

# The Expeditionary Times

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## Life saver



Soldiers train to save lives in combat

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## New leadership



Sustainment battalions transfer authority

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## Tech savvy



New weapon system keeps Soldiers safer on road

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# Soldiers celebrate Easter at historic monastery

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
SGT. KEITH S. VANKLOMPENBERG  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

## CONTINGENCY OPERATING

BASE MAREZ, Iraq

– More than 600 service members and civilians celebrated Easter with weekend services April 3 and 4 at St. Elijah Monastery, the oldest Christian monastery in Iraq, at Contingency Operating Base Marez.

A candlelit Mass was held April 3 and two other services were held April 4 at the 1,700-year-old structure.

“This is the second time we’ve done this,” said Capt. Patrick Van Durme, the battalion chaplain with 1st Battalion, 19th Field Artillery, 2nd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division and a Dansville, N.Y., native.

Van Durme said turnout for the events was large and included civilian workers from around the world and from the Mosul area, which has the largest Christian population in Iraq.

Sgt. William Olivier, a paralegal with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Smyrna, Tenn., native, holds a candle during Mass April 3 at St. Elijah Monastery at Contingency Operating Base Marez, Iraq.

“It’s an amazing thing for them,” he said.

First Lt. Geoffrey Whitaker, the garrison chaplain at COB Marez with the Regimental Fires Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), said he was honored to be part of the services.

“To get to celebrate Easter in the oldest Christian monastery in Iraq ... it’s a once in a lifetime opportunity,” said Whitaker, a Murphy, N.C., native.

Sgt. 1st Class Bobby Brooks, a shop foreman with A Battery, RFS, 278th ACR and a Sevierville, Tenn., native, said it was a privilege to experience so many cultures coming together in a historic location to celebrate Easter.

SEE MASS ON PAGE 4



# General praises Providers for base closure efforts



Trucks move containerized housing units March 11 from Camp Cedar II, Iraq, to Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq, to be used for the new convoy support center under construction at Adder and to start preparing Cedar for base closure.

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

## CAMP CEDAR II, Iraq – Brig.

Gen. Randal A.

Dragon, the deputy commanding general with 1st

Infantry Division, visited

Camp Cedar

II, Iraq, April 3 to observe the progress that has been made toward transferring convoy support operations to Contingency

Operating Base Adder, Iraq, as well as preparing Cedar for closure.

Capt. Valentino Bailey, the contracting officer with the 36th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Dallas native, said Cedar should be closed down by the Aug. 21 deadline set by United States Division – South.

Bailey accompanied Dragon during his visit and briefed him on the status of the Cedar to Adder move.

SEE PRAISE ON PAGE 4

SEE MASS ON PAGE 4

SEE PRAISE ON PAGE 4

## Balad Blotter March 25 - April 1

### **FAILURE TO OBEY ORDER:**

A complainant telephoned the Law Enforcement Desk and reported the subject was passing out and throwing up at the bus stop adjacent to building 7303 and had been transported to the emergency room with a possible drug overdose. A patrol was briefed and dispatched to the ER in the Air Force Theater Hospital. The patrol arrived on the scene and made contact with witness two who said, via Air Force IMT 1168/Statement of Witness, at roughly 10 a.m., the subject arrived at the ER incoherent and complaining of nausea escorted by the complainant and witness one. The subject was uncooperative and struggled with medical personnel when they attempted to remove his shirt and pants. Witness two said he found substances in the subject's uniform pockets and held them until the patrol seized them as evidence via Department of the Army Form 4137/Evidence/Property Custody Document. The patrol arrived on the scene at the subject's living quarters H-7 housing/C-59 and secured the room. The complainant said, via Air Force IMT 1168/Statement of Complainant, at roughly 9:40 a.m., she arrived at the bus stop to see the subject passing in and out of consciousness, throwing up and unable to walk. The complainant said, along with witness one, she transported the subject to the ER at roughly 10 a.m. and made contact with witness two. Witness one's statement corroborates the complainant's statement. Investigators conducted a three way conference call to gain search authority. Authority was granted. Investigators initiated a search of the subject's living quarters. The search terminated with 27 pieces of evidence obtained from the room. The subject will remain in the hospital until 8 a.m. April 3 and is unable to provide a statement. Witness one was instructed to escort the subject to the LED for questioning upon his release.

### **POSSIBLE IDENTITY THEFT:**

A complainant walked into the Law Enforcement Desk April 1 and reported a possible identity theft. The complainant said, via Air Force IMT 1168/Statement of Suspect/Witness/Complainant, March 27, she called her bank (Scotia Bank) in the Virgin Islands to verify a deposit was made. The complainant was asked to give her social security number to gain access to her account. The complainant said the banker relayed to her the social security number belonging to the complainant brought up someone else's name. The complainant called her mother in the Virgin Islands to inform her about the situation and spoke to her aunt who works at the same bank. The complainant said, March 29, her aunt provided her with information on the person who is using her social security number. Her mom sent her information about what to do as a victim of identity theft. The complainant was informed to notify the credit bureaus and to make a police report. The complainant went on Facebook to see if the individual who is using her social had an account. The complainant found the individual on Facebook, which showed her living in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands. Air Force Investigations was notified. There are no further investigative leads at this time.

NIPR: 443-8602  
SIPR: 241-1171  
Email: PMOdesk@iraq.centcom.mil

# Chaplain's Corner: overcome giants, have faith

BY CAPT. MARK D. PHILLIPS  
278TH ACR CHAPLAIN



Twelve men slowly climbed the treacherous mountain, determined to reach their objective and complete their mission.

The mission was very simple: reach the top of the peak, look into the valley, and spy on the enemy forces. Afghanistan? Iraq? No, this mission took place almost 3,500 years ago. Moses had led the Israelites on a long journey.

They had finally reached their objective to seize what God had promised: Canaan, the promised land.

Ten of the 12 spies saw the enemy as "giants" in the valley and became extremely fearful. Reporting back to Moses, the 10 unanimously decided there was no way the Israelites could overtake the enemy occupying the valley.

However, two of the spies, Joshua and Caleb, had a completely different report.

They declared in Numbers 14:7-9, "The land, which we passed through to spy it out, is an exceedingly good land. If the Lord delights in us, he will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land that flows with milk and honey. Only do not rebel against the Lord. And do not fear the people of the land, for they are bread for us. Their protection is removed from them, and the Lord is with us; do not fear them."

If the 12 men were there together, how would two men see something different? Clearly, Joshua and Caleb knew they were in the center of God's will. If God had led them this far, he would surely deliver them in this leg of their journey.

The other 10 spies relied only on their sight with no faith and that created the doubt and fear.

So often, we too, in our own lives, encounter "giants" that seem too big for us to conquer. We can become over-

whelmed with relationship, finance, career, parenting or decision-making issues. If we are not careful, then fear oftentimes replaces the courage to move forward and overcome.

It is this fear that causes many people to miss the greatest blessings in life. Some experience the fear of failure, the fear of ridicule or simply the fear of the unknown.

Notice that Joshua and Caleb exhibited faith in the face of fear.

According to Hebrews 11:1, "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."

Militarily, Joshua and Caleb knew the Israelites could not win the battle, but they also knew that God was greater than anyone they would face, and they chose to put their faith in God.

Only when our fear is replaced with courage can we make the right decisions in life and expect the best that God has to offer.

So, how do we obtain the faith we need? Interestingly, faith is an action word. When we are faced with a dilemma, God does not expect us to do nothing but to step forward and trust that he will guide our decisions that we make.

Faith causes us to reach out beyond our own abilities and trust in that which is greater than what we have to offer. Faith in God gives us confidence because we know God cannot fail.

How do we know this? The answers are found in God's Word.

Romans 10:17 declares, "So faith comes from hearing and hearing through the word of Christ."

When you place your faith in God, do not fear the "giants" in your life. God is greater than all of your problems and has a wonderful plan for your success.

Therefore, as we say in the cavalry, "lean forward in the saddle" and be courageous for God is your strength and power.

To Sgt. 1st Class Fernando Flores:

You are a wonderful husband and a wonderful dad. We cannot wait to have you home. We are so proud of you.

Loving you always,  
Your wife Amparo

## EXPEDITIONARY TIMES

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Contact the Expeditionary Times staff at: [escpao@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:escpao@iraq.centcom.mil)

13th ESC G2, Security Manager  
(318) 433-2155

13th ESC PAO, Managing Editor  
Maj. Raul Marquez, 13th ESC PAO  
[raul.marquez@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:raul.marquez@iraq.centcom.mil)

13th ESC PA NCOIC  
Staff Sgt. Joel F. Gibson, 13th ESC  
[joel.f.gibson@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:joel.f.gibson@iraq.centcom.mil)

13th ESC Staff Writer  
Spc. Naveed Ali Shah, 13th ESC  
[naveed.alishah@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:naveed.alishah@iraq.centcom.mil)

139th MPAD Commander  
Capt. Brad Sinkler  
[bradley.sinkler@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:bradley.sinkler@iraq.centcom.mil)

139th MPAD First Sergeant  
1st Sgt. Aangi Mueller  
[aangi.mueller@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:aangi.mueller@iraq.centcom.mil)

139th MPAD Production Editor  
Staff Sgt. Robert E. Fafoglia  
[robert.fafoglia@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:robert.fafoglia@iraq.centcom.mil)

139th MPAD Layout and Design  
Sgt. Jayson A. Hoffman  
[jayson.hoffman@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:jayson.hoffman@iraq.centcom.mil)

139th MPAD Photo Editor  
Sgt. Keith VanKlompberg  
[keith.vanklompberg@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:keith.vanklompberg@iraq.centcom.mil)

139th MPAD Copy Editor  
Spc. Brandy Oxford  
[brandy.oxford@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:brandy.oxford@iraq.centcom.mil)

139th MPAD Staff Writers  
Sgt. Ryan Twist  
[ryan.twist@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:ryan.twist@iraq.centcom.mil)

Sgt. John Stimac  
[john.stimac@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:john.stimac@iraq.centcom.mil)

Pfc. Lisa A. Cope  
[lisa.cope@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:lisa.cope@iraq.centcom.mil)

Spc. Michael V. Camacho  
[michael.camacho@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:michael.camacho@iraq.centcom.mil)

### Contributing public affairs offices

15th Sustainment Brigade  
36th Sustainment Brigade  
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256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team  
278th Armored Cavalry Regiment  
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing

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## 13th ESC Commanding General, Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz

**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: proper use of government communication systems

By SGT. 1ST CLASS ROBERT E. CHRISTIAN  
13TH ESC INSPECTOR GENERAL



Federal government communication systems and equipment such as telephones, fax machine and Internet systems must be used for official use and authorized purposes only.

Official use includes emergency communications and Department of Defense communication components determined necessary by the federal government.

Official use may also include, when approved by theater commanders, morale and welfare, and communications by military personnel and DoD employees who are deployed for extended periods away from home on official business. DoD employee personnel are authorized to use communication systems in the work place when checking in with family members, as well as scheduling doctor, home or auto repair appointments.

The use of these systems must be of reasonable duration and frequency. DoD employees should use these

privileges during personal time such as after duty hours or lunch periods. When communications are permitted, they must not adversely affect the performance of official duties.

Use of federal government communications systems that reflect adversely on the DoD or a DoD component is prohibited and against regulation. These actions include the use of pornography, chain letters, unofficial advertising, soliciting or selling except on authorized bulletin boards, inappropriately handled classified information, and other

uses that are incompatible with public service.

DoD employees should use federal government communications systems with the understanding that such use serves as consent to being monitored. This consent also includes incidental and personal use, whether authorized or unauthorized.

Misuse of government resources, such as communication systems, may result in a violation of General Order One, Article 134, the Uniform Code of Military Justice and a host of federal regulations.

<p><u>Joint Base Balad (13th ESC):</u> DSN 433-2125 Lt. Col. Reginald Howard (Command Inspector General) Maj. Christopher Minor (Deputy) Master Sgt. Roy Thacker (NCOIC)</p>	<p><u>Adder/Tallil (36th Sust. Bde./256th IBCT):</u> Maj. Andrea Shealy - DSN 833-1710 Master Sgt. Marta Cruz - DSN 883-1710 Maj. Jamar Gails - DSN 485-7246 Sgt. 1st Class Christian Lee</p>
<p><u>Q-West (15th Sust. Bde.):</u> DSN 827-6115 Lt. Col. Gary Davis</p>	<p><u>Al Asad (96th Sust. Bde.):</u> DSN 440-7049 Sgt. 1st Class Alexander Arce Master Sgt. Richard Faust</p>
<p><u>Taji (278th ACR):</u> DSN 834-3079 Master Sgt. Richard Faust</p>	

## Combat Stress: dealing with redeployment

By CAPT. MIKE KNIGHT  
1908TH MED.DET.



