

C USF-I CHRONICLE

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MPs get Iraqi
Highway Patrol
Ready to Roll





Sgt. Matthew Glassford, of the 217th Military Police Company, Alabama National Guard, supervises two Iraqi Highway Patrol officers during a training scenario in Baghdad, Iraq, March 17. The training includes conducting traffic stops, writing tickets and serving search warrants.



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Soldiers help Iraqis make electrical advancements



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Ohio Scout NCO leading the way



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SoI families get assistance from U.S. Army medics

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USF-I Commander
Gen. Raymond Odierno

USF-I Deputy Commander (Operations)
Lt. Gen. Robert W. Cone

Public Affairs Officer
Col. Ben Danner

Public Affairs Sergeant Major
Sgt. Maj. James M. Posten

Editor/Layout and Design
Ms. Renea L. Everage

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Sgt. 1st Class Phillip Neal, non-commissioned officer in charge of the 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division's legal office, counts out money to be paid to an Iraqi landowner for leasing land the U.S. military. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Bryce Dubee)



Legal office settles old debts

Sgt. 1st Class Phillip Neal, noncommissioned officer in charge of the 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division's legal office, counts out money to pay to an Iraqi woman for her land, which had been leased by the U.S. military.



Story and photos by Sgt. Bryce Dubea
USD-C Public Affairs

As U.S. forces proceed on course with the responsible drawdown of forces in Iraq, Soldiers in the 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division legal office are working hard to tie up loose ends among Iraqi citizens who are owed compensation from the U.S. government.

The Army has programs in place designed to address any claims filed by Iraqi citizens, including property damage, injury or loss of life, and even lease payments to landowners for land used by the U.S. military.

For example, if a 20-ton Stryker accidentally backs into an Iraqi citizen's car, the drivers can't exactly exchange information and let the insurance companies take care of it.

Instead, the citizen can file a claim with the military, which is then processed and paid out by military legal professionals.

On March 10, members of the 4th SBCT legal team travelled to Abu Ghraib near Camp Liberty to pay claims they had received and pick up new claims that had been filed.

On that day, the legal Soldiers were especially excited because, in addition to regular claims payments, they

had a chance to do something that hadn't been done in a while.

"We've gone out on numerous claims missions," said Sgt. 1st Class Phillip Neal, the brigade's legal office non-commissioned officer in charge. "What makes this one special is that this is the first time we've actually gotten to pay a lease claim for land that we've occupied and have a lease for, for the time period that we've occupied it."

When U.S. forces launched the 2007 "Surge" offensive, aimed at rooting out insurgents across Iraq, the increase in forces and expanded U.S. presence meant the Soldiers had to set up combat outposts and joint security stations in new areas, oftentimes taking over homes and property owned by Iraqis with the agreement that they would reimburse the property owner at a later date.

"We have the ability to help others," said Capt. Alex Arca, the brigade claims, contract and fiscal law attorney, who explained that the average damage claim takes about two to four weeks to process, while claims for land leases can take more than a year.

This was the first time in several years that the Army has paid out land lease claims to Iraqi landowners, with the 4th SCBT legal team paying out roughly \$225,000 to claimants. And while some of the lease claimants expressed frustration in the length of the process, most appeared happy to finally be receiving payment and left

with a smile on their face.

"It's a great accomplishment for us personally to actually be able to pay these people out," said Sgt. Corbin Reiff, the claims NCOIC. "... the legal office of 4-2, was able to get something done that no one had been able to get done before, which is something that makes you feel real proud."

The legal office set a goal of trying to process about 25 claims a month, not an easy task when they are responsible for nearly all of western Baghdad to Fallujah, and north past the city of Taji.

"We are the largest intake point and the largest purveyor of money when it comes to claims," said Reiff proudly. "No one's bigger than 4-2 SBCT."

Securing funding to pay for the leases was the most time consuming part of the entire process, said Scott



Mason, the acting chief of real estate for the U.S. Forces-Iraq J7, who also travelled out to Abu Ghraib to assist in processing the lease claims.

Mason praised the 4th SBCT legal office and said he was truly impressed by their hard work and dedication to processing the lease claims.

"Everyone said it would take six to eight months, but Sgt. 1st Class Neal and his guys did it in a little over a month," he said. "Whoever follows behind me need to see this is how it should be done."

Neal took the praise in stride, saying that even though his shop may have the largest claims mission in Iraq; it is all part of the job.

"It is quite the workload," he said with a smile. "But that's what we're here for."



Sgt. Corbin Reiff, the claims non-commissioned officer in charge for the 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division's legal office, talks with an Iraqi translator who helps the legal Soldiers process claims paperwork.

