



*The Arrowhead Brigade*

# ON POINT



# NOTE FROM ARROWHEAD 6 AND 7

Dear Family and Friends of the Arrowhead Brigade,

Hello once again from the Garden Spot of Diyala, Iraq (we thought we'd start this month's update with a joke). We told you last month that we would start to see weather reaching the high 90's. We were slightly off, with a high of only 94 this past month. Perhaps more surprising than the continued mild weather is the late but welcome rain we have received. Just two days ago, we had a thunderstorm that would have put a tropical monsoon to shame. Who knew rain actually can go sideways?...very different from the light, constant drizzle we see back home. Next month for sure will bring a dramatic change in the heat. On average, we will see a 12 degree jump in the temperatures. The record for May is 113 degrees. Let's hope we don't see that. At any rate, in future pictures your Arrowhead Soldiers will start to appear darker and thirstier from the sun and sweat. Let's move on to some of the great things your heroes have been doing to leave an enduring legacy here in Iraq.

**Civil Capacity Building in Diyala:** Over the past eight months we have shared countless stories about the great things your Arrowhead Soldiers are doing throughout the Diyala Province. We have come a long way from where we started, both with regard to rebuilding Iraqi infrastructure and in terms of helping to secure the citizens of Diyala. Our focus has been to develop enduring programs and projects that not only rebuild and secure, but also give Diyalans the tools they need to continue the process when American forces eventually leave Iraq.

Everyday our Soldiers give the Iraqi people hope for a brighter and more productive future.

**Tomahawk Extreme School Makeover:** The Tomahawks have done tremendous work with their "Extreme School Makeover" initiative. Patterned after the famous T.V. show, "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" the Tommies descend on



Col. David Funk

a school (3 so far), and in a short 15 days they renovate, repaint, and rewire the entire structure. Working alongside Iraqi contractors, local ISF, and even some students, they re-plaster and repaint the inner and outer walls, reinforce the ceilings to prevent water damage, clean up the outside areas, and put new desks and chairs in every classroom. In each case, they have finished the schools "just in time." While none of the Tommies would be mistaken for Ty Pennington, they have their own version of "Move that Stryker!" Watching the students (and teachers) run through their "new" school is an incredibly rewarding experience. It also goes a long way

toward promoting civic responsibility...very powerful.

**Suq Initiatives:** A Suq is a large open-air market where most Iraqi's gather to drink chai, socialize, and shop. The Aruba Suq in Muqadiyah was once the second largest in all of northern Iraq. During the height of the violence in Diyala, Al Qaeda overran, occupied, and destroyed the entire area. For the past 7 months, The Patriot and Red Lion Battalions, along with the Provincial Reconstruction Team have been helping to rebuild this marketplace in an effort to stimulate the Iraqi economy. They have coordinated for hundreds of micro-grants to assist local vendors in reopening their booths. There are now 1500 successful shops in this bustling market area, with many more soon to open. The tireless efforts of the Patriots and Red Lions have been applauded by the U.S. Embassy as a model of what is possible. The Aruba Suq has been so successful we are now pursuing similar projects in local Suq's in the Tomahawk and Warhorse areas. This is a great example of the permanent capacity-building your Soldiers are doing here every day.

**Abu Sayda/Salam Bridge:** Currently the province has only two permanent bridges crossing the Diyala River. These two bridges are 50 kilometers apart, making cross-province travel by vehicle very difficult. This not only separates the province, but also limits trade and the transfer of goods. To put it into perspective, imagine having only two bridges that cross the Puget Sound, with one in Tacoma and the other in Seattle. The soon-to-be-repaired Salam Bridge (again

destroyed by Al Qaeda) will provide a permanent crossing point that is halfway between the two existing bridges. Our Red Lion and Patriot Soldiers have worked hard to get this project approved and started. While the project is just underway, construction will continue after our departure and will have a lasting positive impact on the economy in the Diyala Province.

**Iraqi Vocational Institute of Diyala (IVID):** Among the many courses taught by the Frontline Battalion, this one has become one of the biggest hits. It teaches unemployed Iraqis how to perform skilled labor, such as welding and HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) repair. Armed with these skills, many of these men receive micro-grants to start their own business. One of the target audiences for this course is the Sons of Iraq – the mostly Sunni male population who helped defeat Al Qaeda during the surge, and who will soon be out of a job as the government stops the SOI program. Hundreds of graduates have made it through the course, armed now with new skills and hope for the future, instead of with an IED. This is permanent capacity building, and it's another example of the things your Soldiers do to make a difference here daily.

**Security Operation in Diyala Province:** Arrowhead Soldiers have also been very busy this past month with security operations. Each battalion has conducted numerous operations with their ISF partners to uncover weapons caches, detain warranted characters, and to counter IEDs and indirect fire. Just this past week, we conducted a massive brigade-level operation, involving

more than 1400 Iraqi and Arrowhead Soldiers. It was a rare and welcome sight to see Iraqi brigade, division and corps-level leaders out on the ground conducting operations. Two of our battalions led the ISF on very challenging ground movements in the heat while a third moved with Kurdish and Iraqi Forces to interdict enemy move-



Command Sgt. Maj. Alan Bjerke

ments along a ten-mile stretch of a lake shoreline. It was odd to see the enemy use boats to evade detention. It was even odder to remind our partners that just because a boat was moving away from us did not mean we could shoot it. The ISF adapted quickly, commandeering a few boats of their own to chase down the enemy. Our partners continue to learn and show initiative. In this case, they also learned about hydration, as 29 of them collapsed from heat exhaustion. All were treated by our Soldiers, and all recovered well. We were extremely proud of the capabilities our Soldiers displayed and the examples they set in this massive operation.

**Arrowhead Fallen Soldier, SGT Keith Coe**

It is with heavy hearts that we once again acknowledge the tragic loss of an Arrowhead Hero. SGT Keith Coe was a rising star in the Red Lion Battalion. He was more than an inspiring Soldier and Leader; he was also a great friend. SGT Coe was mortally wounded when an IED struck the vehicle in which he was riding at the end of April. This great man accomplished more in three years of Army service than many accomplish in an entire career. He is sorely missed by his comrades. Please keep his wife and three children in your prayers.