We like to think that redeploying from a war zone is a stress-free time.

Soldiers have calendars dedicated to the sole purpose of tracking how many days they have left in country. Ask any Soldier with a few weeks remaining and he can probably tell you exactly how many days he has left with the ever popular "and a wake-up" at the end.

So, with all of this excitement to leave Iraq and return to family and friends, one would think that stress would be the farthest thing from anyone's mind. Past experiences and statistics show us, however, that the months before and after redeployment can be as mentally taxing as the actual deployment itself.

During the course of the deployment, changes occur both for the deployed Soldier and loved ones who remain state-side.

For the Soldier, these changes could

include becoming closer with battle buddies, finding new hobbies, or being changed by the positive and negatives effects of mission requirements.

For the family that stays behind, changes could be that the spouse becomes more independent, takes on a more active parenting role and that children adjust to the Soldier being away.

As the date approaches when the Soldier and family will reunite, it is very common for both sides to experience apprehension and worry about how to best handle the situation. With a little preparation and advanced planning, however, the negative impacts of redeploying can be minimized and family ties can be strengthened.

The best advice to give any Soldier redeploying soon is to begin communicating with his or her spouse in the months and weeks prior to the actual date. Talk about changes that have occurred on both sides of the water so there are no surprises. Communication is the key to any difficult situation and this is no different.

The next advice is to anticipate that

not all situations will go exactly how you envisioned them. Complicated situations rarely do. We would all like to go home and pick up where we left off without missing a beat, but the fact of the matter is, there will be some obstacles to overcome along the way. Having those obstacles on your radar ahead of time will help to lessen the disappointment when those life events happen.

Next, when it comes to children, don't be surprised if they have changed as well. Generally, younger children will be apprehensive and take longer to warm up to your return than older children. Be patient and take things at their pace.

Finally, if you return home and life isn't going as planned or problems arise, don't be afraid to seek out help. There are many resources available to deal with these issues. Ask your chain of command or chaplain for more information.

The 1908th Combat Stress Control Detachment is available to instruct classes concerning redeployment issues for units. Call the Patriot Clinic at 318-433-2402 to schedule a class or for more information

## Sexual Assault Response Coordinator

Be sexual assault response coordinator smart: Not stopping when someone is indicating that they want you to stop, be it with words, actions or both, is sexual assault. If a person seems hesitant, do not try to convince him or her to give in, just stop. Call the Joint Base Balad SARC 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; you may also call 433-7272 or 443-9001, 122/135 for assistance.

## Correction

In the April 7 issue of the Expeditionary Times, the article, "US senators visit service members" should have said the senators dined in the Tuskegee Room at the Mirage Dining Facility and the article titled, "Captain runs 30 miles on 30th birthday," should have been attributed to Staff Sgt. Rob Strain. The Expeditionary Times regrets these errors.



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# MASS: religious ceremony held at 1,700-year-old Christian structure



Service members and civilians gather for Easter services April 4, at St. Elijah Monastery at Contingency Operating Base Marez, Iraq.

## MASS FROM PAGE 1

Brooks said he was most impressed with the group of Ugandan guards who performed a song in their native language.

"It's a blessing to be here and witness this," he said.

Van Durme said the monastery has held great historical relevance throughout the ages.

Local tradition suggests the monastery was first built in the year 350 A.D. and the existing structure was probably added 1,000 years later, he said.

In 1743, the monks and orphans at the monastery were killed by a Persian leader for refusing to convert to Islam. Christians in the area have been per-

secuted since, said Van Durme.

"If you go back 50 years, you'll find thousands of Christian families in Mosul," he said. "You'll now find maybe 100. You have to wonder what its future will be."

Whitaker said the chaplains work with the Provincial Reconstruction Team in Mosul to preserve the monastery and repair structural damage that has occurred in the years since the U.S. came to Iraq.

"The Department of the Army has signed on to do some restoration," he said. "The plan is still ongoing."

Whitaker said the monastery is open for tours every Friday, for service members and civilians interested in learning more about its history.

# PRAISE: general viewed progress on responsible drawdown

## PRAISE FROM PAGE 1

"My goal was to talk to him ... about some challenges we have been having, where we hope to be in the next 30 days and what he can do to help facilitate the process," he said.

With several units and civilian contractors working together on this project, moving Camp Cedar II to COB Adler has been difficult to coordinate, but is now in the final stages, Bailey said.

"Coordination has definitely been a

challenge," he said. "Hopefully we will be able to execute along the timeline, get the fuel farm over here as expected in the next three or four weeks and have personnel follow."

Dragon, an Alexandria, Va., native, said as the battle space owner, his unit has a responsibility to assist the 13th ESC and ensure that the area is in the proper environmental condition when it is turned over to the Iraqi government.

"We will follow all the steps that are required, without cutting any corners, and make sure that we turn over an environmentally sound piece of land back to our Iraqi counterparts," he said.

Dragon said the 36th Sust. Bde. and the 13th ESC have reduced the footprint at Camp Cedar II and prepared the base for closure.

"I think the Soldiers in the (36th) Sust. Bde. are doing a great job, as well as the Soldiers from the (13th) ESC," he

said. "It is great to have forward-looking and forward-leaning Soldiers here, because what the sustainment brigade has done under the umbrella of the ESC, is taken on a project ... that has taken three years to come to fruition. Both those organizations have really sought to complete this one on their watch. I hold them in high esteem for that, because it (comes) at a critical juncture to reduce our footprint here in Iraq."

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# Soldiers train to save lives in combat

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. RYAN TWIST  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq – During a training exercise, a simulated improvised explosive device hit a convoy, forcing Soldiers to use combat life saver skills to react to an extreme situation with casualties, during a CLS course April 1 at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq.



Soldiers with the 2101st Transportation Company out of Demopolis, Ala., 541st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) participated in a 40-hour CLS course to become qualified combat life savers for their convoy missions.

Sgt. Brian M. Evans, a battalion medical training noncommissioned officer with the Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division out of Fort Stewart, Ga., said the course gives Soldiers more hands-on experience.

“Basically, we’re giving them a real-life scenario,” he said. “They are a transportation company, so we have them set up as a convoy out here for their training. They get hit and they’ve got to treat and maintain the patients until we get them evacuated.”

Evans, a Cincinnati native, said the training will help Soldiers when they are off base on convoys traveling throughout Iraq.

“We’re providing them CLS training so that, should anything bad happen out there, they know how to take care of themselves, take care of their buddies and make sure everybody returns home safe and alive,” he said.

The CLS training focuses on preparing Soldiers to treat life-threatening injuries, said Evans.

“We’re providing them with the basic medical knowledge they need to be able to treat any type of battlefield wounds,



Sgt. Dustin G. Atkins, a truck driver with the 2101st Transportation Company out of Demopolis, Ala., 541st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and an Andalusia, Ala., native, checks a casualty during a training exercise for the combat life saver course April 1 at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq.

until a medic arrives or until they can get them to a place that has other medical assets,” he said.

Sgt. Jamie L. Thicklin, a transportation specialist with the 2101st Trans. Co., said during the convoy scenario, they got a chance to assess casualties and give them care under fire.

“The training was very good,” said Thicklin, a Montgomery, Ala., native. “It was realistic. When I came out, I didn’t know what to expect, same as going on a mission. We got out here, we saw the casualties and the team went to work.”

Sgt. Dustin G. Atkins, a truck driver with the 2101st, said the Soldiers who

participated in the training had their skills put to the test.

“I think we did a pretty good job overall,” said Atkins, an Andalusia, Ala., native. “Before I came to this class it probably would’ve been a little bit harder, but now I have a better mindset of how to control the situation.”

Thicklin said all Soldiers need to take part in the course to help prepare them for what could happen during any convoy mission.

“(We) train as we fight, so when you get out on the battlefield it becomes second nature,” he said. “They need to keep on doing this training.”

Atkins said all Soldiers should com-

plete the training regularly, to maintain familiarity.

“I learned to expect anything that could happen and to keep your skills sharp,” he said. “That way, when something does happen you’ll be ready for it.”

Evans said he wants Soldiers to leave the course with the best possible training.

“There’s not too many CLS programs that implement a validation lane such as we have,” he said. “It’s not a requirement of the CLS course, but we take it one step above just to give them that additional experience and prepare them better for the real-life missions they will be out on.”

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# Michigan Guardsmen escort Iraqi workers at JBB

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Almost every morning, Soldiers with the 1073rd Maintenance Company out of Greenville, Mich., escort local nationals working with the Department of Public Works from the entry gate at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, onto the base.

These Soldiers escort roughly 140 to 160 Iraqis to their worksites to do post beautification, which can range from sidewalk sweeping to custodial upkeep, said 1st Lt. Joey Degrammont, the force protection platoon leader with the 1073rd Maint. Co., 2nd Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

These jobs give the Iraqis a steady source of income, said Degrammont, a Mio, Mich., native.

Despite the cultural and language differences, the Soldiers and Iraqi workers get along, said Degrammont, exhibiting a strong working relationship. Both groups are simply doing a job, and they all understand that, he said.

“There’s a lot of cohesion built up between the American Soldiers and



Spc. Karen Beekman, a Department of Public Works employee escort with the 1073rd Maintenance Company, 2nd Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Baldwin, Mich., native, supervises local national DPW employees April 1 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

the local nationals,” he said. “They have a good time, they’re laughing and joking.”

Although the partnership between service members and Iraqis is solid, Soldiers always maintain professionalism and military bearing, said Degrammont. This includes situational awareness at all times, keeping operational and force protection security a

top priority, he said.

The Iraqis must be escorted because they do not have the proper authorization to be left alone, according to base security measures, said Sgt. 1st Class Calvin Charania, the force protection platoon sergeant with the 1073rd Maint. Co.

The Soldiers also take care of the Iraqis, ensuring they have water and

food and take breaks throughout the day, said Charania, an Alpena, Mich., native.

For consistency’s sake, Soldiers work with the same local nationals on a regular basis to maintain solid, working relationships with them, he said.

The salary workers earn is enough for them to support their families and live comfortably, said Charania.

This is a joint effort between the 13th ESC out of Fort Hood, Texas, the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing and Noor Al-Belad Company, a local company, said Air Force Tech. Sgt. Patrick Galla, noncommissioned officer in charge of Troops to Task, with the 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineering Squadron, 332nd Expeditionary Mission Support Group, 332nd AEW.

The contract between the Air Force and the Noor Al-Belad Company has been a roughly six-year project, said Galla, a Traverse City, Mich., native. The 1073rd Maint. Co. provides strong support for the DPW’s mission on base, he said.

The project’s long-term goal is to instill strong work habits and skills in local nationals, to assist them after the U.S. military drawdown from Iraq, said Galla.

“The (local nationals) work hard, and they do an excellent job on base,” said Charania.

## Adder to run final joint distribution center

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE ADDER, Iraq – The Joint Distribution Center at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq, distributes supplies and equipment coming into and leaving the Iraq Joint Operations Area.

First Lt. Christopher G. Kee, the officer in charge of the JDC with the 40th Quartermaster Company, 732nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 36th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and an Urbana, Ill., native, said the JDC handles all forms of supplies except food, ammunition and medical supplies.

“The main mission here at the JDC is to redistribute class two (organizational clothing and individual equipment), three

(petroleum, oil, lubricants), four (construction materials), six (demand items), seven (major end items, such as Humvees, and Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicles), and nine (repair items) classes of supply throughout (United States Division – South),” he said.

Kee said the JDC at COB Adder will be the last functioning JDC in Iraq, and all of the equipment will funnel through Adder and into Kuwait during the drawdown.

“We have a major retrograde yard on the south side of COB Adder, and that is where we house the majority of our class seven and class nine items to be retrograded to Kuwait, or to be sent to Afghanistan,” he said.

Sgt. 1st Class Dawadrain Clark, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the JDC with the 40th QM Co. out of Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, and an Ocala, Fla., native, said 20 Soldiers and 18 KBR, Inc. contractors work in the JDC, with the Soldiers primarily



Sgt. Joseph P. Franklin, the mid-shift noncommissioned officer in charge with the 40th Quartermaster Company, 732nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 36th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a New Orleans native, ground guides a Humvee onto a flatbed trailer to be taken through Kuwait March 31 at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq.

focusing on class seven items.

“The Soldiers are responsible for unloading and downloading class seven supplies that come in,” he said. “They also store and keep accountability of those supplies.”

Clark said the unit has moved more than 65,000 tons of class three, four and nine supply, and about 5,000 pieces of class seven equipment in the last four months.

Kee said accountability of incoming and outgoing equipment is a high priority for his unit.

“Our goal is maintaining full accountability of every piece of commodity that comes through the JDC, to ensure that it gets ... from the sender to the customer, and to do that as fast as possible,” he said. “We try to turn items around within 72 hours, pushing onward to our next customer.”