Iraqi Highway Patrol trains with Alabama National Guard

Story and photos by
Sgt. Rebekah Lampman
USF-I Public Affairs



Sgt. Matthew Glassford of the 217th Military Police Company, Alabama National Guard, supervises two Iraqi Highway Patrol officers during a training scenario in Baghdad, Iraq, March 17. The training includes conducting traffic stops, writing tickets and serving search warrants.

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

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

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

For the past six months, the MPs have been assisting 16 IHP officers from seven Iraqi police stations in Baghdad as they conduct a variety of training events, said Sgt. Matthew Glassford, an MP with the 217th and a deputy sheriff in Shelby County, Ala.

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

The IPs are perfecting their basic police skills such as properly conducting a traffic stop, serving a search warrant

and writing tickets. As the highway patrol officers move through their training process, 2nd Lt. Joseph Bennett, a platoon leader with the 217th MP Company, said the IHP are dedicated to the training and have dramatically improved their skills.

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

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

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

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



Sgt. Matthew Glassford, a Military Police officer assigned to the 217th Military Police Company from the Alabama National Guard, supervises an Iraqi highway patrol officer during a training scenario March 17 in Baghdad.

Iraqis attend first cable, antenna maintenance class

Story by Senior Airman Jarrod Chavana
USAFCENT Baghdad Media Outreach Team



Air Force Staff Sgt. Gary Graf, 821st Expeditionary Training Squadron cable and antenna maintenance instructor, demonstrates to some of his students how to carefully cut open a cable and separate the different wires during class at Camp Taji, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Trish Bunting)

CAMP TAJI, Iraq -- The U.S. is taking strides to rebuild Iraq and create a modern military that has the capability of defending its people and borders from enemies foreign and domestic.

The Iraqi Training and Advisory Mission-Air Force have Airmen assigned to teach Iraqi personnel how to create a self-sufficient and sustaining military. A cable and antenna maintenance class is taught by Airmen from the 821st Expeditionary Training Squadron. During this 42-day course, the Iraqi military students learn about theories, splicing cable and the overall capabilities that fiber optics can bring in advancements.

"This is the first class of its kind here and they are making huge strides and everyone must remember they are just starting out with this kind of technology," said Staff Sgt. Gary Graf, 821st ETS cable and antenna maintenance instructor. "This class is building a better Iraq, I want to train them and I hope I can make a difference."

Graf was deployed to another location in Southeast Asia where he was using his fiber optics and antennas skill set before being transferred to the 821st ETS.

As deployments go, unforeseen circumstances occur and servicemembers must be prepared to adapt and overcome - as Graff did.

"I didn't mind them asking me to come and teach, even though I only had a five day notice," he said. "I will do whatever I have to in order to complete the mission."

Graf is deployed from Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas.

"Our main goal is to be advisors and train the Iraqis to be the instructors," he said. "During class there are times I find it difficult to relate theories to them and that's when my Iraqi counterpart is able to step in and explain it to them."

More than 60,000 telephones can run through one strand of fiber optic cable, which has the thickness of a strand of hair and there are about 48 strands per cable.



Air Force Staff Sgt. Gary Graf, 821st Expeditionary Training Squadron cable and antenna maintenance instructor, gathers his students around a table to teach them some of the aspects of fiber optics during class at Camp Taji, Iraq. During this 42-day course, the Iraqi military students learn about theories, splicing cable and the overall capabilities that fiber optics can bring in advancements. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Trish Bunting)

"This course will help further the progress of Iraq and help us catch up to the rest of the modern world," said Mahmud Hassun, a student of the class. "What I like most about fiber optics is its accuracy and the capacity of the information that it transmits. When I get back to my base I can share my experience from this class and help build it up."

"It's cool, that someday I will be able to look back and see I made a difference," said Graf. "It's not going to be over night, it will take time but they want to learn and they can make Iraq into a better place."

Air Force Staff Sgt. Gary Graf, 821st Expeditionary Training Squadron cable and antenna maintenance instructor, holds the various colors of fiber optic wires during a class at Camp Taji, Iraq. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Trish Bunting)



The rotunda in Al Faw Palace buzzed with conversation April 4, as service members and civilians gathered around a stage beneath an enormous American flag.

The room momentarily fell silent, and then echoed with applause as six wounded warriors and their Soldier mentors made their way through the crowd of about 250, returning to Iraq for the first time since they were injured.

