
Saturday & Sunday 9 a.m. - noon

Notice

To all USF-I personnel:
Remember to apply
OPSEC to your
e-mails, blogs, Facebook,
and other social networking
sites.

Use the USF-I and
Reduction of Forces critical
information lists if you are
unsure whether or not it
should be posted.

This applies to any time on
a NIPR computer or personal
computer.

Make sure your families
know about OPSEC as well.

JEFF LEAVES FINGERPRINT ON IRAQ

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Dan Yarnall
United States Forces-Iraq Public Affairs

A green argon-ion laser is the only light in a corner of an otherwise pitch black room as Michael Palermo, a forensic scientist, examines latent finger prints on an energy-drink can.

It is through latent fingerprint analysis that the Joint Expeditionary Forensic Facility, 22nd Military Police Battalion (Criminal Investigative Division) collects evidence to bring to prosecution.

In addition to their crime-solving mission, the professionals at the JEFF lab also work with the Iraqi Police and Iraqi Army, training them on properly collecting fingerprints and other forensic evidence for use in solving crimes and prosecution, according to Staff Sgt. Cedric Sherrod, noncommissioned officer in charge of the JEFF lab.

Ten forensic experts work at the JEFF lab, which is the center for DNA, firearm and fingerprint evidence collection at Camp Victory.

Palermo, who has more than 34 years in law enforcement, is a certified latent print examiner. He is using his experience and knowledge to aid in the partnership with the Iraqi Army and Police.



Michael Palermo with the Joint Expeditionary Forensic Facility, 22nd Military Police Battalion (Criminal Investigative Division), examines fingerprints with the aid of an argon-ion laser. Palermo and other JEFF lab forensic experts work with their Iraqi Army and Police counterparts, training them on the latest fingerprint and forensic evidence collection techniques.

Palermo works one-on-one work with the Iraqis; training them on fingerprint collection and analysis and working side by side his Iraqi counterparts as they process evidence.

“We have Iraqi experts who come here to participate and train with us in

the process of collecting latent print evidence,” Palermo said. “We are able to direct them and help them in new techniques.

Forensic science is relatively new to the Iraqi justice system, which used to rely

entirely on witness testimonies during its trials, Sherrod said. With the knowledge that has been transferred in this partnership, Iraqi law enforcement officials are now able to stay one step ahead of the criminals in their country.

“The criminals don’t know to wear gloves, so their finger and palm prints are all over the evidence,” he said. “This makes it that much easier for law enforcement to collect prints.”

Through the guidance of Sherrod, Palermo and the other JEFF lab members, the Iraqi Army and Police better understand how to collect latent fingerprints and the importance of properly handling evidence to keep it from getting contaminated.

“Our goals are to better the partnership we have with our Iraqi counterparts and make sure that they understand forensics is here to help solve cases,” Sherrod said.



The Joint Expeditionary Forensic Facility is the center for DNA, firearms and fingerprint evidence collection on Camp Victory.