And thank you for all your prayers as we head into the ninth month. We love and miss you all. Until next month, we are humbly...

**Arrowhead 6 and 7**

ARROWHEAD

SECOND TO NONE

AMERICA'S CORPS!

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Specialist Adam Baptista, from Truro, Mass., a gunner for 1/14th Cav., looks down the road behind him during a convoy to Jalula where they will Iraqi Police training on April 7. (US Army photo by Pvt. Zachary Zuber)

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## ON THE COVER

Private First Class Jack Hansbro, of Hernando, Miss., a radio telephone operator for 3rd Platoon, 1/23 Inf., waits for other Soldiers to get on line before continuing on to clear palm groves during Operation Apache Blanket near Mahudiya, Iraq, on April 23. (US Army photo by Pfc. Adrian Muehe)

## THE BACK COVER

Specialist Charles Grijalva, of Brawley, Calif., an air sentry for Charlie Company, 52nd Infantry Regiment attached to 5/20 Inf., fires a round down range as part of the Soldier and Non-Commissioned Officer of the Quarter Competitions at Forward Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq, on April 10. (US Army photo by Pfc. Adrian Muehe)

# New Mental Health Program to Support Division Soldiers

Story and Photos by  
Pvt. Zachary Zuber  
135th MPAD

DIYALA, Iraq – A new initiative to preemptively identify and ease mental health issues for Soldiers during deployment is being implemented beginning in April throughout Task Force Marne.

The Primary Care Behavioral Health Initiative utilizes medics and initial medical care providers to screen for potential mental health issues. It was created by Maj. Keith M. Lemmon, surgeon for 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division.

The program was designed to establish more trusting relationships between Soldiers, creating a comfortable outlet to speak of any mental or emotional issue they face while deployed. These new methods are designed to empower the young medics and physician's assistants who already develop a close connection to the Soldiers. Educating caregivers about subtle indicators of a personality change may draw attention to a small problem a Soldier may be dealing with prior to the situation becoming a crisis.

"I'm an adolescent medicine specialist, and one of the biggest tenets of adolescent medicine is that there is usually something going on in a young adult's life that

is a bigger threat to their health," said Maj. Lemmon. "The concept here is that we do a psychosocial interview to get to know them, and when we ask them about emotional and behavioral health, things will come out that wouldn't normally without that relationship."

"We still treat a sprained ankle or cold, but we also establish this [aid station] as a place they can come when they are having emotional and behavioral issues."

Originally the concept of the program was to combat the everyday stresses that Soldiers experience by helping to provide them with coping tools before their problems can escalate to violent or suicidal actions. The easiest place to introduce this concept



Two Soldiers from Task Force Marne practice new techniques taught during a seminar on the Primary Care Behavioral Health Initiative at Forward Operating Base Warhorse on April 2.

and nurture a trusting relationship is during the initial level of care, with the medics that take part in missions side by side with those they treat.

"When you look at what medics do, taking care of our Soldiers, if medics can deal with these issues as well that's accomplishing the mission of taking care of the health of Soldiers," said Maj. Lemmon. "Traditionally that has not been a medic's job, but with a program like this they can do even more good in an environment where there are not many trauma incidents for them to take care of."

Once a trial period was completed with the 1/14th Cav. at Forward Operating Base Cobra, the initiative was presented to division medical and mental

health officers for implementation throughout USD-N. With the help of Maj. Jacob Richardson, Task Force Marne behavioral health officer, the program is now being introduced to medical teams from each brigade in the division.

"We [the division medical officers] decided, based on Maj. Lemmon's brief to us, that we wanted to push this program out to the division," said Maj. Richardson. "I am participating actively with the founders, collaborating, adding some behavioral health tweaks for the course."

In order to introduce this new process to an entire division of medical care providers, conferences will be held at a central FOB within each brigade in the division. At each seminar, medics and officers from the respective battalions will learn methods designed to identify any potential mental health issues early and be given the tools to train their colleagues.

"We are providing 'train-the-trainer' seminars for the different units and once they receive the initial introduction, we are giving them four weeks to go back and train their units," said Maj. Richardson. "Once that is complete the program can be implemented immediately for the Soldiers."