# Mechanics maintain standard of safety for traveling Soldiers

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. RYAN TWIST  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq – A breakdown off base in a war zone stops an entire convoy, creating an opportunity for the enemy to attack.



Mechanics with the 2101st Transportation Company out of Demopolis, Ala., 541st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) ride along with convoys to provide assistance if a vehicle breaks down or needs to be towed to another base.

Spc. Andrew R. Hilliman, a mechanic with the 2101st Trans. Co., said he works on vehicles at the motor pool and drives the wrecker as part of the unit's recovery team.

Hilliman, a Prattville, Ala., native, said his job allows him to work with units when they do preventive maintenance checks and services on their vehicles. If the Soldiers find problems with the trucks that require a mechanic, Hillman and his unit can assist them.

"We'll go out with the operators and ... help them do their PMCS," he said. "We fix any on the spot corrections that we can make. If need be, we come back and order parts, look through the (tech-



Sgt. Gregory T. Garrett and Pvt. Jacob F. Ray, mechanics with the 2101st Transportation Company out of Demopolis, Ala., 541st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and Montgomery, Ala., natives, look at the technical manual to determine where to start their preventive maintenance checks and services on the M915 line haul truck.

nical manuals) and go from there. As soon as we get (the parts), we go back out to the trucks and fix them."

Hilliman said PMCS should be performed before every mission. When he is part of the recovery team, he does PMCS on his wrecker each time to make sure it does not break down on a mission, he said.

Sgt. Henry H. Tavra, another mechanic with the 2101st Trans. Co., said

when Soldiers do PMCS, they should check the oil, air, water and belts, and replace any parts that need to be fixed.

"Maintenance means a lot," said Tavra, a Birmingham, Ala., native. "A (broken) 10 cent part can ground that vehicle on the side of the road."

If the mechanics cannot fix a vehicle within a certain amount of time, they use the wrecker to tow it to its final destination, Hilliman said.

"If you're smart and you know your vehicle, then it's not much of a transition; it's pretty much doing your job, just in a convoy or at a motor pool," he said. "Maintenance is maintenance, so as long as you know your job. Operating (the wrecker) is a piece of cake."

They can also use the wrecker to help pull motors out of other vehicles at the motor pool, said Hilliman.

"I think it is the best (military vehicle) we have," he said. "It's got many uses and it never seems to break down if you keep up with its preventive maintenance checks and services."

This is Hilliman's third deployment to Iraq.

"I've got quite a bit of experience as far as being down the road and at the motor pool," he said. "I love the job. I love it more when we're outside the wire, just makes it a lot more exciting. Every day is not the same and you never know what you might (encounter)."

Spc. Amy J. Combs, also a mechanic with the 2101st, said she takes vehicles that are inoperable and does what she can to fix them.

Combs, a Choctaw, Ala., native, said the mechanics don't just fix the vehicles until they are comfortable with them, but so the drivers feel safe and confident about operating the vehicle.

"They used to throw posters up all the time ... that said, 'We work on it as though our lives depend on it – theirs do.' I don't think I quite understood that until I got here," she said.

## Q-West inducts new noncommissioned officers

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq – The Special Troops Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) inducted 48 newly-promoted noncommissioned officers from units across Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq, into the NCO Corps during a ceremony March 31 at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation center.



"Being an NCO is more than acquiring a skill, passing boards or completing courses," said Sgt. Elizabeth Gaytan, a personnel NCO with the STB and the ceremony's narrator. "It is the change in mentality about how we conduct our day-to-day business."

An NCO's focus must be on the accomplishment of the mission and the welfare of his or her Soldiers, said Gaytan, a Los Angeles native.

"We change our frame of thought from worrying about ourselves to mentoring, training, guiding, leading and taking care of our Soldiers," she said. "We put their needs and welfare above our own."

The ceremony's guest speaker was Master Sgt. Vanessa Price, the food services NCO in charge with the 15th Sust. Bde.

"There's nothing like being a part of a team where everyone relies on you to accomplish the mission while ensuring the welfare of all Soldiers," she said.

As NCOs, the newly inducted Soldiers are charged with making decisions that are both legally and morally sound while taking care of the mission, the unit and the Soldiers, said Price, a Shreveport, La., native.

These NCOs are ready for that challenge, she said.

Price told the new NCOs to continue improving themselves, but reminded them that they are responsible for their Soldiers now, and they must put the Soldiers first.

"Encourage (your Soldiers) to stay focused and teach them how to make good decisions," she said.

The NCOs should know and live the Creed of the Noncommissioned Officer and not just memorize it for the promotion board, she said. No matter how far the NCO goes, there is always room for im-



First Sgt. Willie Johnson, the senior noncommissioned officer with A Company, Special Troops Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a New Orleans native, leads 48 newly-inducted NCOs in the Charge of the Noncommissioned Officer during an induction ceremony March 31 at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq.

provement, said Price.

"Are you ready for this responsibility?" she asked the new NCOs. "Yes, you are."

# Sustainment battalions transfer authority

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

## CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE



SPEICHER, Iraq – The 264th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) transferred authority to the 541st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 15th Sust. Bde. during a ceremony at the main gym April 1 at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, signaling the end of the 264th's tour in Iraq.

Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz, commander of the 13th ESC out of Fort Hood, Texas, and a Mansfield, Ohio, native, was present with the ceremony's reviewing officer, Col. Larry Phelps, the 15th Sust. Bde. commander and a Greenville, Ala., native.

“Today we are celebrating the next step in operation Provider Horizon, (Brig.) Gen. Wentz's plan for realignment of support across Iraq – a plan that will result in over 13,000 providers returning to their homes and loved ones, and set the conditions for uninterrupted support to Iraq throughout the drawdown of forces in theater,” Phelps said.

The 264th CSSB worked for 12 months to provide logistical support to troops in their area of responsibility. Phelps said they received and distributed nearly 5 million bottles of water, 65,000 cases of meals, ready-to-eat, 3,000 cases of halal – fit for use under the rules of Islam – meals, and drove more than 3 million miles in more than 1,200 convoys.

“They have fixed everything a truck driver can break – and that's everything,” Phelps said.

Lt. Col. Steven S. DeBusk, the 264th CSSB commander and an Elkton, Md.,



A Soldier salutes the flag during the playing of the national anthem at the transfer of authority ceremony from the 264th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) to the 541st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 15th Sust. Bde. April 1 at the main gym at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq.

native, said he was proud of his Soldiers' accomplishments.

“We hauled, stored and issued over 36 million gallons of fuel, filled over 650,000 requests for supplies, repaired over 3,200 vehicles and other equipment,” he said. “We oversaw a mortuary; we handled over 10,000 containers; and we facilitated the turn in of millions of dollars of excess equip-

ment. We logisticians love to define ourselves with numbers ... but what you did here isn't a story about numbers. It wasn't a math problem. It was a human story – a Soldier's story.”

Before a transfer of authority is carried out, the incoming and outgoing units work side by side to ensure a smooth transition. Elkton expressed his confidence in the abilities of the

541st and Lt. Col. Paul D. Dismar, the 541st CSSB commander and a Morgan City, La., native.

“Lt. Col. Dismar, it has been a pleasure to serve with you over the past several months,” Elkton said. “I leave Iraq in good conscience knowing that you and the 541st staff are well prepared to continue to advance the ball down the field.”

**No One Shoots Alone**

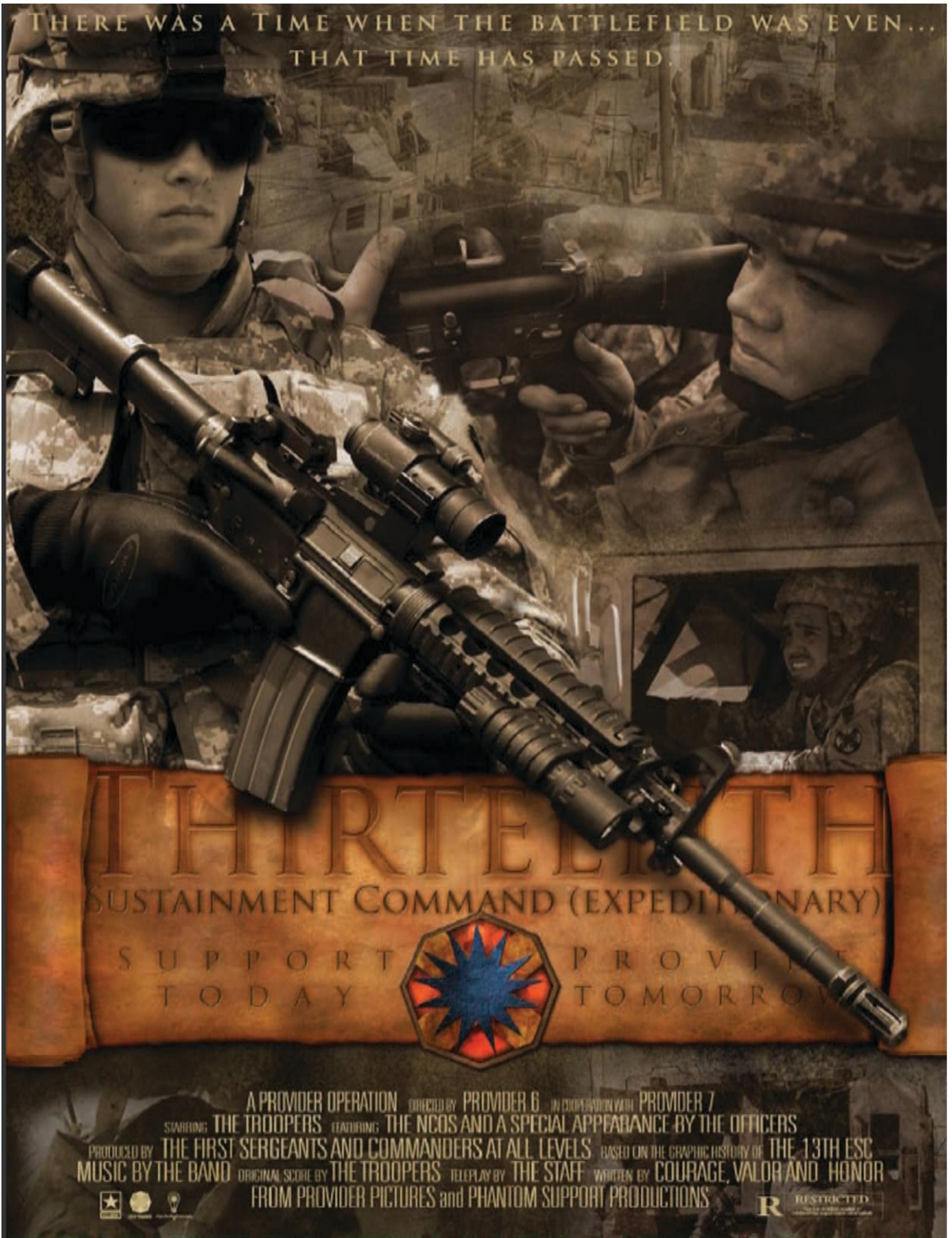
- Treat every weapon as if it is loaded.
- Handle every weapon with care.
- Identify the target before you fire.
- Never point the muzzle at anything you don't intend to shoot.
- Keep the weapon on safe and your finger off the trigger until you intend to fire.

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# Christians come together to celebrate Easter at JBB

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. JOHN STIMAC  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – More than 250 Christian service members and civilians came together for an Easter sunrise service April 4 at Holt Memorial Stadium at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

The one-hour service featured performances by the Provider Chapel band and members of the inspirational praise dance team.

Maj. Camilla Wood, the assistant acquisition logistics technician director with the 402nd Army Field Support Brigade and a Huntsville, Ala., native, said the dance team is part of the Provider Chapel dance auxiliary and is used as an outreach program.

“Normally we use three weeks rehearsal time for events like these,” she said.

Wood said the team considers its dance more of a ministry than a performance.

“We’re actually uplifting the name of God and helping people understand his word through dance,” she said.

Of the 12 team members, nine performed on Easter, said Wood.

“We have a great group of people who love to take forth the word of God through dance,” she said.

Lt. Col. Roy T. Walker, head chaplain with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), said they had been planning the sunrise service for almost three months.

“Our job was to (see) that all the programs were put together, sound systems were set up, an inclement weather plan (was in place) and advertising was taken care of,” he said.

Walker, an Elizabethtown, Ky., native, said the 13th ESC and the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing came together for the event.

“The Army took the lead to make it happen and we worked with the Air Force and split the duties down the middle,” he said.

What made the service special was that almost every unit ministry team was represented, said Walker.

“Even though we are thousands of miles from home, we all have become part of history,” he said. “Watching the sunrise come up in the cradle of civilization on Easter is something that you will tell your grandchildren about, and



The inspirational praise dance team shares its message with service members and civilians at the Easter sunrise service April 4 at Holt Memorial Stadium at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

it’s turning this time away from home into a time of opportunity.”

