

Victory Times



Telling the United States Forces - Iraq story

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Liberator II continues effort to find missing

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

“We never have, and we never will stop looking,” said Navy Lt. Cmdr. K.C. Chhipwadia, the senior intelligence officer with United States Forces – Iraq’s Personnel Recovery Division.

This is the motivation behind Operation Liberator II, the latest operation in the U.S. military’s ongoing efforts to find and recover the 16 American and coalition service members and civilians missing in Iraq.

Operation Liberator II began April 15 and continues the work started last summer during Operation Liberator, a two-month-long effort that improved the collection of actionable intelligence relating to missing personnel, said Lt. Col. Kevin Dennehy, director of USF-I’s Personnel Recovery Division. That operation laid the groundwork for the development of this phase of the search.

“We feel we can build on it with additional intelligence and cooperation and make Liberator II even more successful,” Dennehy said.

Although USF-I is spearheading the operation, a wide spectrum of agencies are involved, Dennehy said, including U.S. Central Command and the U.S. Embassy’s Office of Hostage Affairs, as well as the FBI, the Defense Intelligence Agency and the National Geospatial Agency.

Chhipwadia said the goal is to conduct

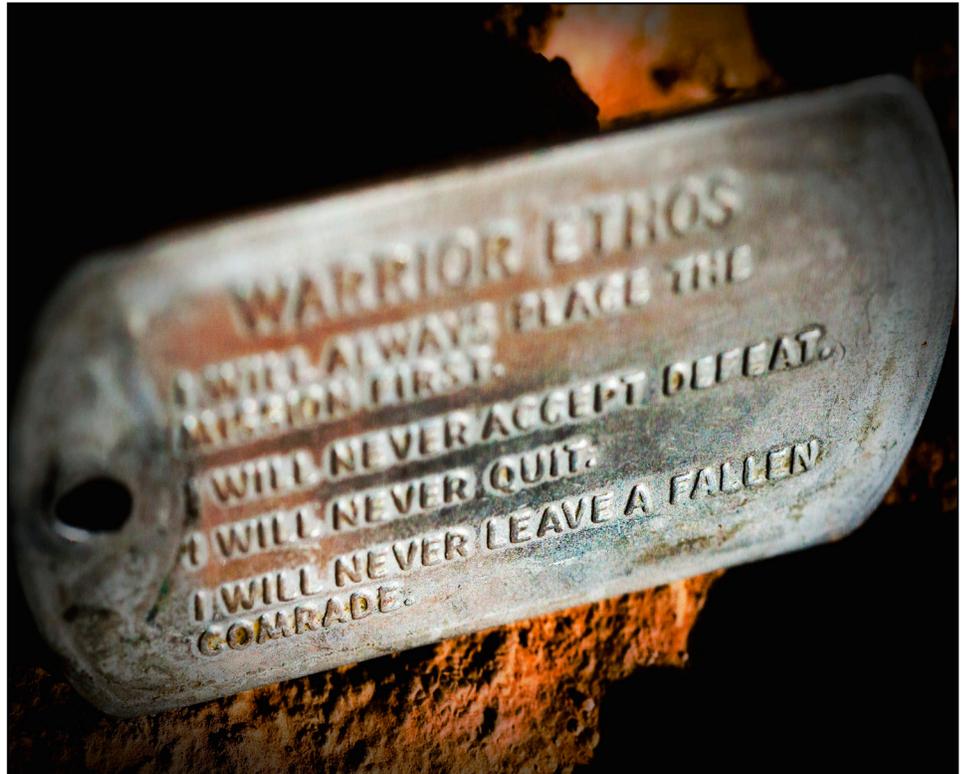


Photo Illustration by Sgt. 1st Class Roger Dey

Operation Liberator II in conjunction with the Government of Iraq, which is not yet directly involved. However, he expects the operation to be one of the main things that “boots-on-the-ground” Soldiers will discuss with their counterparts in the Iraqi Police and Iraqi Army as they spend time together in leadership meetings and during advise-and-assist missions.

Operation Liberator, which focused intelligence-gathering on the missing individuals, created a grassroots campaign that contributed to the recovery of Navy

Capt. Scott Speicher in July 2009, Dennehy said. Speicher, a naval aviator whose jet was shot down on the first night of Operation Desert Storm in 1991, was the only American listed as missing in action from the first Gulf War.

Recently, the Personnel Recovery Division helped with the return of Issa Salomi, an American contractor captured by insurgents in January. He was held for two months and released March 25.