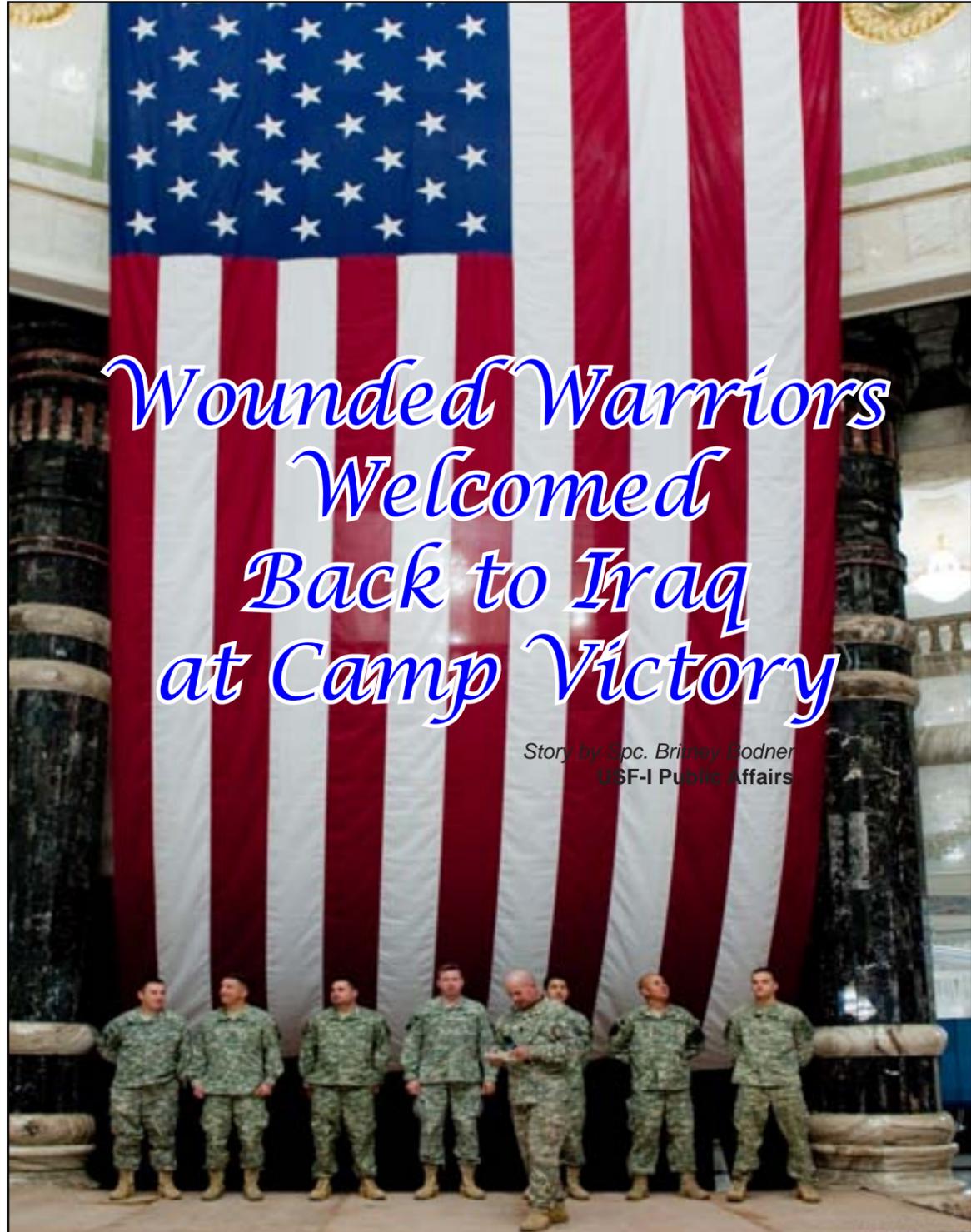
After waiting for the applause to stop, Command Sgt. Maj. Lawrence Wilson, command sergeant major of United States Forces-Iraq, introduced the Soldiers as they walked on stage. The Soldiers are a part of Operation Proper Exit V, a program that provides Soldiers injured in combat the chance to come back to Iraq and see the progress made here since they left and help them bring closure to their personal situations, said Rick Kell, the executive director for Troops First Foundation, the nonprofit organization that sponsors Operation Proper Exit. It lets them see that their sacrifice was not made in vain.

Taking part in this program and seeing the appreciation of their fellow service members means a lot to these Soldiers.

"I was very proud to be a Soldier," said Sgt. Juan Arredondo from Coachella Valley, Calif., Arredondo lost his left arm below the elbow, has damage to both calf muscles, and can no longer bend his right foot as a result of an improvised explosive device detonation. "The people who

Wounded Warriors Welcomed Back to Iraq at Camp Victory

Story by Spc. Brihney Rodner
USF-I Public Affairs



Soldiers participating in Operation Proper Exit V are introduced by **Command Sgt. Maj. Lawrence K. Wilson**, United States Forces-Iraq command sergeant major during a welcome back ceremony April 4. (U.S. Army photo by Lee Craker)

attended to showed their support, from the higher echelon all the way down to the private, they showed us that they were proud of us. It was very moving."