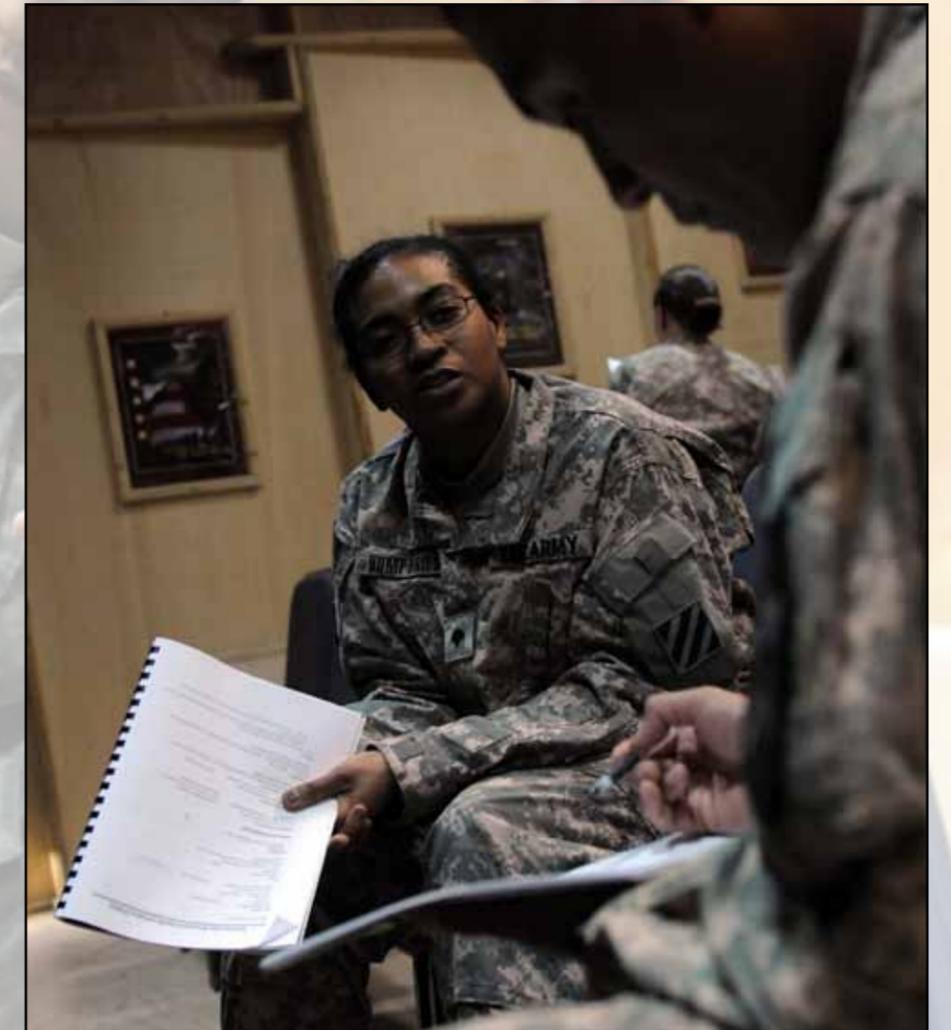
After the introduction of the program, it will be reviewed to assess its affects on Soldiers, and acceptance among the Task Force Marne medical providers. Success

in the program will be measured by an increase in patients assisted, and a decrease in violent or suicidal incidents. If proven effective, the new process could easily be continued by medical professionals after their deployment is finished.

"I am definitely looking at the big picture and I'm very excited for the potential of this system,"

said Maj. Richardson. "There is great potential for this to be carried into the garrison environment and a wider spectrum."

Once Task Force Marne has proven the difference it can make, the Primary Care Behavioral Health Initiative could become an essential tool to ensure better mental and emotional healthcare for Soldiers. 🇺🇸



Specialist Erica Humphries, mental health tech for the 3rd Infantry Division Special Troops Battalion, provides a patient's view during a training scenario for the Primary Care Behavioral Health seminar held at Forward Operating Base Warhorse.

# Apache Blanket Covers Iraqi Palm Groves

Story and Photos by  
Pfc. Adrian Muehe  
135th MPAD

DIYALA, Iraq – The palm groves of Mahudiya, Iraq, created an eerie setting on a Friday morning as U.S. Soldiers and Iraqi Police from Hib Hib, made their way underneath a canopy of leaves, moving slowly in a single line, like a blanket being pulled over a sleeping child.

Small patches of sunlight snuck in through the gray clouds between periods of light rain. The vegetation was saturated after a downpour the previous night, soaking the men as they moved through it checking every piece of land, looking for

weapons as part of Operation Apache Blanket conducted by 3rd Platoon, 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, on April 23.

“Indirect Fire [IDF] and IEDs [Improvised Explosive Devices] are now a fairly high priority given that there has been an increase of attacks in this area, including rockets launched from the palm groves,” said 1st Lt., William Horan, 3rd platoon leader, Apache Co., 1/23 Inf.

According to 1st Lt. Horan, an individual was detected by surveillance running in these palm groves in the pitch black of night.

“We thought it was weird, and kind of suspicious so we went and checked it out,” said 1st Lt. Horan. “We wanted to make sure there wasn’t any kind of weapons cache there.”

Also participating in this joint operation with Apache Co. Soldiers and Hib Hib police were the 18th Engineer Company, Task Force 296, 3 SBCT, 2nd ID and military working dogs from Warhorse Kennels.

The engineers brought out metal detectors to sweep between the trees, trying to identify potential buried munitions, while the dogs sniffed around using their heightened sense of smell to detect even the slightest hint of gunpowder or explosives.

“A human can’t smell a bomb,” said Staff Sgt. Curtis Hay, a military police military working dog handler for Warhorse Kennels. “I can send that dog out there 100 yards away from me and he can tell me

An Iraqi policeman looks forward as does Spc. Michael McQueen, of Dunn, N.C., and an automatic rifleman for 3rd Platoon, Apache Co., 1/23 Inf., while taking cover behind a palm tree in Mahudiya, Iraq, on April 23. This was part of Operation Apache Blanket, a clearing operation conducted in palm groves where recent suspicious activity has been reported.

what’s out there without me going in the kill zone.”

These military working dogs are a mission essential factor in clearing operations, not only for detection, but to serve as another battle buddy, watching out for Soldiers.

“It’s a way of saving peoples’ lives,” said Staff Sgt. Hay. “I love that dog, but it’s better to have him out looking for a bomb than a Soldier.”

The search party proceeded cautiously, never knowing what awaited them with every step.

“You got to be careful out there, always looking around, you never know when you find something if it may be booby-trapped or not,” said Spc. Michael Pichotta, a fire team leader for 3rd Platoon.

After the length of the palm grove was searched, no weapons were found, but signs of suspicion were.

“We found a bag, similar to a sandbag, that was folded neatly and buried,” said 1st Lt. Horan. “I know from past experiences that these are used to carry mortars, and it’s weird that someone would hide a bag.”

Specialist Michael McQueen, an automatic rifleman for 3rd Platoon, was on his tenth clearing operation with Operation Apache Blanket.

“It’s disappointing to go



through all that trouble and not find any weapons,” said Spc. McQueen. “At least we know these groves are clear now.”

The Tomahawk Soldiers of Apache Co. will continue to perform clearing operations as part of their partnership with ISF in the area around the city of Khalis.

First Lieutenant Horan said that despite the recent increase in attacks, they are still considerably lower than they were two years ago.