According to Chhipwadia, 11 of the

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Relationships make us stronger

By Chaplain (Maj.) Bob Crowley
United States Forces-Iraq Operations Chaplain

April 1949 marked the signing of the NATO pact, as the United States and 11 other nations established the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

A mutual defense alliance, NATO was aimed at containing possible Soviet aggression against Western Europe. It stood as the main U.S.-led military coalition against the Soviet Union throughout the Cold War.

Today the NATO mission, with 28 member states, is different than in 1949.

It is committed to defending member states against aggression and also to the principle that an attack against one member would be considered as attack against all.

The strength of NATO is not the strength of one partner state, but the strength of all states standing together.

I believe that you get it, but you may ask what this has to do with where we are right now.

Right here, right now, we all face challenges. Some seem insurmountable, others small, but still they present themselves to us and we may let those things affect us to the

point that we get down or become upset. We never wanted to get to that place, it just happened. That is when each of us has to muster up some personal courage and lean on someone else.

The aggression that comes your way, in whatever form it may take, is also aggression against your squad, platoon, company, battalion, brigade, task force or service component. The good news is that there are people in your

formations who want to help you to be strong.

When adversity comes, find a friend, a confidant, a person you can trust who will listen without judgment. Strength is not measured by you pulling yourself up by your own boot straps. Strength is

measured by those around you who pick you up when the day is not going the way you planned. I liken it to our Army Ethos that says, "Never Leave a Fallen Comrade."

My personal faith as a chaplain tells me that "A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity." (Proverbs 17:17).

I encourage all of us at Camp Victory and in the Iraq Joint Operations Area to pick those Soldiers up who are having a tough time. Remember how NATO is strong due to partnership, as we our strong through our relationships.

"The good news is that there are people in your formations who want to help you to be strong."

SARC Smarts



Sexual assault has no place in our military – it's up to each of us to prevent assaults by watching out for our fellow Soldiers. Join the SHARP Team in standing up and saying "No more!" Offer your support to survivors of this crime by being informed.

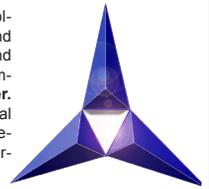
Call the USF-I Deployed Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (DSARC) at 485-5085 or 435-2235 for help. Army members should seek assistance with their Unit Victim Advocate (UVA) or DSARC.



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Communication is key for military children

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

It's late in the evening on Camp Victory, Baghdad, but midday in Albany, Ore. Sitting down at the desk in his room, Lt. Col. Matthew Doggett, the meteorology oceanography officer for United States Forces-Iraq, turns his computer on and talks with his family.

His wife, Sherry, home schools their five children, which makes the late night call the best time for Doggett to speak to his entire family.

Sherry answers and greets her husband with a smile. It isn't long before she is sitting on the stairs surrounded by their kids happily shouting, "Daddy!" "Hi Daddy!" "Daddy, look what I made!"

Doggett's smile widens as his 7-year-old son Caleb holds his latest Lego creation up to the camera and his youngest daughter Bethany, 2, shows him her painted fingernails. Four-year-old Hannah tells him about the picnic they did the night before and his oldest daughters, Katrina, 11 and Kiersten, 14, tell him what classes they have completed.

Since Doggett arrived in late October he has spent one hour every night talking with his family.

It's a scene many deployed parents can relate to.

There are 1.7 million children in the United States who have at least one parent in the military. In recognition of the sacrifices they make April has been designated as the Month of the Military Child.

Recognizing military children and their sacrifices and letting them know they are special is important, especially when service members are fighting for the freedom of another country, said Air Force Staff Sgt. Dustin Martin, coordinator for the United Through Reading Program in the chaplain's office on Camp Victory.

When service members deploy, it impacts the whole family, said Spc. Dominica Hewett, a mental health specialist with the 1908th Combat Stress Control Medical Detachment.

Hewett understands that fact all too well. As a single parent with a 16-year-old daughter, Kdijah, back home in Greensboro, N.C., Hewett is on her second deployment.

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Photo by Spc. Britney Bodner

Lt. Col. Matthew Doggett, meteorology oceanography officer for United States Forces-Iraq, stationed at Camp Victory, Baghdad, speaks with his wife Sherry and youngest daughter Bethany, 2, back home in Albany, Ore. Many service members now use the internet to communicate back home with their families in an effort to help their children cope with the stress of deployment.