Staff Sgt. Samuel I. Shoemate, the security manager noncommissioned officer in charge with the 13th ESC and a Windsor, Colo., native, said he thought the service was powerful. It was not

about being of a certain denomination, said Shoemate, it was about coming together and praising the risen Savior.

“Very rarely do so many believers from so many different backgrounds and denominations get to come together to worship as one,” he said.

# Soldiers train to transfer mission

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SPC. ANITA VANDERMOLEN  
41ST IBCT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE ADDER, Iraq – The Oregon National Guard’s 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team Soldiers began their deployment overseas in Kuwait with training from the outgoing unit in June 2009.

At the end of that deployment in March 2010, the Soldiers returned the favor.

Task Force Volunteer, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, 41st IBCT, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) drove vehicles to Kuwait to assist them in conducting pre-mission training for the Louisiana National Guard’s 2nd Squadron, 108th Cavalry, 256th IBCT Soldiers, who will use similar vehicles when they take command of the convoy security mission conducted by the Volunteers.

The training included a maintainer’s course for the mechanics and Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle driver’s training.

“The casualty evacuation was more realistic than I’ve had,” said Staff Sgt. Ronnie Veal, a 2/108th truck commander and a Lecompte, La., native.



Soldiers with the Louisiana National Guard’s Task Force Geronimo, 2nd Squadron, 108th Cavalry, 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team arrive at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq, March 25. The Soldiers were trained in Kuwait by the Oregon National Guard’s Task Force Volunteer, 2nd Battalion 162nd Infantry Regiment, 41st IBCT Soldiers. TF Geronimo will take over the convoy security mission as TF Volunteer heads home.

“The counter-(improvised explosive device) training was great.”

TF Volunteer brought 10 months of experience with convoy security to Kuwait for the TF Geronimo Soldiers.

“It was good having the actual unit teaching us the most up-to-date tac-

tics, techniques and procedures, passing it on to our guys,” said 1st Sgt. Billy Myers, a 1st sergeant with the 2/108th and a Natchitoches, La., native.

The 2/162nd Soldiers taught the incoming 2/108th Soldiers their duties and responsibilities, as well as the

idiosyncrasies of the area and missions they would execute.

“We brought the standard (to TF Volunteer expectations),” said Pfc. Ronald Cain, a driver with the 2/162nd and a Medford, Ore., native. “We also explained what to expect at (COB) Adder and on the road.”

Spc. Mukunda Moss, a gunner with C Company, 2/162nd and a Gladstone, Ore., native, praised the incoming Soldiers.

“Louisiana has a good group of guys,” he said. “They accepted the training with a good attitude. They were willing to learn, even the ones who deployed before.”

While in Kuwait, TF Geronimo Soldiers were able to experience every aspect of a typical mission. The 10-day training is the beginning of the relief-in-place process that must occur before the 2/108th can assume their responsibilities.

“It’s the first real taste of how TF Volunteer operates,” said Maj. Eric Riley, TF Volunteer operations officer and a Roseburg, Ore., native. “They experienced it all, from the briefs to the missions.”

As TF Geronimo arrives at COB Adder and conducts their training and mentorship, they will continue to benefit from the Volunteers’ experience before they head out on their own.

“It was a great hand off,” Myers said.

# Refueling point offers oasis for thirsty birds

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

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Like oases for weary desert travelers, Army refueling points in Iraq offer a place for pilots to refuel their thirsty birds.

The Riflestock refueling point in Baghdad is manned by nearly a dozen Soldiers from Task Force 38's E Company, 3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment. They refuel helicopters of all shapes and sizes, including CH-47 Chinooks, AH-64 Apaches and UH-60 Black Hawks.

"If they fly in here, we fill them up," said Spc. Matt Harvell, an E Co. fueler and a Fort Worth, Texas, native.

Pfc. Nathan Gould, an E Co. fueler and a Lafayette, La., native, said he saw similarities and differences between his team and race car pit crews.

"We work together as a team like they do," he said. "However, we're a lot more safety conscious. They jump out in front of cars. We don't jump out

in front of the helicopters."

Gould said they take additional precautions to mitigate risk.

"We're brutally honest with each other out there if somebody is about to make a mistake," he said. "We have to be. We're constantly double checking each other."

The Riflestock Soldiers refuel helicopters with the engines on and the blades still turning, known as "hot fueling." A spark at the wrong time, mixed with the petroleum could be a volatile combination.

"We're huge on safety; a minor mistake can have a devastating effect," Gould said.

The fuelers, each with a specific task, work as a team to mitigate the risks. One Soldier fuels the helicopter, one Soldier mans the fire extinguisher and one Soldier runs the fuel trucks that pump the petroleum.

"We need to do it in a timely matter," said Gould. "We need to be efficient, but we need to be methodical so we don't make mistakes."

The fuelers work as a synchronized unit when it is time to refuel the helicopters, said Sgt. Charles Smith, the



A Task Force 38 fueler with E Company, 3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment waits for a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter to stop before walking out to refuel the helicopter at the Riflestock refueling point March 26 in Baghdad.

team's noncommissioned officer in charge, praising his team.

"I have no problems with them and I've had zero complaints, said Smith, a Jacksonville, Fla., native. "They go

to the aircraft in a timely manner and refuel them in a timely manner. The customers are never waiting on them. I wouldn't want to work with anybody else. They are the cream of the crop."

# Wisconsin Soldiers bring family along for tour in Iraq

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. MATTHEW T. HIPPI  
36TH SUST. BDE.

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE  
ADDER, Iraq – Leaving home to serve in Iraq does not always mean leaving family behind.

Roughly 12 percent of the Soldiers with the Wisconsin Army National Guard's Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 732nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 36th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), out of Tomah, Wis., serve with family members in Iraq.

"Having a close family member here with you makes it easier to talk about family issues that may arise and ... makes it easier to cope," said Sgt. Geoffery Miller, the HHC readiness noncommissioned officer and an Appleton, Wis., native.

Staff Sgt. Jennifer Baurichter, the 732nd CSSB personnel NCO and an Ellsworth, Wis., native, chose her sister, Sgt. 1st Class Christina Pagenkopf, the 732nd CSSB special projects NCO and a Neilsville, Wis., native, as her roommate for the tour, and said her sibling makes life easier.



These Soldiers with the Wisconsin Army National Guard's Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 732nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 36th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), out of Tomah, Wis., represent the roughly 12 percent of the Soldiers in the unit who served with family members in Iraq.

"Having Christina here is really helpful because one of us is always in contact with the family, so they don't worry as much," she said. "She knows me the best. When I need my space, she leaves me alone, or when I

need someone to talk to, she is always there. When one of us is super busy, we help the other out by getting chow or doing each other's laundry."

Some current members of the 732nd CSSB volunteered for this de-

ployment to be with a family member.

"I decided to volunteer ... and my dad decided to come along because of me," said Staff Sgt. Nicholas Raabe, the HHC motor sergeant and a Tomah, Wis., native.

Nicholas Raabe's father, Master Sgt. Douglas Raabe, the 732nd CSSB command sergeant major and a Tomah, Wis., native, agreed with his son.

"If my son didn't deploy, I might not have deployed," Douglas Raabe said.

The members of the 732nd CSSB will soon make the journey back home to be reunited with the rest of their families.

Staff Sgt. Moriah Menden, the 732nd CSSB dining facility operations NCO and a Sparta, Wis., native, who is deployed with her husband, said she knows she is lucky to have him with her.

"It has made the deployment so much easier for us," she said. "It has made our marriage stronger, and if we deploy again, we understand that the odds of deploying together are very low. For both of us being in the National Guard, we know what to expect for our futures and what a deployment is all about."

# Formerly wounded Veterans return to mentor service members at JBB

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. JOHN STIMAC  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Eight Soldiers who sustained injuries during previous deployments returned to Joint Base Balad, Iraq, April 9 for Operation Proper Exit V.



The Soldiers, some visiting for a second or third time, came to tell the stories behind their injuries and recoveries during a town-hall style meeting at Morale, Welfare and Recreation center east.

Retired Sgt. Juan Arrendondo, an infantry noncommissioned officer and a Coachella, Calif., native, said this was his first time back in Iraq since 2005 when he was injured.

“It has been very emotional, but very rewarding,” he said. “I came back to give a message that everything we’re doing here is for something good.”

Col. Knowles Y. Atchison, the deputy commander with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and an Oresville, Ala., native, said he was deeply honored that the Soldiers came.

“You have honored us here today,” he said. “You remind all of us why we’re here. There is nothing more powerful.”

Atchison thanked them for their thoughts and the guidance they shared with the audience.

“Please keep being involved,” he said. “You are the firepower where we need it most – in the ranks of our younger Soldiers.”

Retired Staff Sgt. Brian Neuman, previously with B Company, 9th Psychological Operations Battalion attached to 1st Marine Division and a Portsmouth, R.I., native, said he came to Iraq to give back to the service members.

“It was also a chance for me to see what Iraq is like now, and see that our sacrifices have paid off,” he said.

Neuman said he wanted to use his experience to make the deployment worth it for service members in Iraq now.

“If just one private first class that came here takes something back with them, then my time here was worth it,” he said.

Neuman said it was surreal coming



Soldiers with the Wounded Warrior Program are introduced to service members April 9 during Operation Proper Exit V, at Morale, Welfare and Recreation center east at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. The visit was part of a week-long tour that is sponsored by the Troops First Foundation in conjunction with the United Services Organization and United States Forces – Iraq.

back to Iraq after five years, and was surprised by all the progress that has been made.

“As I was flying over Fallujah in the helicopter and seeing all those buildings being erected, it made me feel that we actually accomplished something over here,” he said.

He and his fellow visitors were surprised by all of the new military equipment and technology in Iraq, he said, and by how much has changed.

Neuman was injured when an explosively formed projectile struck his Bradley M2A3 Tracked – Armored Fighting vehicle near Fallujah.

His left arm was amputated below the elbow and he sustained shrapnel wounds to both legs and his right arm.

Neuman said body armor saved his life, but he was in the hospital for nine months recovering.

Capt. Ingrid Welsh, the equal opportunity adviser with the 36th Sustainment Brigade, 13th ESC out of Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq, and a Lampasas, Texas, native, said she was glad she had an opportunity to come to JBB to witness the visit because, being a National Guard Soldier, she may not get this opportunity again.

“It was interesting for me to see how they coped with losing limbs and the mental stress they underwent,” she said. “How they overcame all of that with the help of other Soldiers and their care providers.”

Welsh said she has followed one of the bills recently passed to help Soldiers get prosthetics and the care they need.

“By listening to them and seeing them, I think they are definitely being helped out,” she said.

Arrendondo said the government has

assisted wounded Veterans like himself tremendously, and continues to do so.

“My hand cost \$25,000,” he said. “We get to try out all the new toys, as far as prosthetics go. If we break it, they give us something better.”

Since being back, Arrendondo said he has not heard any gunfire or explosions, a change from five years ago.

“I was telling everybody on the way over here that now I finally have the chance to walk out of here on my own two feet,” he said. “This will give me a lot of closure.”

Arrendondo said this event would not be possible without the help of the Troops First Foundation and the United Services Organization, which founded Operation Proper Exit.

“I want to thank them, along with the Army, for helping make this all happen,” he said.

## Do you have a story idea?

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

# Mayor promotes safety in Mosul

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. KEITH S. VAN KLOMPENBERG  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE  
MAREZ, Iraq – The Regimental Fires Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) held a mayor cell meeting

April 5 at Contingency Operating Base Marez, Iraq, to discuss current issues and future plans for the base and its inhabitants.

“We’re 30 days on ground today as the mayor cell,” said Lt. Col. Warner Holt, commander of the RFS, 278th ACR and a Winchester, Tenn., native. “We’re glad to be here.”

The meeting, which is held monthly, gave military leaders and civilian contractors a chance to discuss the services they provide on base, but the main focus was on safety, said Holt.

“Our field of view is very wide because we’re looking at more than 10,000 Soldiers and civilians,” he said. “We’re looking at safety across the board.”

Maj. Tommie Stevens, the executive officer for the RFS and the mayor of

COB Marez, said they are preparing for the base to get busier.

“This is one of the (bases) that’s going to endure for a short time,” he said. “As we have more people, we’re going to need to be more safety conscious.”

Stevens, a Sherwood, Tenn., native, said they are trying to curb speeding offenses on the base and better enforce the visibility of badges on contractors.

Safety in containerized housing units has also been an issue, said Capt. Christopher Tutje, the safety officer for the RFS and a Nashville, Tenn., native.

Tutje said they are in the process of fixing bad wiring and updating plugs in all living areas.

“We have to err on the side of safety with what we put in our CHUs,” he said. “We just don’t want anybody getting hurt.”