Major David Underwood from Harrison, Ark., lost his left arm below the elbow and had additional trauma to both legs when an IED carried by a suicide bomber exploded. He

is currently a history student at the University of Texas and expects to graduate in May.

Retired Staff Sgt. Brian Neuman's left arm was amputated above the elbow due to shrapnel wounds from a rocket-propelled grenade blast. He lives in Portsmouth, R.I., and currently recruits transitioning service members for positions for a

banking and insurance company.

Corporal Roberto Cruz of San Sebastian, Puerto Rico received a spinal cord injury and nerve damage to his left side from a gunshot wound. He plans to earn a bachelor's degree in sports medicine.

Cpl. Bryan Hinojosa from McAllen, Texas, received shrapnel wounds to his face and neck from a pressure-plate IED explosion. He is currently finishing his degrees in political science and international relations at the University of North Texas.

Corporal Andrew Powers of El Cerrito, Calif., was also injured by an IED explosion on his deployment, which resulted in facial burns, lacerations, and the loss of his left eye. He is currently a licensed representative for a brokerage company.

These Soldiers will spend the week visiting the areas in Iraq where they were injured and speaking with

service members about their personal stories and the programs that are playing a large role in their recovery.

"For me, it's a great experience to come back," said Arredondo, "I keep telling everyone that I was carried out the first time." It's a big thing for me to take this next step in my life and have some closure."

During his introduction, Arredondo got a surprise when he was joined by his younger brother, Staff Sgt. Julio Arredondo, currently deployed in Iraq with the 486th Civil Affairs Battalion.

Staff Sgt. Arredondo mentioned that organizations like Troops First Foundation and United Service Organization really help service members like his brother, and said he is thankful they could bring his brother back here as part of Operation Proper Exit V.

This is the fifth time in two years the program has brought wounded

Soldiers back to Iraq.

"Including this trip we have brought up to 30 Soldiers back, and that does not include the mentors that we've had back two or three times," said Kell. "We look for Soldiers that thrive during their recovery. Soldiers that are moving forward both mentally and physically to what's next. That they've begun to implement those plans and they've shown that they've made great adjustments and great strides in not only pursuing, but embracing what's next."

For these Soldiers, the opportunity to return to Iraq definitely helps them see the benefit that came from their sacrifices.

"By bringing us back to where we were injured; it will hopefully bring some closure," Arredondo said. "We were in a bad situation at the time, and we can see that it all happened for something good."

Retired Army Sgt. Juan Arredondo (right), from Coachella Valley, Calif., embraces his younger brother, **Staff Sgt. Julio Arredondo**, who surprised him with his attendance at the Operation Proper Exit V welcome ceremony, April 4, at the Al Faw Palace on Camp Victory. Arredondo returned to Iraq with five other Soldiers and two Soldier mentors previously injured in Iraq as part of Operation Proper Exit V. Julio will spend the week with his older sibling. (U.S. Army photo by Lee Craker)



Below: **Master Sgt. Bryon Griffin**, 506th Expeditionary Security Forces Raven-B noncommissioned officer in charge, launches a Raven-B unmanned aerial vehicle at Kirkuk Regional Air Base, Iraq on March 23. Raven-B is equipped with cameras, sensors and communications tools to perform critical missions in reconnaissance, surveillance, positive target identification and battle damage assessment inside and outside the wire. Griffin is deployed from Patrick Air Force Base, Fla. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Tabitha Kuykendall)



Spc. Joel LeMaistre, assigned to Joint Combat Camera Center - Iraq, shows a group of Kurdish children their picture as he documents a Kurdish New Year celebration in the Qarah Anir region of Kirkuk, Iraq, March 21. U.S. Soldiers visited the celebrating Kurdish citizens and gain feedback about how the citizens feel their recent elections were run. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2(SW) Matthew D. Leistikow)

First Lt. Puja Ghosh of East Brunswick, N.J., a medical platoon leader with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 209th Aviation Support Battalion, celebrates women and her culture through dance during the Women's History Month Program and Talent Show at the North Morale, Welfare and Recreation Center at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, March 27. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Shantelle J. Campbell)



Team All Stars played against team Thunder Cats in the final game of the Garrison March Madness tournament held at the Camp Liberty field house March 18-27. The All Stars defeated their opponents 64-59, to win the tournament. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Daniel Yarnall)



Margaret Ostrenko, a social scientist with the Army's Human Terrain System, explains a cultural concept to employees at Basra International Airport during an English class there, March 14. (U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. David Bennett)

Maj. Linda Bass, the human resources chief for the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Bessemer, Ala., resident, holds a sign from a street on Contingency Operating Base Marez, Iraq, dedicated to her brother, **Sgt. 1st Class Richard Henkes**. He was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 3rd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, during the unit's deployment to Mosul, Iraq, in 2006. Henkes died from wounds received during combat operations in Mosul in September 2006, when his Stryker vehicle struck an improvised explosive device. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Naveed Ali Shah)