Medics train Iraqi Heroes Clinic staff

Task Force 1st Med Soldiers teach counterparts on new equipment

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



Spc. Jay Geronime, assigned to the 550th Air and Support Medical Company, shows an Iraqi doctor how to operate an x-ray machine at the Heroes Clinic at Camp Iraqi Heroes in Baghdad, Iraq. Geronime currently works at the Golby Clinic on Camp Victory and helps teach his Iraqi counterpart how to use and maintain his equipment.

As she walked through the doors of the clinic at Camp Iraqi Heroes in Baghdad, Iraq, Cpl. Jessica McKenzie prepared herself for an important mission – training the Iraqi medics on equipment that can help save lives.

As part of the United States Forces - Iraq mission to assist and train the Iraqi forces, McKenzie and two other health care providers from Task Force 1st Med spent April 3 teaching the Iraqi medics how to operate and maintain laboratory, optometric and x-ray equipment. It was part of the first iteration of training at the clinic. Task Force members plan to come back at least once a month to train with their Iraqi counterparts.

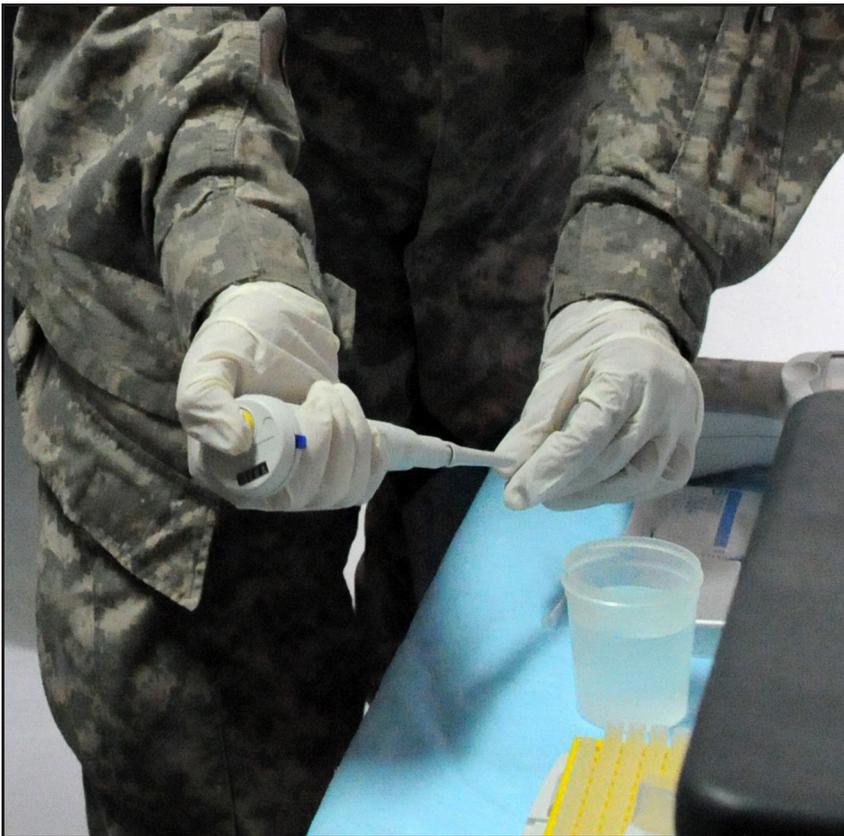
“I’m glad that I have the opportunity to train some of these medics and help them help their Soldiers,” said McKenzie, a laboratory technician from the 550th Air and Support Medical Company. “They asked lots of questions, which is really good and helps them to be more proficient.”

Both the Golby and Heroes Clinics are level-two clinics, according to Lt. Col. Timothy Walsh, the Civil Military Operations officer for the 1st Medical Brigade. Both have the ability to stabilize patients and can provide a higher level of medical care than a basic troop medical clinic, but have no specialized facilities or doctors on hand.

Since Golby Clinic is on Camp Victory and the Heroes Clinic is on nearby Camp Iraqi Heroes, Walsh said it made sense to partner with them to build a relationship and exchange knowledge and training.

Before training at the Heroes Clinic, the U.S. medics first brought the Iraqi medical personnel to Golby Clinic to see how the American facility operates. This gave the Iraqis a chance to see firsthand how to set up and use the equipment.

“Instead of just giving them things, we’re teaching them how to use it,” said Walsh. “It’s like the saying goes, if you teach a man how to fish he’ll eat for a lifetime, and that’s exactly what we’re doing here. They’re learning things that will better prepare them to sustain themselves when we leave.”