In addition to safety issues, Stevens briefed leaders about the need to continue the drawdown process through Operation Material Advantage.

“There’s a lot of equipment lying around that needs to be turned in through the system,” he said.

Stevens said Operation Material Advantage is a sort of spring cleaning project they conduct with 2nd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division.



Maj. Tommie Stevens, the executive officer with the Regimental Fires Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), mayor of Contingency Operating Base Marez, Iraq, and a Sherwood, Tenn., native, takes questions from military leaders and civilian contractors at the mayor cell meeting April 4 at COB Marez.

Tutje said collaboration between units, and between military and civilian workers, is important during any operation and is one of the reasons they hold the mayor cell meetings.

“Our scope can’t just be unit level,” said Tutje. “It’s about building relationships with people and maintaining them. You have to have the right people to build relationships.”

## Container manager earns battlefield promotion

BY 2ND LT. GABRIEL WEST  
15TH SUST. BDE.

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – A container manager with the 159th Seaport Operations Company, 80th Ordnance Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)

distinguished himself from his peers and earned a battlefield promotion to staff sergeant March 1 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Staff Sgt. Patrick Ryan, a Rapid City, S.D., native, manages the Joint

Base Balad Empty Container Collection Point, overseeing not only 12 civilian contractors but also thousands of empty seaworthy containers, which are issued to units and trans-shipped throughout theater, said Capt. Philip McDowell, commander of the 159th SOC and a Charlottesville, Va., native.

“During this deployment, Staff Sgt. Ryan was chosen above his peers to manage the Joint Base Balad Empty Container Collection Point, which is co-located with the Central Receiving and Shipping Point,” he said.

Ryan’s professionalism is unparalleled, and he has flawlessly accomplished his mission since he took

charge two months ago, said McDowell.

Ryan said his work was challenging.

“It has really given me a taste for what I would like to do as a mobility warrant officer, and I’m really appreciative of this learning opportunity,” he said.

Ryan said he was honored that his leaders placed their faith and confidence in him.

“I’m eager to accept the challenges which come with being a staff sergeant,” he said.

Sgt. 1st Class Stephen Latch, the 159th SOC CRSP noncommissioned

officer in charge and a Little Rock, Ark., native, said the command is fully confident that Ryan’s efforts were essential to the responsible drawdown of U.S. forces from Iraq.

“Staff Sgt. Ryan is an independent leader who we can trust to interface with container managers throughout theater,” Latch said.

In his spare time, Ryan works on his bachelor’s degree in business administration.

“Talk to (him) and you’ll find a leader who stays positive regardless of the weight of his responsibility, who has his eye on the next rank already,” McDowell said.

# SHOUT OUT!!!

Contact the Expeditionary Times for more information.

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

# Chaplain ministers after near-death experience

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. KEITH S. VAN KLOMPENBERG  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE  
MAREZ, Iraq – In addition to traditional services, Army chaplains provide a sounding board for dealing with difficult situations in both their personal lives and military careers.

Capt. Geoffrey Whitaker, the garrison chaplain at Contingency Operating Base Marez, Iraq, with the Regimental Fires Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), has used his own near-death experience and unlikely recovery to reach out to his Soldiers.

“I was a SEAL team officer in my former life,” he said.

Whitaker, a Murphy, N.C., native, said in 2003, during a tour in the Middle East, he had a speed rope accident and fell from a helicopter, landing on his head.

His skull was crushed and he was unconscious for 10 days. Even after life-saving brain surgery, Whitaker said he was given a 10 percent chance of surviving and an even smaller chance of recovering.

Whitaker said it was a miracle he did not break his neck, and credited much



Capt. Geoffrey Whitaker, the garrison chaplain at Contingency Operating Base Marez, Iraq, with the Regimental Fires Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Murphy, N.C., native, leads an Easter service April 4 at St. Elijah Monastery at COB Marez.

of it to his lifetime of wrestling.

“My doctors said, ‘Next to the hand of God, you need to be thankful for those neck muscles,’” he said.

Whitaker said he defied the odds and made a full recovery, returning to full duty with the SEALs within 12 months. He said he owes his recovery to the thousands of people praying

for him around the world.

“I’ve been a part of churches everywhere I’ve lived,” he said. “My friend network was global.”

After his recovery, Whitaker went back and read all the cards he had received in the hospital and did some math to find out how many people were praying for him. He estimated the num-

ber was more than 60,000.

“That’s really what this story is about,” he said.

Toward the end of 2004, Whitaker said he felt a calling to enter the chaplain’s corps for the Navy. When he was offered a job coaching wrestling at Tennessee Temple University, Whitaker transferred to the Army Reserves and moved to Tennessee.

He said he felt he owed something to wrestling, as it had once saved his life.

As a chaplain, Whitaker has been able to use his experience as a SEAL to reach Soldiers in need, said Cpl. Michael Hankins, a chaplain assistant with the RFS, 278th ACR and a Memphis, Tenn., native.

“I think his experience in the SEAL team really attracts Soldiers to him,” he said. “Having that experience kind of gives him a one-up on other chaplains.”

Hankins said coaching is also a huge part of Whitaker’s life, and he sees it in his counseling style.

“He uses that connection that he would normally have with his wrestlers ... to relate to his Soldiers,” he said.

Even though Whitaker has undergone life-changing events, Hankins said he is the same energetic man he always was.

“He’s still a warrior,” said Hankins, “but he’s a spiritual warrior now.”

**SEXUAL ASSAULT**

Now that she's out of the fight,  
who will protect their six?

**HURTS ONE, AFFECTS ALL**

248th Veterinary Services Company's winning poster for Task Force 1 Medical's Sexual Assault Awareness Poster Contest. The winning poster's design team is Chief Warrant Officer 3 Donald Smith, Staff Sgt. Michelle Pinson-Horne, Sgt. Vicki French and Sgt. Tiffany Dardy.

# 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.

# New weapon system keeps Soldiers safer on road

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The Common Remotely Operated Weapon Station helps keep Soldiers safe on the road by increasing accuracy and keeping the gunner inside of the protected vehicle.



Capt. Colby P. Tippens, the commander of F Company, 2nd Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Cookeville, Tenn., native, said he believes his gunners are safer now that his unit uses the CROWS on its Humvees.

“The gunner is way more protected,” he said. “It is not a (Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle), but you do not have a guy who is sitting up there behind a couple pieces of rolled steel and ballistic glass.”

Tippens said the three cameras used by the CROWS helps the accuracy of his gunners.

“This is a combat multiplier ... like having a sniper team,” he said. “This is an additional tool in our kit that we can pull out and use to help protect ourselves. This is absolutely an asset.”

Spc. Christopher D. Baird, a gunner

with F Company, 2/278th ACR out of McMinnville, Tenn., and a Franklin, Tenn., native, graduated at the top of the five-day CROWS training course.

Baird said he likes that the CROWS is compatible with four weapons, which allows him to choose the weapon that is appropriate for each mission. The CROWS supports the M-2 .50-caliber machine gun, the M-249 Squad Automatic Weapon, the M-240B machine gun and the MK-19-3 40 mm grenade machine gun.

“We like the M-2 on top because it is pretty reliable, same with the 240,” he said. “You’ve got that accuracy and reliability factor, and that is pretty important when you are outside the wire.”

Baird said another feature he appreciates is surveillance mode, in which the barrel of the weapon elevates and the cameras can be moved independently of the weapon.

“Our mission out there is to win hearts and minds,” he said. “(Surveillance mode) is definitely a good thing when you are rolling out there; you do not want to be flagging people all the time.”

Baird said overall he believes he is more effective and secure on the road when using the CROWS.

“It gives you a pretty good sense of security,” he said. “You are within the



Spc. Christopher D. Baird, a Franklin, Tenn., native, and Spc. Graham T. Binkley, an Ashland City, Tenn., native, both gunners with F Company, 2nd Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), attach the M-2 .50-caliber machine gun to the Common Remotely Operated Weapon System before a mission April 7 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

confinements of your armor, and you can look out pretty far even when it’s pitch black outside. We are pretty con-

fidant with our gunnery skills, but this weapon system takes all the thinking out of it.”

## Iraqi bankers, businessmen meet, discuss best practices

BY SPC. NAVEED ALI SHAH  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Iraqi bankers and businessmen gathered for a conference March 31 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, in an effort to increase knowledge and awareness of the services offered by Iraqi banks.

The conference was organized by banking officials with the 326th Financial Management Center, Army Central Command, as well as officials with the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad and the U.S. Treasury.

“The purpose of today’s event is to bring these banks and businesses together,” said Maj. Jack Nemceff, a contracting officer with the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing at JBB.

“We have much to share and learn from each other,” said Nemceff, a Bismarck, N.D., native.

Under the current financial system, Iraqi businesses are known to use cash, primarily U.S. dollars, as their

main operating method, said Capt. Shaun Miller, a joint banking officer with the 326th FMC and Army Central Command.

Using cash as a primary means of conducting transactions has several drawbacks, he said.

“Before, a vendor might be robbed or killed and the money used for terrorist operations,” said Firas Obaid, an electronic banking specialist with Task Force for Business and Stability Operations, out of Baghdad. “We have to start step by step, help them understand the threat situation. The goal is to have Iraqi banks transfer funds from dollars to dinars and give it to the vendors.”



U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Edward Wandrick

Iraqi banks and businesses gather for a conference March 31 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, in an effort to increase knowledge and awareness of the services offered by Iraqi banks. The conference was organized by banking officials with the 326th Financial Management Center, Army Central Command, as well as officials with the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad and the U.S. Treasury.

Miller, a Washington native, said the use of U.S. currency undermines that of the Iraqis and their government.

“People don’t trust the banking system, so it’s going to be a slow, steady process to rebuild it,” he said.

The conference’s organizers said they hoped to encourage Iraqi busi-

nesses to use Iraqi banks, and also move away from using U.S. currency for their transactions.

“Here at Balad, we want to get Iraqi business and banks together and build relationships,” said Miller. “We’ve been moving toward using dinar and using Iraqi banks. Right now, only about 9 percent of Iraqi people use their own banks.”

The Department of Defense’s Task Force for Business and Stability Operations is working with Iraqi contractors and vendors to facilitate relationships with Iraqi banks.

“We establish banks’ relationships with Iraqi banks and with international banks,” said Firas, a Baghdad native. “Then we can move to the next level of exchanging funds electronically.”

The ultimate goal for all involved is to have an integrated and fully functioning Iraqi financial center, said Miller.

“The benefits are enormous,” he said. “We can provide safety and accountability, and help stabilize the system. This is just the start.”

# Rough Terrain Container Handler operators manage container yard

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. RYAN TWIST  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq – Some Soldiers use video games to pass the time in Iraq, but one Soldier said he actually gets to play them at work.



Spc. Christopher A. Ward, a Rough Terrain Container Handler operator with the 611th Seaport Operations Company, said he tries to make the deployment as fun as he can, especially when operating the RT-240 Kalmar.

“It’s just like playing a little video game in there,” said Ward, a Nampa, Idaho, native. “You’ve got to hook up all the corners.”

Soldiers with the 611th SOC out of Fort Eustis, Va., 541st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) use the RT-240 Kalmar to move containers throughout the container yard at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq.

Sgt. Richard B. Laurey, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the container yard with the 611th SOC and a Washington native, said the Kalmars pick up 20 or 40-foot containers and stack them three high.

“The maximum capable weight is up



Soldiers with the 611th Seaport Operations Company out of Fort Eustis, Va., 541st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) operate the RT-240 Kalmar to unload a container from a trailer.

to 50,000 pounds,” he said. “Due to the conditions that they have been in and how long they have been out here, you (try to keep the weight) down to 30,000 to 35,000 pounds.”

Ward downloads the containers off the trailers and puts them into specific lanes to be shipped out later to their final destination. Some of the containers are empty, but others are full of units’ equipment and supplies, he said.

“When they need it, they will call or send a request in so we can upload it and have it shipped,” he said.

Ward said he performs preventive maintenance checks and services before, during and after he uses the vehicle.

Laurey said if the containers are waiting to be picked up by another convoy, they spend roughly five days in the container yard. A container that is waiting to be picked up by a local unit should sit in

the container yard no more than two or three days, he said.

“It gets pretty busy, but it can also be laid back,” said Ward. “A few convoys come in, download and upload. It can vary in numbers, from two connexes to 50 or 100 connexes, depending on where they’re coming from and where they’re going.”

Ward said he learned how to drive the Kalmar on the job, after arriving in Iraq.

“I’m getting a lot of experience,” he said. “It’s fun; it makes the day go by faster.”

Laurey said they sometimes encounter oil leaks due to the high heat and the constant running of the vehicles, or if the hoses crack. The computer can overheat without air conditioning inside the Kalmar, and sand sometimes gets inside the equipment.