“This tells me, along with the fact that we aren’t finding much on these clearing operations, that we have almost cleared Iraq of weapons caches,” said 1st Lt. Horan. 🚫

Sergeant Alex Pryzbylowski, of Salem Oregon, and of 3rd Platoon, Apache Co., 1/23 Inf., points out something of interest to Sgt. Adam Beach, a native of Lake of the Ozarks, Mo., also of 3rd Platoon, during Operation Apache Blanket in Mahudiya, Iraq, on April 23. The operation was conducted to secure palm groves in Mahudiya to counteract a recent increase in attacks in Diyala province.



# CLEANING UP THE STREETS IN BAQUBAH

Story and Photos by  
Pvt. Zachary Zuber  
135th MPAD

DIYALA, Iraq – Centuries ago, Diyala province, Iraq, was part of the cradle of civilization, a bustling region with a thriving economy embodied in the vibrant oranges, pomegranates and vegetables harvested in the farmlands and soon after sold in the marketplaces.

These days, an individual would need a vivid imagination to picture the flourishing past amid the modern-day drought and heaps of burning garbage along the country side. Seeing this, local government officials have recognized that the current trash disposal process must change.

Together with the Diyala Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) and 1st Battalion, 37th Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, the leaders of Diyala province, commemorated the opening of the Baqubah Landfill on Earth Day, April 22. These organizations have begun a new initiative in the provincial capital, Baqubah, to promote proper waste disposal procedures and to generate better sanitation service.

“It is very important for us

to create these resources for the cities and the people,” said Mr. Haider Kadhum Hosien Aziz, directorate general of municipalities for Diyala province. “With proper trash and sewage networks, we can clean up the area and have a healthier, more beautiful city.”

The landfill is considered only one component of a larger project dedicated to shifting the local citizens’ perception of trash disposal beginning with a new network of community trash and recycling bins placed

throughout the city. Soldiers from 1/37th FA have collaborated with members of the PRT to establish contracts to hire local employees and equipment to institute a proper disposal process where garbage is first placed in dumpsters that can then be hauled to the landfill.

“We will now be trying to encourage people to use bags for their trash, and to use the new bins so it can be taken by trucks the PRT gave us to this landfill,” said Mr. Aziz. “This will be very important for

people to transfer from what we used to know to a more modern way now and for the future.”

Throughout each step of the process, Diyala provincial leaders, the PRT and 1/37th FA have enabled a change in the community mentality so the citizens will take part in the new system. The people have used roads and yards as dumpsters so long, changing that habit will be a challenge to overcome. In order to do this they have offered educational materials to local leaders, including the Imams who broadcast to a wide audience daily.

“The education process has been ongoing since we have been here,” said Capt. Rick Helton, commander of Alpha Battery, 1/37th FA. “We are letting people know the benefits of keeping streets and waterways clean, and what can happen if they don’t.”

The focus on education will help people understand the potential health concerns they face if their current habits do not change, said Mr. Aziz. Creating a healthier environment may also encourage more people to visit the city. It has also generated interest among community

leaders in several other large cities that would benefit from an upgrade in utility services.

“It has been a good starting point just to get this first one opened up,” said Capt. Helton. “It has garnered a lot of interest in several cities, such as Khanaqin, Khalis, and Muqadadiyah, and is something we will definitely work towards there.”

If they can continue to garner support with the surrounding areas, the rest of Diyala province could soon see a significant upgrade in its sanitation utilities. Habits are often difficult to break, but with help from the people, the entire region has the potential to once again achieve international recognition for its beauty. 🇮🇶

Haider Kadhum Hosien Aziz, directorate general of municipalities for Diyala province, receives a sign to commemorate the Baqubah Landfill, opened on April 22. The landfill, along with newly created waste removal services, is part of a sanitation initiative in cooperation with 1/37th FA, and the Diyala Provincial Reconstruction Team.



Diyala province officials and leaders from the Provincial Reconstruction Team cut the ceremonial ribbon to open the new Baqubah Landfill on April 22. This landfill is part of a larger sanitation initiative undertaken by the 1/37th FA, to change waste management methods in the city.



# Attack Company Helps Iraqi Police Take Charge

Story and Photos by  
Pfc. Adrian Muehe  
135th MPAD

DIYALA, Iraq – “We do a lot of patrols without the IA [Iraqi Army] or U.S. Forces,” said Maj. Saddam Ahmad Mahoud, the commander of the Iraqi police station in Imam Mansoor. “We have been hit by Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in the past, and we didn’t have this training, or this equipment. We are ready now; this knowledge will help us react better.”

Leading the instruction on advanced medical care to Maj. Mahoud’s men are Soldiers from 4th Platoon, Attack Company, 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, on April 18.

Although these policemen received basic first-aid education in the past, the Soldiers of 4th Platoon felt that as the IPs continue to patrol communities independently, they must know how to react to an incident. Being a first responder requires the Iraqi policemen to know how to evaluate and treat casualties.

“We felt they needed more advanced medical training, that they needed to know more than just how to slap on a Band Aid,” said 1st Lt. John Nance, native of Crown Point, Ind., 4th platoon leader for Attack Co., 5/20 Inf.

“We also wanted to show them what we do and why we do it.”

Specialist Wayne Holmes, a combat medic with 4th Platoon, showed the IPs of Imam Mansoor how to effectively apply a pressure dressing to stop severe bleeding, apply tourniquets, and administer intravenous (IV) fluids, all of which are skills needed in traumatic situations.

Major Mahoud’s team of police has worked with 4th Platoon over the past seven months to receive not only medical training, but instruction on checkpoint operations and patrolling techniques.

“We’ve given them training in Battle Drill Six, which is vehicular and personnel search techniques,” said 1st Lt. Nance. “This

was stressed for the elections, but they’ll be able to use this for better security into the future, since one of their responsibilities is to operate checkpoints.”

The Sykes’ Regulars of 4th Platoon have also taken their training with this IP unit outside the classroom.