A sedated tiger cub gets a medical check-up from **Dr. Mewafak Raffo**, a veterinary advisor assigned to 1st Armored Division, U.S. Division - Center and **Maj. Matt Takara**, commander 51st Medical Detachment Veterinary Medicine, 248th Medical Detachment Veterinary Services, March 24, at the Baghdad Zoo. The zoo has been a program of partnership between Iraqi zoo workers and U.S. forces for the past few years. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Phillip Valentine)

Brian Howe pumps up the audience during a performance by The Brian Howe Band at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, March 14. Howe was formerly a member of rock band, Bad Company. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jessica Zullig)



Excited **Iraqi boys** play to the camera and show off the toys they received during a humanitarian assistance drop, March 25, by Soldiers from 1st Platoon, Company C, 1st Battalion 38th Infantry Regiment, 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Bryce Dubee)

The **1st Armored Division's Iron Oasis food service team** proudly displays the trophy they won, March 27, during an "Iron Chef" competition at the DeFleury dining facility at Camp Liberty. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Debrah Sanders)



United States and Iraqi Air Force members from the first graduating class of Iraqi meteorology officers at the Air Force House, Camp Victory, Iraq, March 25. The graduates will be sent throughout Iraq for 30 days of on the job training. Once the training is concluded, some of the weather advisory officers will become instructors while others will begin their weather advisory mission for the Iraqi military. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Trish Bunting)



The first female four-star general in the United States Armed Forces, **Gen. Ann Dunwoody**, commanding general, U.S. Army Materiel Command, greets a 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division Soldier at the brigade headquarters building, March 22. Dunwoody visited the Soldiers of the brigade to discuss the responsible drawdown of forces as they reach the halfway point in their deployment. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Luisito Brooks)



Lt. Gen. Ahmed Hashim Aouadi, commander of the Baghdad Operations Command, cuts the ribbon of the new Joint Operations Center during the official opening ceremony March 15. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Luisito Brooks)



Maj. John Dang, a Houston native, explains the importance of getting an accurate account of equipment for the return of Joint Security Station Salie to the Iraqis. As the 1st Armored Division Site Closure Assistance Team officer-in-charge, one of Dang's primary duties is to help units clearing U.S. sites avoid delays due to property issues. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Samantha Beuterbaugh)

Keeping with aviation tradition, **Chief Warrant Officers Dan Wallace** (background right), brigade tactical operations officer from Fort Hood, Texas, and **Donald Washabaugh**, brigade aviation maintenance officer from Collingswood, N.J., shake hands while getting hosed down, March 25, by fellow aviators. All are in 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-Center. Wallace and Washabaugh have a combined 55 years of service and 8,000-plus flight hours. Both are also taking jobs where they will no longer pilot aircraft. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Travis Zielinski)



Story and photos by
Master Sgt. Duff E. McFadden
USD-N Public Affairs

trained members of the Iraqi Army and Kurdish Peshmerga on air mobile techniques at Joint Security Station India in northern Iraq.

Training topics ranged from perimeter and landing zone security, loading and unloading an aircraft, to

FORWARD OPERATING BASE MAREZ, Iraq – Noncommissioned officers have long been the backbone of the U.S. Army. And a competent NCO serves as a role model for today's Soldiers, providing mentorship, professionalism, tactical skills and knowledge.

When an NCO is placed in a unique situation, such as training Iraqi Army Soldiers on the finer points of air mobile operations, the heart and soul of the enlisted ranks embraces the challenge.

For five days, Staff Sgt. Jeremiah A. McLaurine, a senior scout with the 1st Battalion, 36th Infantry Regiment, and his fellow scouts

OHIO SCOUT NCO LEADING WAY

movement formations and detainee operations.

“What the Iraqis are getting out of this training is being able to take their leadership and provide direction for their soldiers, and their soldiers listening to and following that instruction, not just from the officers in the Iraqi Army, but from the enlisted personnel, as well,” McLaurine said. “The biggest thing

the American Soldiers are getting from this training is providing leadership and direction for an Army that's not used to having it come from enlisted Soldiers.”

Success in combat comes down to such training, he noted, and leading Soldiers from the front.

“I feel you need to train, train and train hard,” said McLaurine. “You train the first time so

people become familiar with it. You train the second time, so you begin to see results. You train harder, so that way, you're saving lives during combat.”

McLaurine, a 28-year old native of Lima, Ohio, joined the Army as a cavalry scout in October 2000, following graduation from Lima Senior High School. He said he didn't have a lot going back home,

other than a job in fast food, or a warehouse

“I wanted to do a lot more with my life. I wanted to do better than that.”

The reason he's in the military, said McLaurine, is because of his father, who passed away when he was 11 years old.