“We have to keep a watchful eye and make sure we blow all the equipment out with air, (and) try to keep the door closed as much as possible,” he said.

Ward said the yard is not entirely flat, so they have to drive the Kalmar slowly and cautiously. He said the drivers have to keep in mind that the containers may not be fully packed and could be unbalanced.

“Those are the main things you’ve got to worry about, potholes and a lot of different variable in weight,” he said. “It’s time consuming but it’s just something that you’ve got to be very careful (with), because you’re holding about 4 to 8 tons.”

# Father patches son in ceremony

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. JOHN STIMAC  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – On April 8, a Tennessee father placed a combat patch on his son’s right shoulder in Iraq, celebrating his son’s service at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Second Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) has been in country for roughly one month, and its patching ceremony was held outside of the squadron’s headquarters building, where Col. Jeff H. Holmes, the regiment’s commander stationed at Contingency Operating Base Taji, Iraq, patched his son, Spc. Hulon Holmes, a gunner with 3rd Platoon, F Troop, 2-278th ACR and Murfreesboro, Tenn., native.

Jeff Holmes, also a Murfreesboro, Tenn., native, said it was an honor to put a combat patch on his son and he was glad he was able to make it for the ceremony.

“I haven’t been able to attend all the regiment’s subordinate combat patch ceremonies, but it was very special for me and I wanted to make sure I was here for it,” he said.

Jeff Holmes said these ceremonies typically happen after 30 days into a rotation.

“This is a good chance to commemorate a Soldier’s service in wartime and in theater,” he said.

Jeff Holmes said many of the Soldiers already have a combat patch from prior deployments, but for those who do not, they try to make this a significant event.

“It exhibits a lot of respect from one combat Veteran to the other, and a significant transition in one’s career to put one on,” he said.

Jeff Holmes said it is a rare occurrence that a father has a chance to put a combat patch on his son.

“I wanted to seize the moment,” he said.

This is Hulon Holmes’ first deployment, and he said receiving the combat

patch is special.

“It’s kind of an honor to be able to receive something like this, knowing that I’ve been here with these guys making a difference,” he said.

Hulon Holmes said it was an honor to be patched by his father.

“I didn’t expect that this would be able to happen,” he said.

“It was nice to see him in general, but for him to be able to put the patch on me, it was a great moment.”

Hulon Holmes said he is proud to serve under his father and could not ask for a better assignment. His father was patient



Col. Jeff H. Holmes, the commander of the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Murfreesboro, Tenn., native, places the combat patch on his son, Spc. Hulon Holmes, a gunner with 3rd Platoon, F Troop, 2nd Squadron, 278th ACR, also a Murfreesboro, Tenn., native, during a ceremony April 8 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

with him, he said, and never pressured him to join the military.

“He left that completely up to me,” said Hulon Holmes. “Eventually, it just kind of got to me. I knew it was something that I wanted and needed to do.”

# Soldiers track trailers at transfer point

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. RYAN TWIST  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE  
SPEICHER, Iraq – The  
Trailer Transfer Point at  
Contingency Operating  
Base Speicher, Iraq,  
opened for business  
March 15.

Soldiers there hold, load and unload trailers as they wait for units to come pick them up or convoys to transfer them to another destination, said 1st Lt. Jonathan A. Ackley, trailer transfer point officer in charge with the 611th Seaport Operations Company out of Fort Eustis, Va., 541st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Columbus, Ohio, native.

“We manage a little over 200 trailers,” said Ackley. “It can be anything from vehicles, pallets (or) containers.”

Sgt. Jackie D. Womack, the trailer transfer point noncommissioned officer in charge with the 611th SOC, said around four convoys, inbound and outbound, come through the yard every day, with an average of 30 pieces per convoy.



A Soldier with the 611th Seaport Operations Company out of Fort Eustis, Va., 541st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) drives through the Savi Signpost system, which helps Soldiers at the Trailer Transfer Point keep track of all inbound and outbound trailers April 3 at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq.

“We’re generally pretty busy,” said Womack, an Emerald, Texas, native. “When we did our count for March, we had over 350 (transfer movement requests) and an average of about

five items on each – right around 1,700 pieces of equipment in just one month.”

Spc. Stefan C. Harris, a truck driver with the 611th SOC and a Clarksburg,

W.V., native, said they verify the cargo when it comes in, to maintain accountability of each piece that passes through the yard.

“(The Savi Signpost system) helps us out a lot,” said Harris. “Sometimes, we get cargo in that we don’t have paperwork for. We can then check the (radio frequency identification) tags that are on the cargo to see what TMR it goes with.”

The Savi Signpost system is an interrogator system that tracks the RF ID tags as they enter and exit the TTP, Ackley said. The 28 systems at Speicher, Joint Base Balad, Victory Base Complex and Marez, cost roughly \$98,000 total.

Harris said the unit also ensures the trailers are put in the correct area, lined up neatly.

The TTP Soldiers verify each outgoing connex’s information to ensure it is headed to the right place, he said. They then ensure each connex is secured properly.

“I really feel like I’m supporting the rest of the Army out here,” said Harris. “I make sure the units get the stuff they need. We make sure that the trailers are fully mission-capable, ready to go.”

# Father, son reunite in Iraq

BY PFC. LISA A. COPE  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF AND  
CAPT. JON-ROY SLOAN  
278TH ACR PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – A Tennessee father went the extra mile, Feb. 21, to be with his son on his birthday.

Capt. Joseph E. Wise, the personnel officer with 2nd Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), convoyed from Joint Base Balad, Iraq, to Camp Liberty, Iraq, to be with his son, Spc. Thomas Hubbard, a light-wheel vehicle mechanic with the 38th Engineer Company, 2nd Infantry Division, on Hubbard’s 21st birthday.

Hubbard, a Mount Juliet, Tenn., native, had a two-day notice of his father’s intended visit and took the day off of work, greeting his father when he arrived at Camp Liberty.

Wise, also a Mount Juliet, Tenn., native, had not seen his son in more than a year, as Hubbard is now stationed in Fort Lewis, Wash., and said the two had a lot to catch up on, in-

cluding the birth of Hubbard’s son.

“We probably stayed up until two o’clock in the morning reminiscing,” said Wise. “He lives in Washington and I live in Tennessee, so I do not get much of a chance to see him. We wound up talking forever. He has a baby boy that is just a year old.”

Wise said he appreciated the effort Hubbard’s unit made to allow the pair to spend time together.

“The unit was very hospitable and accommodating,” he said. “I met his commander and his friends. Then I got to see where he worked, and later the next morning, we got to visit one of Saddam (Hussein)’s old palaces.”

Hubbard said a desire to emulate his father was a factor in his decision to join the Army.

“I always kind of wanted to follow in his footsteps,” he said. “We argued about it a little because I wanted to go into the infantry, but he talked me into doing something that I could use when I got out of the Army.”

Both father and son said they were thankful for the time together and hope to do it again in the future.

Wise said, “It was one of those days I’ll cherish for the rest of my life.”



Courtesy photo

Capt. Joseph E. Wise, the personnel officer with 2nd Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and his son, Spc. Thomas Hubbard, a light-wheel vehicle mechanic with the 38th Engineer Company, 2nd Infantry Division, both Mount Juliet, Tenn., natives, pose in front of one of the Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicles. Wise rode in to visit his son for his 21st birthday, Feb. 21 at Camp Liberty, Iraq.

# 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**

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

Last week's answers

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

# TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. Where is the lowest point of the western hemisphere?
2. Which is the only U.S. state to have been an independent republic?
3. Which state with access to an ocean has the shortest coastline?
4. Which park in South Dakota has the highest number of bison after Yellowstone?
5. In which state is the Yosemite National Park?

1. Death Valley, Calif. 2. Texas 3. New Hampshire 4. Custer State Park 5. California

## JB BALAD WORSHIP SERVICES

**TRADITIONAL - Sunday**

0200 Air Force Hospital Chapel  
 1030 Freedom Chapel (West side)  
 1400 Air Force Hospital Chapel  
 2000 Air Force Hospital Chapel

**GOSPEL - Sunday**

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

**CONTEMPORARY - Sunday**

1030 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)  
 1100 Castle Heights (Bldg. 4155)  
 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. 4155)

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

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

**MASS - Sunday**

0830 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)  
 1100 Provider Chapel 1230 Air Force Hospital  
**Thursday** 1100 Air Force Hospital  
**Wed., Fri.** 1700 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

**\*Saturday**

1600-1645 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6) Confessions or by appointment

**JEWISH SHABBAT SERVICES- Friday**

1800 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

**PAGAN/WICCAN FELLOWSHIP - Thursday**

1900 Provider Annex  
**Saturday** 1900 The Bat Cave

**GREEK ORTHODOX - Sunday**

0900 Provider Annex

**GENERAL - Sunday**

0900 Provider Chapel 0900 Freedom Chapel

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CALL:**

**Gilbert Chapel: 443-7703**  
**Provider Chapel: 483-4107**  
**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. Tue., Thu., - 2 p.m. Boot Camp: Sunday- 8:45 a.m. Tue., Thu., - 7 p.m. Power Abs: Mon., Tue., - 8 p.m. Friday- 9 p.m.	Monday- 8 p.m., 8:30 p.m. 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. <b>WEST REC- REATION CENTER</b> Green Bean Karaoke: Sun., Wed., 7:30pm 9-ball tourney: Monday- 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. <b>WEST REC- REATION CENTER</b> 3 on 3 basketball tourney: Saturday- 7:30 p.m. 6 on 6 volleyball tourney: Friday- 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>CIRCUIT GYM</b> Floor hockey: Mon., Wed., Fri., - 8-10 p.m.
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# UPCOMING SPORTS ON AFN



**Thursday 04/15/10**

2010 Stanley Cup Playoffs-First Round, Game 1: Teams TBD, Tape Delayed 12 a.m. AFN/ sports  
 Philadelphia Union @ Toronto FC, Live 4 p.m. AFN/xtra  
 2010 Stanley Cup Playoffs-First Round, Game 1: Teams TBD, Live 7 p.m. AFN/sports  
 Arizona Diamondbacks @ Los Angeles Dodgers, Live 7 p.m. AFN/xtra

**Friday 04/16/10**

Chicago White Sox @ Toronto Blue Jays, Tape Delayed 12 a.m. AFN/sports  
 Houston Astros @ Chicago Cubs, Live 11 a.m. AFN/sports  
 Tampa Bay Rays @ Boston Red Sox, Live 4 p.m. AFN/xtra  
 2010 Stanley Cup Playoffs-First Round: Teams TBD, Live 7 p.m. AFN/ sports  
 Detroit Tigers @ Seattle Mariners, Live 7 p.m. AFN/xtra

**Saturday 04/17/10**

Game of the Week: Orlando Predators @ Jacksonville Sharks, Tape Delayed 12 a.m. AFN/sports  
 2010 Stanley Cup Playoffs-First Round: Teams TBD, Live 10 a.m. AFN/prime Atlantic  
 2010 NBA Playoffs-First Round, Game 1: Teams TBD, Live 4 p.m. AFN/sports  
 2010 NBA Playoffs-First Round, Game 1: Teams TBD, Live 7:30 p.m. AFN/sports

**Sunday 04/18/10**

Strikeforce Nashville: Dan Henderson vs Jake Shields, Tape Delayed 1 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 Colorado Rockies @ Atlanta Braves, Tape Delayed 4 a.m. AFN/ sports  
 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series: Samsung Mobile 500, Live 10 a.m. AFN/xtra  
 AVP Beach Volleyball: Women's Final (Ft. Lauderdale, FL), Live 2:30 a.m. AFN/xtra

**Monday 04/19/10**

Sunday Night Baseball: New York Mets @ St. Louis Cardinals, Tape Delayed 3:30 a.m. AFN/sports  
 2010 NBA Playoffs-First Round: Teams TBD, Live 4 p.m. AFN/sports  
 2010 Stanley Cup Playoffs-First Round: Teams TBD, Live 4 p.m. AFN/xtra  
 2010 Stanley Cup Playoffs-First Round: Teams TBD, Live 6:30 p.m. AFN/xtra

**Tuesday 04/20/10**

Monday Night Baseball: Chicago Cubs @ New York Mets, Tape Delayed 12 a.m. AFN/sports  
 2010 NBA Playoffs-First Round: Teams TBD, Tape Delayed 6:30 a.m. AFN/sports  
 2010 NBA Playoffs-First Round: Teams TBD, Live 5 p.m. AFN/sports

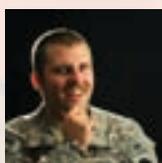
**Wednesday 04/21/10**

2010 NBA Playoffs-First Round: Teams TBD, Tape Delayed 12 a.m. AFN/sports  
 Kansas City Royals @ Toronto Blue Jays, Live 9:30 a.m. AFN/sports  
 2010 Stanley Cup Playoffs-First Round: Teams TBD, Live 4 p.m. AFN/xtra  
 2010 NBA Playoffs-First Round: Teams TBD, Live 7:30 p.m. AFN/sports

# Arts & Entertainment

## 'How to Train Your Dragon' an action-packed, fire-breathing good time

BY SGT. JAYSON A. HOFFMAN  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



If you like charming humor and adventure fit for a Viking, then "How to Train Your Dragon" is the flick for you.