“We’ve done a lot of clearing operations together through the surrounding villages and palm groves,” said 1st Lt. Nance. “We’ve shown them how we operate and also shown them the equipment we use, such as a metal detector, and how that can be used to find weapons caches out in the palm groves.”

First Lieutenant Nance and his men no longer partner as

frequently with this IP unit since the closure of Forward Operating Base Caldwell, near Imam Mansoor. This isn’t because they are no longer close by.

“They operate alone 98 percent of the time,” said Attack Company Commander Capt. Ryan Case. “They really set an example for other IPs.”

This feeling is shared throughout Attack Co. as they have watched this Iraqi unit excel in training sessions and then apply what they learned during their combined operations.

“When I think of the Imam Police Station, I think of police stations back home,” said 1st Lt. Nance. “They perform the same duties as American police, they walk the beat, they patrol regularly, and they are very responsive to their people.”

As the Army prepares for its responsible drawdown of forces in Iraq, Maj. Mahoud is confident his men will be the best police force they can be, using the training they have received from Attack Company.

“We will control the situation here 100 percent,” said Maj. Mahoud about what will happen when U.S. Forces leave Diyala province. “We will provide security for villages around here, run checkpoints, investigate criminal activity, and we know if we need assistance we can call the IA if necessary.”



Specialist Wayne Holmes, a combat medic for 4th Platoon, Attack Company, 5/20 Inf., sticks an intravenous (IV) needle into the arm of Sgt. Samuel Camp, a mortar team leader for 4th Platoon, during a demonstration for Iraqi policemen at the Police Station in Imam Mansoor, Iraq, on April 18.



Using a specially made bandage with a valve, Spc. Wayne Holmes, a combat medic with 4th Platoon, Attack Company, 5/20 Inf., demonstrates how to effectively provide first aid for a sucking chest wound at the police station in Imam Mansoor, Iraq, on April 18. This lesson was part of a class on medical procedures given to Iraqi policemen so they can treat casualties when they are the first responders to an incident.

# Stryker Brigade Combat Dental Team, At Your Service

Story and Photos by  
Pfc. Adrian Muehe  
135th MPAD

DIYALA, Iraq – When Army medical care in a deployed environment comes to mind, most people think of combat medics out in the field working with Soldiers. What many don't realize is that infantry brigades also bring their own dentists.

Meet Capt. Jaylon Waite, a native of Soldotna, Alaska, the dentist for 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, and officer in charge of the 3 SBCT, 2nd ID Combat Dental Team currently de-

ployed at Forward Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq.

“Our role [as medical] is to preserve the fighting force, to keep them healthy and on the battlefield,” said Capt. Waite. “We fulfill the role of conserving the fighting force dentally.”

Back at Joint Base Lewis-McCord, Wash., Capt. Waite and his team worked hard to ensure the brigade's Soldiers were caught up on their dental needs, so they wouldn't have to schedule a routine exam while deployed. This ensures that Soldiers are dentally fit for duty and are able to focus on missions instead of when they

need their next cleaning.

“My primary mission here is emergency dentistry, in case something goes wrong,” said Capt. Waite. “However, we will do anything in our capabilities. You don't have to be hurting, or have a broken tooth. If someone comes in and wants me to check them to see if they're healthy, I'll do that.”

Since he is the only dentist in the brigade, he is consequently the only Army dentist in Diyala province, and he has Soldiers come from all over the region to see him for their dental needs. Being strictly a general dentist, and not an orthodontist or specialist, he sometimes needs outside help.

“I don't have as many capabilities as I do in garrison, so I have to be careful what I get into, I don't want to bite off more than I can chew,” said Capt. Waite. “We have other dentists not too far away at

Captain Jaylon Waite, of Soldotna, Alaska, the dentist for the Arrowhead Brigade, and Spc. Lorenzo Canto, a native of Mount Pleasant, Texas, and a dental technician for Company C, 296th BSB, pose for a photo in front of a mural they painted in their exam room at Forward Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq. They are part of the Combat Dental Team that serves the needs of the brigade, and all Soldiers in Diyala province, Iraq.

Joint Base Balad, so if I need advanced help or support, they have more advanced specialists I can consult.”

Besides having specialists at JBB, he has a support team here of two dental technicians, Spc. Lorenzo Cano, and Spc. Mark Van Wart.

“Dentistry is a four-handed job,” said the Brigade Dentist. “They're my two other hands, without them I'm not much good. I usually have forceps in one hand and a pick in the other, so they're there to hand me other utensils or supply suction.”

Even with most people having a fear of dentists, Capt. Waite enjoys his role in this combat team.

“My job rocks,” exclaimed Capt. Waite. “I get to work on Soldiers. They're good patients. They're typically tough and not whiney. Dentistry is fun, it's mechanical, it's artistic, and my patients don't die.”

The Army has many medical professionals at hand to ensure Soldiers are capable of completing their missions. Even though they are constantly overlooked, the Combat Dental Team is an essential component to help keep the Army rolling along. 🇺🇸

Captain Jaylon Waite, a native of Soldotna, Alaska, dentist for the Arrowhead Brigade, gives a routine exam to 1st Lt. John Mones, a platoon leader for Company C, 5/20 Inf., at Forward Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq, on April 7. First Lieutenant Mones came in to receive this check up as part of his physical to go to Ranger School after this deployment.



# Seasons Can't Change Growing in New Greenhouses

Story and Photos by  
Pvt. Zachary Zuber  
135th MPAD

DIYALA, Iraq – Growing and selling crops is a vital part of the agrarian culture in Diyala province, Iraq. What was once one of the most fertile regions in the Middle East is now a difficult place for farmers to cultivate their land.

As a significantly lower amount of rainfall descends on the farmlands of Iraq, Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, are providing an innovative solution to nurture plant growth year round. With the construction of almost 40 new greenhouses in the Wajihya district of Diyala province, the Highlanders are hoping to not only mitigate the effects of the drought but infuse life in the agriculture sector.