“He was leaving the house one day and asked me what I was going to do with my life. Not really having made a decision, the Army came to mind, so I told him that,” he said. “When I stood up to look out the door to see where he was going, I saw him on his way to an ambulance. That was the last time I saw him. So I just knew, once I graduated from high school, I'd join the military.”

After the 10-year veteran's first enlistment, he decided to stay in.

“Home isn't somewhere I missed, McLaurine said. “There's been so many reasons, but what started it off 10 years ago, was because of my father.”

And, he adds, he's never looked back upon that fateful decision.

In the meantime, there're Soldiers to train. Each individual is different, so it's a matter of an NCO recognizing what motivates a particular Soldier.

“Some people don't respond to constructive criticism,” he said. “Most of the time, though, a lot of yelling will simply cause a person to shut down; but, when NCOs are responsible for a task not being completed, then you have to hold them accountable. In other words, don't give broken or empty promises.

“It's all about treating everybody with respect,” McLaurine continued. “You have to try to take care of everyone how you want to be taken care of. Don't be afraid to make people pay for their mistakes.”

Upon his return from his current deployment, he'll return to Fort Campbell, Ky., where he'll serve as an air assault instructor. After that, McLaurine says he hopes to attend drill sergeant school, followed by warrant officer school, where he looks to become a flight or maintenance warrant officer. Until then, he will be leading his Soldiers from the front.

Staff Sgt. Jeremiah McLaurine, a senior scout, demonstrates proper air mobile techniques to Iraqi Army soldiers on a dry erase board.



Staff Sergeant Jeremiah McLaurine, a senior scout with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Bn., 36th Inf. Reg., points out the proper placement for unloading a helicopter to Iraqi Army Soldiers.



A quick "time out" is called by Staff Sgt. Jeremiah McLaurine, while training Iraqi Army soldiers.

U.S. and Iraqi Army units build operations center together

Story and photos by Sgt. Tracy Knowles
USD-C Public Affairs

A choreographed symphony of sounds, a plethora of smells, and the beautiful blue sky painted above, creates a well-orchestrated backdrop for partnership between 101st Engineer Battalion, “the Oldest in the Nation,” and 17th Iraqi Army division, the youngest in the IA, on Joint Service Station Deason Mar. 20.

Soldiers of 1434th Eng. Co, 101st Eng. Bn., have been working with the Soldiers of 17th IA to build a new Command Division Operation Center. When complete, the CDOC will hold six private offices and enough space for 17th IA operations equipment and personnel.

In less than one week the structure, which is 45ft x 65ft, was already in the wiring stage and the roof was being placed. The U.S. and IA Soldiers have worked many long days together, putting them ahead of the scheduled completion date.

When the job started, the Iraqi engineers were untrained in carpentry skills. After some basic instructions and encouragement, the IA Soldiers are now able to work with little guidance from the U.S. Soldiers. The skills the IA Soldiers have acquired will not only help them on future projects on JSS Deason, but also give them the ability to assemble simple household furniture out of scrap wood, like medicine cabinets with latches to keep the contents away from small children.

“We took an afternoon and taught them some basic skills and safety, we also taught them how to build simple furniture, now we can’t get them to stop and take breaks,” said Spc. Daryl Kujat, 1434th Eng. Co.

The partnership has gone so well that higher ranking officers of the 17th IA stop by the job site to see the