This film proves that Pixar isn't the only company producing animated films aimed at children and adults alike.

The story is about a Viking village that is constantly attacked by dragons, and their way of life is built around battling the dragons to feed everyone in the village.

Hiccup (Jay Baruchel) is a young

Viking who doesn't quite fit in with the rest of the village no matter how hard he tries. During one battle with the dragons, he sneaks away from the blacksmith shop he works at and captures a Night Fury, the most feared and misunderstood of all the dragon breeds.

When he goes to give the beast the killing blow, he finds that he can't harm the injured creature. Soon, the two become best friends and they change the entire way of life for both dragons and the Vikings.

The voice work on the film was great. Gerard Butler ("300") played Stoick, the fierce village leader and father of Hiccup. His character had battle cries reminiscent of his character Leonidas from "300."

Craig Ferguson ("The Late Late Show with Craig Ferguson") does great work as the comedic Gobber. He brings a level of heart to all the Viking machismo in the film.

Baruchel ("She's Out of My League") makes Hiccup a misunderstood, big-hearted Viking who just wants to find his place in the village. This is very similar to the role Baruchel played on the short lived Judd Apatow TV show "Undeclared." Although not uncharted territory for the actor, it was still some solid voice work that made the film.

Jonah Hill ("Superbad"), Christopher Mintz-Plasse ("Role Models") and America Ferrera ("Ugly Betty") also provided great supportive vocal

work. They gave the characters variety and quirky charm.

The graphics were stellar. There were parts in the film where it looked like real life. I won't say the characters looked like real people, they were clearly cartoon characters, but they looked like they could be real objects.

The settings were great too, but there were definitely flying scenes and landscapes that reminded me a lot of "Avatar." However, I don't think it took anything away from the story.

"How to Train Your Dragon" is not great, like "WALL-E" or "Shrek" were great, but it is really good, and anyone interested in some cute laughs and a lot of action involving Vikings and dragons should go a watch this movie.

## Dead Weather's sound alive on 'Horehound'

BY PFC. BRAIN VORCE  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES CONTRIBUTOR

The warped blues/rock that supports Allison Mosshart when she says, "You got my attention, you got it all," on the opening track to Horehound, "60 Feet Tall," certainly raises the listeners' awareness.

Featuring Mosshart on vocals, Jack Lawrence on bass, guitarist Dean Fertita, and Jack White of White Stripes and Raconteurs fame on drums, The Dead Weather attacks with thick, bludgeoning, bottom heavy blues.

White isn't the only member with a hard rock pedigree; Lawrence played with him in The Raconteurs, while Fer-

tita hails from Queens of the Stone Age. Each member has his or her own original band, but they seem to all bring their willingness to rock and a love of Led Zeppelin to the table.

The influence of the mighty, seminal LZ can be heard throughout "Horehound," whether it be the slow crawl to the netherworld in "So Far From Your Weapon," or the dusty, downtrodden shuffle of "Will There be Enough Water?"

That's not to say that The Dead Weather is a slave to its influences, rather that they use meaty, bluesy rock 'n' roll as a template and overall aesthetic. This gives the album a discernable cohesion, as do the tough, confrontational lyrics.

As a vocalist, Mosshart is a pleasure, spitting just the right amount of bile into the words. She recalls female rockers of the past like Joan Jett and Sonic Youth's Kim Gordon. Mosshart has more attitude than many male rockers.

Lawrence and White's fat rhythms give Fertita enough space to wallow in bluesy solos and blast off into cosmic guitar fantasias. It's Fertita and his myriad, schizophrenic guitar effects that really give the album its character. He supplies "Rocking Horse" with a slinky, '60s-style lick and feeds "Bone House" with ethereal noodling reminiscent of Rage Against the Machine guitarist Tom Morello.

The record isn't perfect.

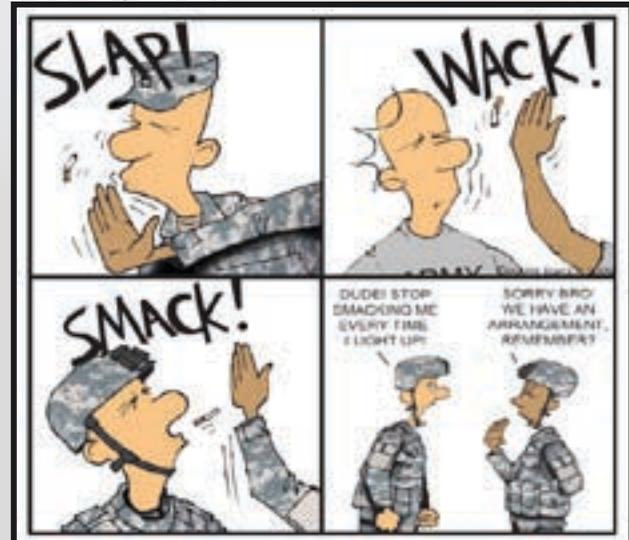
The cymbals are often too loud and splash instead of crash.

A couple of tracks sound simplistic in their chord progressions.

Although it features more of Fertita's otherworldly showmanship, "3 Birds" is an inessential instrumental.

These are minor quibbles, because this album takes the classic rock sound of Led Zeppelin and just has fun with it. The Dead Weather takes its adopted blues aesthetic and delivers enough stylistic differences to keep the sound fresh for a full album. With fiery hard rock, cool blues, and tough demeanor – and frontwoman – The Dead Weather's "Horehound" is a worthy addition to any rock fan's record collection.

### PVF MURPHY



### Sustainer Reel Time Theater

**Wednesday, April 14**  
5 p.m. Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief  
8 p.m. Clash Of The Titans

**Thursday, April 15**  
5 p.m. Clash Of The Titans  
8 p.m. Cop Out

**Friday, April 16**  
2 p.m. TBA  
5 p.m. TBA  
8:30 p.m. TBA

**Saturday, April 17**  
2 p.m. TBA  
5 p.m. TBA  
8 p.m. TBA

**Sunday, April 18**  
2 p.m. TBA  
5 p.m. TBA  
8 p.m. TBA

**Monday, April 19**  
5 p.m. TBA  
8 p.m. TBA

**Tuesday, April 20**  
5 p.m. TBA  
8 p.m. TBA

**Wednesday, April 21**  
5 p.m. TBA  
8 p.m. TBA



# PHOTOS AROUND IRAQ

U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Adellita Mead



Sgt. 1st Class John Zanella keeps a watchful eye on the open field March 27 at Al Madinia, Iraq. Zanella is the noncommissioned officer in charge of the Guardians Maneuver Detachment, 17th Fires Brigade.

# IRAQ

U.S. Army photo by Spc Anderson Savoy



(Left) Sgt. 1st Class James Young with 1st Battalion, 37th Field Artillery, 2nd Infantry Division and a Slater, Mo., native, stands in the rubble foundation of a house March 14 at Khafaja, Iraq. Soldiers from the unit provided security for members from the U.S. Embassy, United Nations, Provincial Reconstruction Teams, International Organization for Migration and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to check on the progress of houses built for internal displaced persons.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jillian Munyon

Soldiers with Mortar Platoon, B Troop, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade, 1st Infantry Division cross through a stream to get to Checkpoint 13 March 4 near the Sinjar Sub-District, Iraq. Soldiers check on the progress of the Iraqi Security Forces at the checkpoint.



U.S. Army photo by Spc Anderson Savoy

(Above) Members of the United Nations talk to Iraqi leaders in a local town March 14 at Khafaja, Iraq. Soldiers with 1st Battalion, 37th Field Artillery, 2nd Infantry Division provided security for members from the U.S. Embassy, United Nations, Provincial Reconstruction Team, International Organization for Migration, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and United States Agency for International Development workers to check on the progress of houses built for internally displaced persons.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jillian Munyon

Staff Sgt. Laurel Holl with 855th Military Police Company, 49th Military Police Brigade walks to the top of a hill March 9 at Sinjar, Iraq. Her team met with the Iraqi Police and locals to discuss the outcome of the elections.

# NEWS AROUND IRAQ

## Academy's first English language class graduates

BAGHDAD – Iraqi students, 20 officers and one enlisted, from the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Defence, graduated from the Iraqi International Academy's first English course March 25 in Baghdad.

The Iraqi International Academy was developed by the MoD with the vision to create an institution of higher learning for Iraqi government employees. Two Iraqi Instructors from the Defence Language Institute of Iraq taught the English class, and were augmented by United States Forces – Iraq advisers who helped enhance the teachers' techniques, methodology and pedagogy.

Lt. Gen. Husain Duhi, the deputy chief of staff for learning, said in the former regime, after an officer learned to speak English or used the term "OK," he would be classified as a member of the "OK group." This was a deterrent to speaking the English language.

"For our Army to be successful, it is very important to make use of positive behavior," said Duhi. "The only way to learn from others is to know their language."

The Iraqi government has placed a high priority on the success and continuance of the Iraqi International Academy.

"The Iraqi government's vision for training is a phenomenal one, and your country will move forward," said Maj. Gen. James M. McDonald, assistant deputy commanding general with USF-I, advising and training.

A \$30 million project for building a new campus for the Iraqi International Academy is scheduled for completion by September 2011.

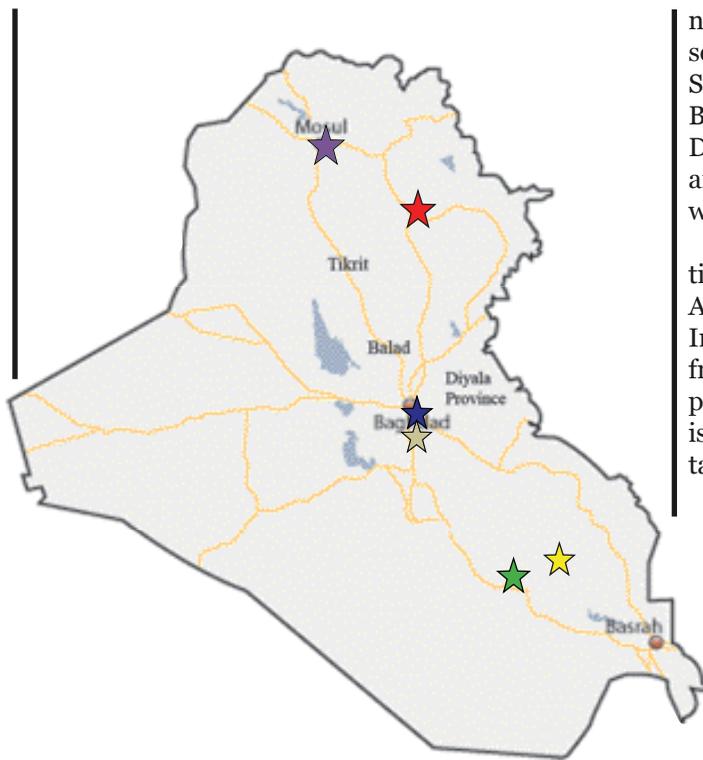
Until then, the English class will continue in a temporary classroom. The curriculum in the new facility will encompass not only the English language but the study of strategic thought, security, cadre training and all areas of public administration.

"I offer congratulations to the graduates," said Duhi. "And I encourage anyone who finds the opportunity to study (English) because it is a very important tool."

## Iraqi Security Forces disrupt al-Qaeda's financial, extortion networks

BAGHDAD – Recent joint Iraqi-U.S. security operations have resulted in the deaths or arrests of at least six suspected senior al-Qaeda in Iraq leaders who contributed to funding the terrorist group by their involvement in a highly organized extortion and assassination ring based in Mosul, in northern Iraq.

Each joint security operation was conducted pursuant to a warrant issued by an Iraqi judge, in coordina-



tion with the Security Agreement and in coordination with the Iraqi government.

The six captured or killed suspected AQI leaders included the overall AQI emir of northern Iraq, the economic security emir, the minister of oil, the deputy minister of oil, the Mosul oil extortion emir, and the wali of Mosul. Without these individuals in the AQI network, it is expected that AQI's ability to operate and restructure will be hindered.

The overall AQI emir of northern Iraq was killed March 18 after firing a handgun at a joint security team composed of 3rd Brigade, 1st Division, Iraqi Army Soldiers and U.S. advisers. Identified as Khalid Muhammad Hasan Shallub al-Juburi, also known as Shaykh Khalid, the suspected overall AQI emir of northern Iraq is responsible for distributing AQI's finances collected in that region in addition to playing an integral role in approving AQI operations and attacks.