◀(Left) Cpl. Jessica McKenzie, assigned to the 550th Air and Support Medical Company, shows Iraqi medics how to properly insert fluid into a test tube to undergo various laboratory work. McKenzie is one of several health care providers for the Golby Clinic on Camp Victory, Iraq, who are training their Iraqi counterparts at the Heroes Clinic on Camp Iraqi Heroes in Baghdad.

(Below) ▼ Capt. Harris Abbasi, trains an Iraqi doctor how to use new optometry equipment at the Heroes Clinic in Baghdad. Abbasi is assigned to the 33rd Medical Detachment out of Fort Polk, La. and works at the Golby Clinic on Camp Victory. Abbasi is from Fredrick, Md.



Child, from Page 3

To help children adjust to deployment, many service members use technology to bridge the gap and remain a part of their children's lives.

Hewett said the first deployment was difficult for her daughter because she was worried about her mother's safety. It wasn't until Hewett began to call her daughter every day that Kdijah knew her mother was okay that she began to adapt to the separation better. Even though Kdijah is now a few years older, Hewett still calls her every other day.

Often, it is more difficult for those left at home, especially children, than it is for the deployed service member abroad, Doggett said.

For him, being able to communicate with his family via webcam makes it much easier to keep in regular contact with his children than his first deployment in 2005. Back then he talked to his family only two or three times a week using the Morale, Welfare and Recreation phones that had a 15 minute limit.

The constant communication is extremely important and has helped his children stay more connected with him during this deployment.

"Children thrive on the comfort and security that parents can provide," Doggett said. "When things happen that they don't understand and are powerless to control, it can really hamper their learning and behavior."

For Doggett, like many service members, the first month is the hardest for children to adjust to the deployment.

"I wasn't there to tuck them into bed and read them a bedtime story anymore," he continued. "There were a lot of tears shed at the initial absence because I wasn't around every day. It gradually subsided as they got into their routine and I got into mine."

Routines are an important tool to help children cope with military life, especially during deployments.

When deployed parents continue to interact on a regular basis with their children it allows them to see that while things are different, life is still okay and the kids can make it through this, Doggett said.

"The big thing is they're able to see my face and I can still be daddy and joke around with them, and they can realize that I'm still involved in their life," he said.

New DVD helps children deal with deployment

By Elaine Wilson

American Forces Press Service

Defense and USO officials joined military families at the U.S. Navy Memorial here yesterday to celebrate the launch of a new DVD created to help military children cope with a parent's deployment.

"With You All the Way" - a joint effort by the Defense Department, USO and the Trevor Romain Co. - offers school-age children help with preparing for and dealing with all stages of deployment, from pre-deployment to separation to reintegration.

"We are grateful for the dedication and creativity of people like Trevor Romain and the generosity of groups like the USO," said Barbara Thompson, director of the Pentagon's office of family policy and children and youth. "With [their] support, we are better able to help bridge the gap that results from months and miles of separation between children and their parents. This is no small feat and the worthiest of missions."

The free DVD is slated to be distributed through USO centers and Military OneSource in May as part of a children's deployment kit that also contains a stuffed bear called Cuzzie, postcards, a journal and a set of dog tags inscribed "With You All the Way."

"The DVD helps to let [military children] know that even though it may feel like they are alone, we are with them all the way," Thompson said.

When faced with deployment, Thompson noted, parents and children often deal with a gamut of emotions ranging from anger and fear to worry and uncertainty.

"But something else that I know ... is that together they work hard to stay connected and to work through all those feelings," she said.

Editor's note: This is a condensed version of the original news release.

The entire release can be viewed at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=58550> on the U.S. Department of Defense Web site.

Liberator, from Page 1

16 individuals still missing in Iraq are American citizens, four are South Africans and one is British. Two of the Americans are members of the military who have been missing since 2006. Air Force Maj. Troy Gilbert, disappeared after his F-16 crashed, and Army Reserve Staff Sgt. Ahmed Al-Taie, a linguist for the Baghdad Provincial Reconstruction Team, was kidnapped in Baghdad.

As U.S. forces prepare for the transition out of Iraq, Dennehy said it is important that the

U.S. military fulfills its duty to bring all 16 home with dignity and honor.

"The mission to recover personnel will continue in some form or another, because we never stop looking for our people," he said. "Go back to World War One, World War Two, Korea, or Vietnam. We still have people out there looking for our missing."