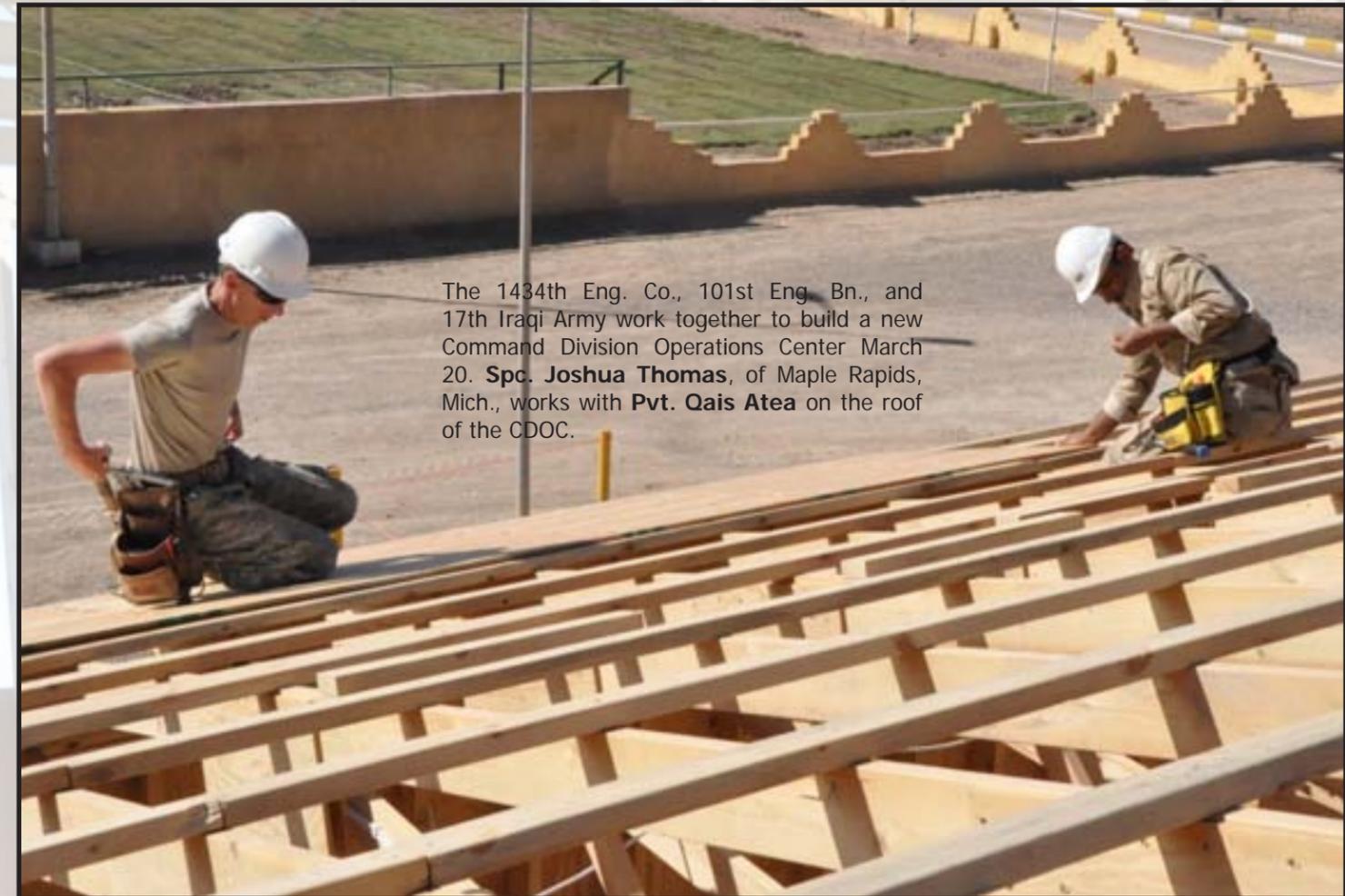
hard-working Soldiers and the quick progress of the building.

With two young lieutenants in charge, the CDOC building has come along with no major snags. The lieutenants are proud of their men, all of whom are working well together despite the language barriers.

“What’s amazing about these Soldiers is they are always ready to work and always on time, their discipline and mannerism are much like ours,” said 2nd Lt. Jacob Della Pia, of Manistee, Mich., 1434th officer in charge. “All of these Soldiers were excited to learn and interact with American Soldiers; I couldn’t have asked for a better group of guys.”

“It is an honor to work with the Americans, my men will always be able to talk about this as part of their history; the Soldiers’ pride and confidence has grown tremendously,” said Lt. Ali Hadi, OIC for the 17th IA.

The completion of this project will bring a partnership that will be a part of the 101st Engineers’ historical lineage and a strong building that will stand for many years, helping yield many successful future Iraqi missions.



The 1434th Eng. Co., 101st Eng. Bn., and 17th Iraqi Army work together to build a new Command Division Operations Center March 20. Spc. Joshua Thomas, of Maple Rapids, Mich., works with Pvt. Qais Atea on the roof of the CDOC.

Background: **Second Lt. Jacob Della Pia**, of Manistee, Mich., 1434th Eng. Co., 101st Eng. Bn., applies sheeting to the side of the new Command Division Operations Center on Joint Service Station Deason. The 101st Eng. Bn. has helped 17th Iraqi Army engineers become a self-sufficient asset to their new division by teaching them basic carpentry skills.

Families of SoI receive much-needed assistance

Story and photos by Pfc. Jessica Luhrs
USD-C Public Affairs

The line of widows, wives, children, mothers and sisters of Sons of Iraq reached from their headquarters building in Hawijah, near Kirkuk, Iraq, all the way to the end of the road, and each of them had a huge smile on their face.

These women and children gathered at the SoI headquarters, March 24, to receive much needed clothes, shoes, food and medical attention from Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 37th Armored Regiment, 1st Armored Division out of Fort Bliss, Texas.

“We did this to show our appreciation to the SoI,” said Capt. Scott Wares, the HHC commander. “They have assisted us greatly since arriving and their families have made many sacrifices.”

The Orange County, Calif. native did a project much like this one during a previous deployment.