“The biggest challenge that these farmers face is the water shortage, and these greenhouses can solve that problem,” said Capt. Samuel McDowell, the lead officer on the project for 2/3 Inf. “Almost 80 percent of the people in this area are farmers, and half of them are unemployed due to the current conditions.”

For farmers in the area, the

new buildings represent an opportunity that they have never seen before. The greenhouses take advantage of a modern method of drip irrigation to water crops in which a slow flow of water trickles on individual plants from a specific pipe thus requiring less water for nourishment.

“The buildings let us grow crops during the colder months, by protecting them from the weather,” said Abdullah Halif al Khalim, a muqtar in the Wajihya district. “Now we can grow tomatoes, cucumbers and other important crops all year.”



Soldiers from HHC, 2/3 Inf., discuss the needs and capabilities of a new greenhouse built for farmers in the Wajihya district of Diyala province, Iraq. The greenhouse is one of nearly 40 that are being constructed in an effort to help farmers prosper despite a historic drought.

These types of produce are important to the local farmers because they are a staple of Iraqi cuisine. By growing tomatoes, or other crops even during the cold months, the citizens will have food for their families, and colorful produce will continue to line the streets in the local market.

“They can also open up many more opportunities for farmers to increase their growing and earning capacity,” said Capt. McDowell. “When we looked at what we could do to provide the most effective solution for the \$5,000 micro-grant limit, greenhouses seemed like the best



Soldiers from HHC, 2/3 Inf., explain the drip-irrigation system used in greenhouses to Iraqi farmers. The greenhouses are part of a new project to revitalize the agricultural industry in the Diyala province of Iraq, which has suffered in recent years due to historic drought conditions.

idea.”

One of the essential components for success with this project is education. The Highlander Soldiers led training sessions for all the recipients, instructing them on how the greenhouse operates and its capabilities. The greenhouses can be built by local contractors, and farmers may even use their micro-grant funds to purchase fertilizer and seeds.

“Some of these people have no idea what a greenhouse even is, and so we have to teach them all the reasons to use it as well as how to maximize its potential,” said Capt. McDowell. “The key to all of this is to make sure that we can get the farmers excited about this project and what it can do for them.”

The Highlanders have already seen examples of the citizens’ excitement when touring Wajihya to find candidates to receive the new greenhouses. During one mission they visited a farmer who, after hearing about the idea, had used his own resources to construct a greenhouse and begin planting in it.

“It was great for us to see someone already jumping on this idea,” said Capt. McDowell. “This one place can provide an example for neighboring farmers to follow and help convince them to work toward the same goal.”

# Taking the Final Steps Toward Home

Story and Photos by  
Pvt. Zachary Zuber  
135th MPAD

DIYALA, Iraq – “My wife had twins before we got here,” said Cpl. Christopher Walters, a vehicle commander for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division. His only familiarity with his new little ones has been through webcam. “It’s exciting for me to start getting ready to go home to see them grow up.”

Since the middle of March, Cpl. Walters and the rest of HHC, 2/3 Inf., have been preparing for the closure of Forward Operating Base Normandy. Mission focus is paramount, but the Soldiers are realizing that in just a short while they will return to Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash. To accomplish this task, they have scaled back daily missions and focused more on administrative requirements.

Their mission here in Iraq has been to train and cooperate with local forces to ensure they have the tactical skills necessary to confidently secure their communities. As these Soldiers prepare to rejoin their own cities and towns, the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) are doing the same. Watching ISF take the lead role has shown the Highlanders the effect they have had in the community.

“The [Iraqi] Security Forces have been doing great work without us,” said Capt. Ryan Bell, commander of HHC, 2/3 Inf. “They have kept us up to date on everything going on, including arrests and actions taken by the security council to improve the community.”

The Iraqi Security Forces have increased security patrols throughout the community, and seen a rise in the number of arrests, said Capt. Bell. The Highlanders can focus on those facts to measure the success of their diligent work.

“The Soldiers are excited to see that the area is doing well without them,” said Capt. Bell. “If it wasn’t, that would mean we had missed the mark somewhere.”

Despite reducing combat operations the Highlanders have kept very busy. Their new focus is to pack all the tools they used to create their success. They are conducting a detailed inventory that involves finding and recording everything registered to them, down to the beds they sleep on. Some people may expect an infantry unit to have little more than guns to count, but the list is staggering.

“First we inventory all the real property... almost \$30 million worth of equipment which we will hand over to the Iraqis,” said Capt. Bell. “Then every company in the battalion is doing a 100 percent inventory of all organiza-

tional property and theater provided equipment, which for HHC is about \$115 million worth of equipment.”

The inventory process has required hard work and long hours from the Highlanders. They have implemented guard shifts overnight to secure items waiting to be counted, packed and shipped home.

“We are trying to get ahead of the game before we start the process of leaving,” said Cpl. Walters. “The whole process of itemizing everything and packing it well, will speed up our time through customs and get us home quicker.”

As they work on final preparations Soldiers anticipate their return to Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., but Capt. Bell’s focus is on ensuring everyone gets home safely.

“Our focus has been on helping the Iraqis capture and prevent terrorists,” said Capt. Bell. “Now I’m looking forward to setting the stage and getting our people focused on the next mission which is to get redeployed safely with all our people, weapons and equipment.”

The Highlanders have worked hard to make their mission a success. Soldiers and their families have grown during the deployment, and one young father is looking forward to watching his two young children grow right before his eyes. 🇺🇸

# Training a Friendly Force of Iraqi Police

Story and Photos by  
Pvt. Zachary Zuber  
135th MPAD

DIYALA, Iraq – There are many things to see in the Jalula market daily. It is a series of shops spanning multiple blocks of the city, visited by thousands of patrons each day looking for items ranging from fresh fish to new clothing styles. In a bustling environment like this one it is easy for situations to arise that would be easily handled with the help of the local police.

Through a new training program operating out of Forward Operating Base Cobra, Iraq, Soldiers from the 66th Military Police Company are encouraging Iraqi Police from the surrounding area to have a stronger presence throughout these communities. The 66th MPs, attached to the 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, are fostering the desire IPs have to get out and mingle with the population to create a better relationship with the people they protect.