"You never leave a fallen comrade," Dennehy said. "Even though we are leaving Iraq, we're not leaving our missing."



Photo Illustration by Sgt. 1st Class Roger Dey

2010 Winter Olympians visit troops in Al Faw Palace



Photo by Staff Sgt. Dan Yarnall

Maj. Malcolm Wise from Hinesville, Ga., the 3rd Infantry Division liaison officer at United States Forces-Iraq (far left), and Capt. Andres Garcia from Copperus Cove, Texas, USF-I core vulnerability assessment management program manager, pose with Olympic Medalists Bill Demong (light green T-shirt) and Brett Camerota in Al Faw Palace on Camp Victory, April 12. The Nordic Combined U.S. Ski team visited with troops in Iraq as part of the Olympic Heavy Medal Tour.

REMEMBER: SAFETY COMES FIRST

ROUTINE MAINTENANCE TASKS CONTAIN INHERENT RISKS.

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS
ATTENTION TO DETAIL
CREW COORDINATION
TEAM COMMUNICATION
ADHERENCE TO STANDARDS

WE NEED YOUR VIGILANCE TO KEEP
EACH OTHER ALIVE AND WELL

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT THE USF-I SAFETY OFFICE
AT 318-485-4624, OR E-MAIL LON.COOPER@IRAQ.CENTCOM.MIL

VBC Facility Operating Hours

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

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

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

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

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

Paul Smith Gym
Open 24 Hours

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

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

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

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

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

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

Notice

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

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

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

Make sure your families
know about OPSEC as well.

IMO keeps info in JOC flowing

Story by Sgt. Chris McCann
United States Forces-Iraq Public Affairs

“They keep me connected to the battle and command systems – they allow me to be more efficient at my job.”

With that statement, Capt. Mike Maysonet, a liaison officer for United States Division – Center at the United States Forces – Iraq joint operations center, may have summed up the role of the information management office personnel perfectly.

The JOC – the nerve center of U.S. operations in Iraq – is home to 134 computer stations, each with at least two computers and often more, said Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Tanesha McQueen of San Diego, Calif.

More than 100 people are often working at any given time. There will be computer difficulties, said McQueen, whether it’s a mouse starting to fail or a public-address system not working just before the battle update assessment.

“We do most of the BUA preparations,” said McQueen. “We assemble the slides, check the alignment on the screens, check all the microphones.”

If there’s a glitch in a login profile on one of the computers, they fix it before the senior officer gets there and needs it.

“We make sure everything is ready to go,” McQueen said.

Assisting the military service members are several civilian contractors, including Elijah Putnam, of Port Orange, Fla.,

who served for several years in the U.S. Air Force, and decided he wanted to continue working with military personnel.

“We do everything from basic hardware technical support to networking and server stuff,” said Putnam.

The job has its own challenges, they agreed.

“The hardest part is dealing with all the different people,” said Putnam. “You just learn to adjust and adapt and not take things personally – you make a bond with people.”

The best part of the work?

“Working with the military,” said Putnam. “It’s the greatest thing, supporting them. The military has all the advanced technologies and the people have a very professional attitude to boot.”



Photo by Staff Sgt. Dan Yarnall

Petty Officer 2nd Class Tanesha McQueen from San Diego, Calif., is an information management officer in the United States Forces-Iraq Joint Operations Center. As an IMO, McQueen helps to keep all the computers in the JOC running properly.

“We see things that Bill Gates never knew could happen to a computer.”

~Tanesha McQueen



Photo by Staff Sgt. Dan Yarnall

McQueen types on a keyboard to resolve a computer problem.

Sometimes, the difficulties are just ... different.

“We see things that Bill Gates never knew could happen to a computer,” McQueen said. “Sometimes we fix them with sheer luck, and tell our co-workers ‘I tried this, and it worked’ – and lo and behold, we have a fix for when that problem happens the next time.”

If the problems don’t get resolved, it could have major repercussions.

“There are always backups, but in the big picture, if this JOC couldn’t communicate, we’d have a lot of issues,” Putnam said. “There would be no BUA, and then General Petraeus at Central Command wouldn’t have his information. In theory, it could go all the way to the president, if the computers here went down.”

In reality, the service members and civilians don’t let that happen; after seven years in Iraq, the systems are redundant and well-maintained. Nonetheless, maintenance keeps them busy and in the process of keeping up the system, they learn.

“I enjoy working in the JOC,” said McQueen. “I’m learning about myself and what I can do, what I’m willing to do, and what I expect of myself in the future.”