On March 23, a joint security team composed of the 3rd Brigade, 1st Division, Iraqi Army and U.S. advisers shot and killed Abu Ahmad Al-Afri, also known as Abu Marwa, who was the suspected AQI economic security emir, after he fired a pistol at the security team. It is believed that al-Afri's duties in AQI included receiving and accounting for all money collected by subordinate units of the terrorist group in northern Iraq. In addition, Al-Afri has a long history of involvement in extortion to fund terrorist activities throughout northern Iraq and had been arrested previously for these activities in 2007.

A separate security operation conducted the morning of March 24 by the 9th Iraqi Army and U.S. advisers netted the arrests of 12 people, including the suspected top three oil-extortion personalities for AQI.

The top three extortion personalities arrested by the 9th Iraqi Army included the suspected minister of oil for AQI, the deputy minister of oil and the oil extortion emir for Mosul. In addition to managing the extortion of oil companies and small businesses throughout northern Iraq, these three individuals are believed to have maintained close associations with the top leaders of AQI and their couriers. Since at least 2005, the suspected AQI oil minister is known to have held senior level AQI leadership positions, including emir of Haditha and overall Anbar emir.

The suspected wali of Mosul was killed the after-

noon of March 24 after firing a handgun at a joint security team of 3rd Brigade, 1st Division Iraqi Army Soldiers and U.S. advisers. Intelligence indicated that Bashar Khalaf Husyan Ali al Jaburi, also known as Dhafir and Abu Huda, was involved in coordinating and approving attacks and assassinations, many of which were related to AQI's extortion operations.

The capture of all six AQI extortion and assassination network leaders in the last two weeks may disrupt AQI operations and prevent future attacks throughout Iraq. This is primarily because the money collected from extortion, and the extortion of oil companies in particular, comprises the bulk of AQI's income, which is subsequently used to fund the terrorist group's attacks against the Iraqi people.

## Army engineers begin construction on Mosul Cardiac Care Center

MOSUL, Iraq – Residents of Nineveh province, Iraq, have two choices when seeking medical treatment for serious heart-related disease. Patients needing cardiac care must either travel to Baghdad or seek treatment in a foreign country.

However, help is now on the way for those residents with the recent revitalization of the Ibn Sena Cardiac Surgery Center project in Mosul.

Iraqi workers are now on site in Mosul to complete a project designed to provide the only fully functioning cardiac care center in Iraq other than Baghdad. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region District, is serving as the construction management partner for the \$1.4 million project.

The project represents the number one priority for the Nineveh Provincial Government and Ministry of Health, said Maj. Tong Smith, officer in charge of the Mosul Resident Office. Smith said the surgery center has an inauspicious history dating back to 2007 with three different attempts made to bring the project across the finish line. The first attempt left a completed foundation, a solid superstructure and interior duct work for the Iraqi-owned Al Hassan Company to complete the proposed 10-month project.

The cardiac center, which is attached to the existing Mosul Hospital, was designed by architects from Mosul University.

The scope of work for the project includes the construction of four operating theaters with separate anesthesia rooms, an intensive care ward, patient recovery rooms, a nurse's station, changing rooms, doctor's offices, teaching rooms and a conference room. The center will also house a laboratory, designed in accordance with military medical standards and hospital staff requirements, and a fully functioning pharmacy.

The construction design includes the installation of a closed circuit television system in the operating theater allowing doctors the ability to observe live video feeds from on-going surgeries. The contractor plans to install security cameras in the hallways, entrances and exits, teaching rooms and nursing station with the capacity to store 48 hours of recorded video feeds.

The center will also have a modern computer network, including a satellite receiver/transmitter and a

modern telephone and public address system.

To protect the cardiac center against fires, a modern detection system will be installed that includes smoke detectors, pull stations, enunciators and a central control panel. The fire detection system is designed to shutdown the center's ventilation system if a fire is identified.

A generator farm will provide uninterrupted electrical power to the hospital during disruptions in the national electrical power grid.

A reverse osmosis water filtration system is planned for the operating theater to ensure that an antiseptic environment is maintained. To guard against water shortage problems, contractors will install a reserve water system capable of storing enough water to keep the operating room functioning for three full days.

Although the current design plans calls for a single story building, the original foundation will be able to support future expansion in the form of a second floor to the facility.

The project is scheduled to be completed early 2011.

Funding for the \$1.4 million cardiac care center is provided through the Economic Support Fund.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq has completed thousands of reconstruction projects in partnership with the Government of Iraq. Since 2004, USACE has completed 5,257 projects throughout Iraq valued at more than \$9.1 billion, and has more than 250 projects ongoing. The overall reconstruction effort in Iraq provides jobs for more than 20,000 Iraqis.

## Army engineers mark transition as Gulf Region South furls flag

ALI BASE, Iraq – The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Transatlantic Division completed its final transformation from three engineer districts in Iraq to one by casing the Gulf Region South District's colors during a discontinuation ceremony March 29 in the chapel at Contingency Operating Base Adder, in Tallil, Iraq.

Brig. Gen. Kendall Cox, Transatlantic Division commander and United States Forces – Iraq engineer director, said the ceremony marks the conclusion of the mission for GRS.

"Simply put, it means success, amazing success here in the south, specifically throughout the GRS area of responsibility," said Cox. "Today's ceremony marked the conclusion of the mission for the GRS Headquarters but in no way ends their mission in support to the nation of Iraq, the U.S. and Iraqi Security Forces but most importantly for the people of the nine provinces here in southern Iraq."

Cox told the audience the GRS completed what he considered to be a monstrous program led by tremendous leaders and accomplished by a superior workforce. The district completed more than 1,300 projects valued at \$4 billion in the last six years and April 2 marked an additional 116 projects under construction valued at \$528 million, with a total of more than \$900 million to be completed in the next 12 to 15 months.

Col. Jeffrey Knippel, commander of the Gulf Region South District, said the ceremony also marks a milestone that signifies success.

"GRS was created because of a great need to provide hope and stability for the Iraqi people, a need so large that from the US Army Corps of Engineers perspective it was determined that three engineering districts were needed to manage its overall execution," said Knippel.

Knippel said the creation of the districts was a monumental task in its own right.

"The provision of facilities and infrastructure to ensure the self-sufficiency and security of Iraq's new democratic government and its people framed the parameters of the GRS mission," he said.

He said for almost six and a half years, GRS tenaciously labored to provide military, police, judicial, water, power, sewer, medical and educational facilities across southern Iraq to promote self-sufficiency and security.

"New Army bases and training camps to care for the Iraqi Army, multiple court houses to process the Rule of Law, hundreds of water compact units to provide clean drinking water, refurbished power plants to provide whole cities electricity, complete city sewer systems and treatment plants to remove the breeding ground of disease, major surgical hospitals including a state-of-the-art children's hospital to care for the Iraqi's sick and scores of elementary and vocational schools to educate the Iraqi people – are but a few of the fruits of GRS's labor that dot the Iraqi landscape," he said.

Knippel also gave credit for GRS' success to the many contractors whose support for security, life support, and technical services were invaluable to accomplishing the mission.

"... It must be specifically noted that it wouldn't have been possible without the 130 Iraqi engineers and construction representatives, almost two thirds of the GRS total technical staff, whose contributions alone deserve celebration," he said.

With the inactivation of the Gulf Region South District, the Corps of Engineers will have one remaining district in Iraq to finish the reconstruction mission. The Gulf Region District is headquartered in Baghdad under the command of Col. Dionysios Anninos.

"The Corps made history while others are writing about it," said Anninos. "Today is yet another event for others to write about while we collectively shape the future of Iraq."

"Just nine months ago, there were three district headquarters and a division headquarters in Iraq. Today there is one district headquarters in Iraq. Despite these changes, as we execute our responsible drawdown plan, we continue to deliver quality facilities and services to the citizens of Iraq and continue to develop their construction and architecture industry. Today we are coming together, sharing together, working together and we will succeed together."

The GRD is under the command and control of the newly established Transatlantic Division, out of Winchester, Va. The new division unifies all Corps of Engineers programs in the U.S. Central Command operations area -- 20 countries from Egypt through the Arabian Gulf to Central Asia -- and includes two districts in Afghanistan.

In support of the end of reconstruction efforts under combat operations and the beginning of reconstruction under stability operations, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Gulf Region South District cased its colors.

## Army engineers turn over Iraqi Army post in ancient Iraqi city

UR, Iraq – With a snip of the ceremonial ribbon, Dhi Qar's Gov. Aziz Kadum Alwan Al Ogheli and Brig. Gen. Hassen, the Ur location commander, welcomed more than 300 guests to view the \$27 million renovation and new construction at Camp Ur Location Command and Regional Training Center March 28 near Nasariyah, Iraq.

Col. Jeffrey Knippel, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region South District commander, said completion of the location command represents

principles from the area's historic past.

"More than 4,000 years ago, just a few miles from here, your ancestors celebrated the completion of the Ziggurat of Ur," said Knippel. "At that time, its completion and the city itself represented a time of peace, prosperity and progress. In the same way today, the completion of this Location Command and Training Center represents a step towards peace, prosperity and progress for the people of Iraq."

The project provides sustainment and life support for roughly 2,700 Iraqi Army Soldiers, as well as training facilities.

"What stands before us today are 48 facilities, 22 barracks to house 2,700 troops complete with showers and latrines," Knippel said. "It also provides command and associated support facilities for the Iraqi Army. There are two dining facilities with the capacity to feed 1,000 personnel during a sitting. There are nine administrative buildings such as headquarters, medical and classroom and 15 other miscellaneous utility buildings and force protection facilities"

Work on the installation included the repair and upgrade of the existing potable water and waste water treatment systems, an upgrade of the site's electrical system, construction of new roads and parking lots and construction of new billets.

The contract also called for refurbishing the existing medical and dining facility, providing enhancements at the fire station and constructing new dining facility and latrines.

The \$27 million ITAM-Army construction and renovation project was awarded to ALMCO Company in September 2008 and was completed in 18 months by a team of 800 employees working two shifts.

Knippel asked the guests to take a moment to reflect on the significance of the day's events.

"I ask all to take a moment and realize that what stands before you today is more than just some ground with some buildings, in some way it represents a modern Ziggurat dedicated to the commitment and teamwork of many hard working individuals," Knippel said. "A monument that we can all be proud of as it reflects virtues we all hold dear."

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq has completed thousands of reconstruction projects in partnership with the government of Iraq. Since 2004, USACE has completed 5,257 projects throughout Iraq valued at more than \$9.1 billion, and has more than 250 projects ongoing. The overall reconstruction effort in Iraq currently provides jobs for more than 20,000 Iraqis.

## Suspected high-value terrorist detained

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq – Iraqi Security Forces, with assistance from 1st Armored Division Soldiers, out of Fort Bliss, Texas, conducted a joint operation that resulted in the arrest of five suspected terrorists March 22 near Kirkuk.

All of the alleged terrorists captured during the patrol are being detained by ISF. One of the captured individuals is suspected of coordinating an attack on a joint service station and is wanted for his involvement in an improvised explosive device cell.

Iraqi and U.S. forces conduct joint operations in accordance with the Security Agreement and in coordination with the Iraqi government to target terrorists seeking to disrupt the security and stability of Iraq.

# Phantom Support



U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Jennette Lucas



(Left) Master Sgt. Richard Flores the maintenance control noncommissioned officer with Headquarters Platoon, 1st Maintenance Company, 260th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Victoria, Texas, native, checks a piece of equipment as a part of a complete inventory for his maintenance shop in preparation for the redeployment of the company and all of its equipment.



U.S. Army photo by Capt. Ralph D. Dempsey

(Above) Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jennifer Allen, with the Reset and Redistribution branch of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and Marques Jones, with the 402nd Army Field Support Brigade, conduct container inspections at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, in support of Operation Clean Sweep. The 13th ESC is conducting Operation Clean Sweep to identify excess material in the Iraq Joint Operations Area to facilitate the responsible drawdown of personnel and equipment from Iraq.



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

Staff Sgt. John Jarrell, a Cleveland, Ohio native and Pfc. Brent Erickson, a Woodstock, Va., native, work on Heavy Equipment Transporter trailers.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. John Stimac

(Above) Color guard members of the 49th Transportation Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), out of Fort Hood Texas and the 14th Transportation Battalion, 15th Sust. Bde., 13th ESC, out of Vicenza, Italy, begin to exit the transfer of authority ceremony held at Joint Base Balad, Iraq on April 3 after the 14th Trans. Bn. uncased its' colors and took over the mission in Iraq.



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

Soldiers and civilians tour the grounds at the St. Elijah Monastery April 2 at Contingency Operating Base Marez, Iraq. Tours are offered every Friday at St. Elijah, the oldest Christian monastery in Iraq.