“The underlying premise of the class is to get these guys out there and be the main independent security force at the community level,” said 1st Lt. Alicia Mienko, 3rd platoon leader, 66th MP Co. “The Iraqi Army has done a great job of securing Iraq, now it’s time for the police to take over and transition from combat operations to stability operations.”

For the first two days of the five day course, the MPs held classroom training to discuss specific actions and behavior that would help ensure that there is a smooth transition. For the following three days they travelled through the local neighborhoods and markets with the Iraqi policemen, encouraging them to become more involved and help with even simple problems.

The practical portion, completed among the citizens, is where these Soldiers can see the improvements they are looking to create. As the IPs walk through the markets, they talk to anyone with a question or concern. During their time in Jalula they were able to resolve a conflict between two merchants and make friends with local children.

“The other day at the market I saw a sergeant pick up a small child and while he was holding him I could tell it was something the people weren’t used to,” said Spc. Ryan Greenzwieg, a driver for 3rd Platoon. “That made the child happy and the expression on the parents’ faces showed they were glad to see him taking interest.”

Instances where these police step out and connect with the community shows that the guidance they are being given will have a lasting effect.

“Having a presence in these communities gives the people faith,” said Lt. Mienko. “When they have that trust the people will be more likely to talk to the police which means they can continue to fight crime in the individual communities.” 🇺🇸



Children from a Jalula neighborhood talk with Iraqi Police as they patrol the community to show citizens they are increasing their presence throughout the city. With guidance from 3rd Platoon, 66th MP Co., the IPs are taking a more active role in responding to criminal behavior and any problems citizens may have.

# Arrowhead Brigade Holds Soldier and NCO of the Quarter Competitions

Story and Photos by  
Pfc. Adrian Muehe  
135th MPAD

DIYALA, Iraq – The best of the best from the 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division gathered at Forward Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq, to compete against each other for the title of the Best Soldier or the Best Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) of the Quarter on April 10.

Emerging victorious after a series of skill tests and going before a board of brigade leaders were Spc. Bret Engle, of Phoenix, Ariz., and a dismounted cavalry scout with Troop A, 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, 3 SBCT, 2nd ID who won Soldier of the Quarter, and Sgt. Eric Moline, a native of Spring Creek, Nev., and a section chief for Battery A, 1st Battalion, 37th Field Artillery Regiment, 3 SBCT, 2nd ID, who won the title of

NCO of the Quarter.

“It feels really good to get here after coming all this way,” said Spc. Engle.

The freshly crowned Soldier of the Quarter has been doing his part to help run tripartite checkpoints and conduct tripartite operations at FOB Cobra. After his time in the Army he plans on going to law school and venturing into politics.

“It was a really fun competition, and it feels good to bring one home for the Red Lions,” said Sgt. Moline

Sergeant Moline has been in the Army for over four years He joined the Army right out of rough time in high school and has been doing good ever since, said Sgt. Moline.

To get these titles, they had to beat their peers by demonstrating their knowledge of how to evaluate and treat a casualty; call for indirect fire; perform level 1 combat-ives, and how to use communica-

tion equipment.

They also had to demonstrate their proficiency on the firing range, firing not only their weapons, but also an M9 pistol, which many were unfamiliar with.

“I had used it one other time before today,” said Spc. Engle. “I used one at [FOB] Cobra, we went to the Special Forces compound and their weapons sergeant gave me a 45 minute class, and that helped me out a lot today.”

Even though only one Soldier and one NCO walked away with the title, 3 SBCT 2nd ID Command Sergeant Major, Command Sgt. Maj. Alan Bjerke, congratulated all the contestants for successfully completing the path to get them to this competition.

“You guys are the best of the best,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Bjerke. “You all had to win the competition for your battalions. You are all winners.” 🇺🇸



## NCO of the Quarter

Sergeant Eric Moline  
section chief, Battery A, 1st Battalion, 37th Field  
Artillery Regiment



## Soldier of the Quarter

Specialist Bret Engle  
dismounted cavalry scout, Troop A, 1st Squad-  
ron, 14th Cavalry Regiment

# FOB Caldwell becomes Kirkush Military Training Base

Story and Photos by  
Pfc. Adrian Muehe  
135th MPAD

DIYALA, Iraq – As part of the Responsible Drawdown, U.S. Forces signed over command of Forward Operating Base Caldwell to the Iraqi Forces and renamed it Kirkush Military Training Base on April 2.

Responsible for this turnover was 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division. FOB Caldwell is the first base handed over by 3 SBCT, 2nd ID.

“This is a monumental moment where we’re executing our reduction of forces and helping ourselves get one step closer to having US Forces out of Iraq,” said Lt. Col. Joseph Davidson, commander of 1/14th Cav.

Soldiers from 1/14th Cav. that have called FOB Caldwell home have been preparing the base for the handover over the past few months. After a majority of the personnel had left the base, those remaining had to cook their own meals and wash their own clothes. They stayed behind to ensure the facilities would be in pristine condition for the turnover.

“Essentially we’ve been cleaning stuff up, everything was in pretty good shape when

we got here,” said 1st Lt. Jake Creecy, of Colorado Springs, Colo., and the assistant supply officer for Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1/14th Cav. “We’re just making sure that everything is functional and clean for [the IA] when they move in.”

The IA received the base well, finding the facilities and equipment left for them suitable and ready for use.

“When we came here to receive this camp we found all the buildings, all the equipment, generators, gyms, everything here we can use,” said Iraqi

Army Maj. Duraid Khaldom, of the Location Command for Iraqi Military Bases. “Any unit from Iraqi forces who come here can find it ready to use for training.”

After the ceremony, both US Forces and IA Soldiers gathered for lunch to celebrate this historic occasion.