“These women and children are very happy to receive the medical attention and supplies they need, in a secure environment,” said Khalaf Ibrahim Ali, the SoI contractor in Hawijah also known as Abu Adnan.

Adnan said that many of the families cannot afford to go to the doctor or buy medicine for minor pains, colds or respiratory problems.

“That is exactly what we are here to help with basic medical care,” said 1st Lt. Jason Hrdina, battalion physician assistant to the battalion.

Hrdina brought along four of his medics, including a female to help with the women. They assisted more than 300 people.

“It is very important to these women that a female medic is present so they get the care they need,” said Sgt. Lisa Moore, a San Antonio, Texas, native and medic for 1st Bn. “Many of them probably would not have seen a medic if we didn’t have one here.”

After being examined by the medics, if they needed to, the families then went to another room where the children were able to pick out new shoes, clothing and the women

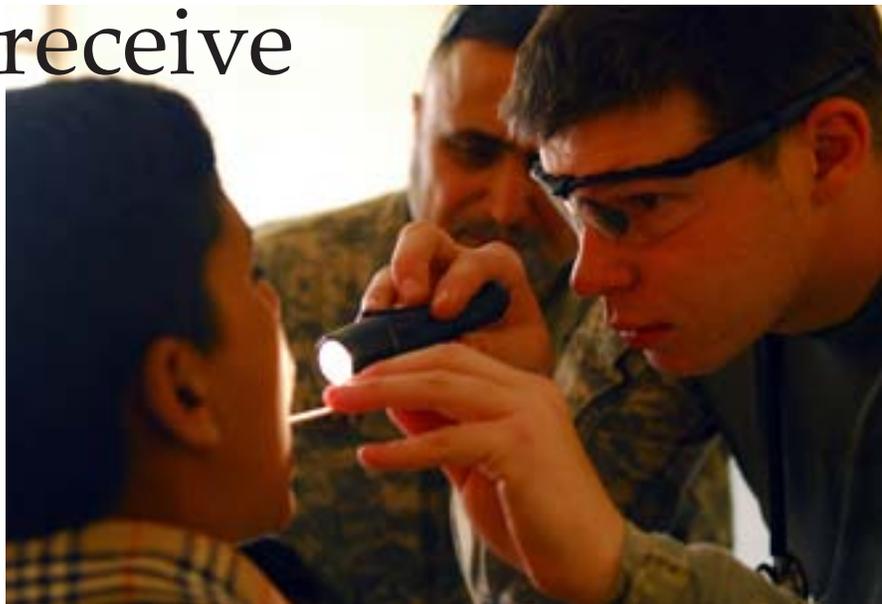
received food and jackets.

One of the women, who asked to be called Manar and whose husband was injured fighting with the SoI, was particularly happy to see the Soldiers and receive the assistance.

“Thank you so much,” she said through an interpreter. “My husband cannot work anymore, so to receive food and clothing makes my family so happy.”

After receiving the clothing and food, the children were able to stop by and see the armor regiment chaplain, Capt. Abrahamyoung Ki Kim, to receive candy and beanie babies donated by the charitable organization, Beanies for Baghdad.

In a community where many of the people are still suffering, these Soldiers truly brightened the day for the families of the SoI and plan to do so many more times.



Pfc. Jason Waleert (above), an Orlando, Fla., native, examines the child of a Sons of Iraq member.

Sgt. Lisa Moore (left), from San Antonio, Texas, listens to the mother of a SoI describe her medical problems.

Waleert and Moore are medics with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 37th Armored Regiment, 1st Armored Division out of Fort Bliss, Texas. Several medics from the unit participated in a humanitarian and medical aid mission at the SoI headquarters in Hawijah, near Kirkuk, Iraq, March 24, providing basic medical attention to more than 300 families of the SoI.

IN MEMORIAM

NAMES OF SERVICEMEMBERS WHO DIED BETWEEN MARCH 1 AND
MARCH 31, 2010 WHILE SERVING IN OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

**GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS: THAT A MAN LAY
DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIENDS.**

JOHN 15:13

March 8

Spc. Lakeshia M. Bailey, 23
Sgt. Aaron M. Arthur, 25

March 13

Spc. Steven J. Bishop, 29

March 14

Pfc. Erin L. McLyman, 26

March 15

Staff Sgt. Richard J. Jordan, 29

March 17

Spc. Robert Rieckhoff, 26



Thousands of vehicles and equipment that have returned from Iraq wait to be retrograded in a lot at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. Not limited to rolling stock, the base receives hundreds of trailer-sized containers each week filled with everything from medical supplies to ammunitions. The process of repairing the battle-worn equipment runs 24 hours, seven days a week, and remains a top priority as repaired and usable equipment is pushed into other areas of operation. (U.S. Army photo by Spc Monte Swift)