“Any forces’ deployment here has been a historical step. It may not seem like it at the time because it’s small steps,” said Lt. Col. Davidson. “I get to see not only the fruits of my labor, but of everyone in the Army’s as well.” 🇺🇸



Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Davidson, commander of 1/14th Cav., and Sameer Al-Hadad, the Iraqi Prime Minister’s chief of staff representative, sign the necessary paperwork to transfer FOB Caldwell from the US Army to the Iraqi Army on April 2.

# Iraqi Children Learn About Life in America Through Letters

Story and Photo Illustration by  
Pvt. Zachary Zuber  
135th MPAD

DIYALA, Iraq – In a primary school in Jalula, Iraq, 15 students have begun new friendships with people they have never met. Through letters, these children will learn what they have in common with others across the world. With the help of Crazyhorse Troop, 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, they have new pen pals in New Jersey to correspond with.

“I wrote to ask for them to send pictures and to ask how things are there and what the school is like,” said Riyel, a girl in the class. “We want to know what their markets are like and what kind of things they do in their city.”

The stu-

dents have sent their first set of letters and are waiting anxiously to receive answers to all their questions. This pen pal program was created by Capt. Ken Quail, commander of Crazyhorse Troop, as a way to promote a strong relationship with members of the community.

“We had a lot of success with our junior heroes program where we dropped off coloring books about the IPs [Iraqi Police] to local school children,” said Capt. Quail. “It dawned on me that we were making incremental increases in the atmosphere of the community itself every time that we went to the schools. The letter-writing campaign has a didactic nature in that it both facilitates Iraqis understanding of Americans, and Americans understanding of the conditions here.”

Through this understanding, a stronger connection can be founded among these students and their families. The program has a potential to be expanded from this one first class to a much broader audience within multiple schools in the 1/14th Cav. area of operation.

“We would like to do two things with this program, the first being to expand it out to more classes,” said Capt. Quail. “The second is to facilitate cutting ourselves out of it so that it can just be mutual exchange between the US and Iraq.”

By getting involved on a personal level with the people of Iraq, Crazyhorse Troop has been able to create a unique partnership with people in their area. Continuing these programs will allow them to create lasting friendships between the citizens of Iraq and America. 🇺🇸



# Chaplain's Corner

## Laying the Foundation

The missions/deployments of the Army as well as the other branches of the military are growing. What this ultimately boils down to is more time away from home and less time with our spouse and children. Our family relationships begin to suffer because the Army owns us 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, especially during a deployment such as this one. So how do we build lasting relationships with our family?

The first thing we must have is the right foundation. A foundation is what we establish as the base or support of a building. It bares the weight of the building and prevents it from toppling over or crumbling. It is what the rest of the structure is built upon and holds up the walls and roof of that structure. Without any foundation even the slightest wind will collapse the building.

If your home is built upon success, fulfillment, money, being happy or “self-actualization,” these can only lead to defeat, problems and the destruction of your home. The right foundation to any relationship is putting God first. Developing an understanding and knowledge of who He is and why He cares for you. With such a foundation as the support of your home, then even the strongest storm will not cause it to come crashing down around you. Place God first; then comes the husband/wife relationship, followed by the children, then extended family and friends. Successes, money, happiness all take a back seat to these. Psalm 127:1 stated that “**Unless the Lord builds the house, its builder's labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchers stand guard in vain.**”

As we build the foundation and

place God first in our lives, we discover that He is **TRUSTWORTHY**. Psalm 84:11 “For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord gives grace and glory; no good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly.”

That He is **LOVABLE**. Deuteronomy 6:2-5 “Hear, O Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the Lord, the God of your fathers, promised you... Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and with all your strength.”

That He is **INCHARGE**. Psalm 31:14-15 “But I have complete confidence in you, O Lord, for I have said, “You are my God. My destiny is under your control.”

Once the foundation is laid, we can start building the walls to family relationships. The first block should be to concentrate on your commitment to your marriage. Whatever happens in your marriage, be willing to stick together and work it out. This may mean getting help from your Chaplain or through the Family Life Chaplain and Center. As you work it out with your spouse, your children will learn how to work through their own problems. Set the proper example.

Make sure spouses know how much you love them. Tell them often. Showing open affection for each other helps build self-esteem and confidence. Respect each other and don't criticize even when things don't go so well, or when you're deployed. Praise each other for even the small things in life. Do not make your home a “War Zone” where all you do is fight. Stop com-



CHAPLAIN (MAJ)  
PATRICK BASAL

plaining about the long hours, deployments, field duty, housing, or schools. All these things are on our spouses mind as well and verbalizing them only tends to make things worse.

The key to any relationship is **listening**. Listen to one another, then take all things to the Lord in prayer and then listen to God about every issue:

Because God is **LOVE**, therefore His will is always best!

Because God is **ALL-KNOWING**, therefore His directions are always right!!

Because God is **ALL-POWERFUL**, therefore He can enable me to do His will!!!

As tough as it is to maintain family closeness and strength during a deployment, as much time as it takes, it is worth every ounce of effort that it takes. So don't give up, but remember that God is in control and he is willing to help with your family relationship, but only if you ask Him.

### PAX DOMINE (The Peace of the Lord)

Staff Sgt. Amy C. Tirador  
209th Military Intelligence  
Company  
July 18, 1980 - November 04, 2009

Pfc. Erin McLyman  
296th Brigade Support  
Battalion  
May 10, 1983 - March 13, 2010

Staff Sgt. Todd W. Selge  
Company A, 5th Battalion, 20th  
Infantry Regiment  
June 22, 1984 - September 3, 2009

Sgt. Jordan M. Shay  
Company A, 5th Battalion, 20th  
Infantry Regiment  
April 3, 1987 - September 3, 2009

### MAY THOSE FALLEN NEVER BE FORGOTTEN

Sgt. Keith Adam Coe  
1st Battalion,  
37th Field Artillery Regiment  
March 18, 1980 - April 27, 2010



3<sup>RD</sup> STRYKER BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM  
2<sup>ND</sup> INFANTRY DIVISION  
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