



DANGER FORWARD



May 3, 2010 | Issue 14

Bringing closure to wounded Veterans

By Spc. Samuel Soza
367th MPAD, USD-S PAO

COB BASRA – “They had me hidden in the sergeant major’s office,” said Staff Sgt. Julio Arredondo, “They told me he was looking all around.”

Moments later, the governance noncommissioned officer with the 486th Civil Affair Battalion emerged and surprised his brother, Sgt. (Retired) Juan Arredondo, both natives of Coachella, Calif., during a welcoming ceremony at the al-Faw Palace in Baghdad, April 5.

More than just a return to where he had served as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Juan, accompanied by eight other recovering Soldiers, took advantage of a unique program known as Operation Proper Exit. The year-old initiative allows Soldiers to return to Iraq to visit the places where they were injured as part of their overall recovery process.

Recovery is more than just a physical effort, said Julio, who is currently stationed at Contingency Operating Base Basra in southern Iraq. It provides psychological closure.

“The program definitely helps – and not only my brother,” he said. “I know a lot of Soldiers that want to come back. It helps bring closure for some that just want to walk out on their own versus their last memories of being carried out on a stretcher.”

Juan lost his left hand when an improvised explosive device was detonated near his vehicle Feb. 25, 2005. During Operation Proper Exit, he returned to the base in al-Ramadi where he served and took a trip out to the site where his life was changed.

“They actually flew him over where he was hit,” Julio said.

The reunion marked the brothers’ first time together in Iraq.

The other eight Soldiers visiting Iraq this trip as part of the program were also taken to the spots where they were injured. Along the way, they had the opportunity to share their experiences with

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Photo by Sgt. Rebekah Lampman

Sgt. (Retired) Juan Arredondo, of Coachella, Calif., listens in to communications aboard a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter, April 5. Arredondo, formerly an Avenger crew member with Company D, 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, returned to Iraq to the site in Ramadi where he lost his left hand to an improvised explosive device. The trip, made possible through Operation Proper Exit, was meant to help Soldiers in the recovery process.



Joint patrol p. 4



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Chief of Staff visits, p. 9

Danger Seven sends World Press Freedom Day

May 3 is a little-known holiday with a big meaning. It is World Press Freedom Day, the day we take a step back and recognize the importance of a free press that keeps people informed and through that, keeps governments, corporations, and a myriad of other institutions honest.

On a day such as this, I can't help but reflect on all the rights and freedoms Americans are born with and we as Soldiers defend. These are rights Iraqis have had to fight for their whole lives, and they are on the verge of achieving the basic rights we have enjoyed for hundreds of years in the U.S.

This is a great opportunity to not only thank you Soldiers for everything that you do in making tremendous personal sacrifices to bring basic freedoms such as this to so many people but to also remind you to take advantage of this important right.

We as service members can be deployed on very short notice to anywhere in the world so keeping tabs on significant world events is not only important for us and our families, but it can also give you personal insight to why you're being told to go someplace. Leaders, this is more important for you so you can help your Soldiers understand their mission that much more.

There's a reason the knowledge of current events is part of the enlisted promotion board process. In the profession of arms, current events have as great an impact as any other, and in an information age where you can read the front page of a newspaper in New Zealand or keep up with what's going on in your hometown back in the U.S., there is no excuse to not be an informed citizen.

Even here on COB Basra, we have easy access to USO and MWR facilities where we can stay up with world affairs. Soldiers maintain "situational awareness" through simple things like picking up the Stars & Stripes or taking a moment to navigate to any number of news websites; doing so will make you a better Soldier and a better person. Leaders, ensure you yourself are doing the same and allow your Soldiers the opportunity to stay informed.

Now get after it!

Danger 7



Jim Champagne
Command Sergeant Major
U.S. Army



Major General
Vincent K. Brooks



Command Sergeant Major
Command Sergeant Major
Jim Champagne

DANGER FORWARD

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-  17th FIB
-  4th BCT, 1st Armd. Div.
-  12th CAB
-  3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div.
-  367th MPAD



Stay safe, beat the heat



Every day an estimated 1,000 eye injuries occur in American workplaces. Not wearing eye protection contributes to eye injuries at work, and nearly three out of five workers injured were not wearing eye protection at the time of the accident. Also wearing the wrong kind of eye protection for the job also contributes to eye injuries. Flying particles account for 70% of the accidents that occur and most of the particles were traveling faster than a hand-thrown object when the accident occurred. Potential eye hazards can be found in nearly every industry, and military motor pools are considered industrial centers. It is reported that more than 40% of injuries studied occurred among craft workers (mechanics, repairers, carpenters, and plumbers).

Standard safety glasses look very much like normal glasses, but are designed to protect you against flying particles. Safety glasses have lenses that are impact resistant and frames that are far stronger than regular eyeglasses, and must meet the standards of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). Safety glasses are also available in prescription form for those persons who need corrective lenses, and can be equipped with side shields, cups, or limited lenses to offer additional protection.

The best way to prevent eye injuries is to always wear effective eye protection. To be effective, the eyewear must be of the appropriate type for the hazard encountered and properly fitted. A recent survey showed that 94% of the injuries to workers wearing eye protection resulted from objects or chemicals going around or under the protector. Eye protection devices should allow for air to circulate between the eye and the lens. Eye protection devices must also be properly maintained; scratched and dirty devices reduce vision, cause glare and may contribute to accidents. It is estimated that 90% of eye injuries can be prevented through the use of proper protective eyewear.

You can guard against eye injury by making sure that you are wearing the appropriate protective eyewear for the particular eye hazards you face. It's important to remember that regular glasses alone do not offer protection from eye hazards. Follow your units established safety procedures (safety SOPs and maintenance safety SOPs), and never hesitate to ask your supervisor or Division Safety Office (DSO) if you have questions pertaining to eye safety.

This and other great information to help with risk mitigation can be found at:
<http://1idportal.1id.army.smil.mil/SpecialStaff/DivisionSafety/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx>
And there is always great information and help for your safety problems at:
<http://bronet/dss/safety/default.aspx>

USD-S re-enlistments, April 23-30

3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf Div

BSTB
SPC JASIA M. JOHNSON

203BSB
SSG MORRISA L RAY
SSG JAVIER TENA

2nd Bn, 69th AR
SPC JEREMY W. MANN
SPC JAMES K. OSBORNE

3-1CAV
SSG WESLEY D. GIPSON

1-15INF
SGT ALBERT D. HANES
SPC JAMES V. WILSON III
SPC DARIUS J. ROWSER
PFC JOSHUA B. HYATT
SSG BENJAMIN A. JONES
SSG JOHN M. DUENAS
SPC GEORGE A. CROOM JR

1-10FA
PFC DANIEL W. DESIMONE

17th FiB

B BTRY, 1-377th FA
SGT ADAM M LANIER

HHB, 1-377th FA
SPC ZACHARY S. JOHNSON

256th SIGNAL
PFC SARAH K. VINCENT

12th CAB

1st Bn, 214th AVN
SPC TINA NICOLE BURNETT
PFC ANTOINETTE SHAVONA DAVISON

3rd Bn, 158 AVN
PFC WILLIAM EDMOND CRAWFORD
SPC ALAN CHAPUSEAUX
PFC AUSTIN JAMES RICHARDSON
SSG DANIEL JEFFREY MARTIN
PFC JUSTIN RENEELEE SALAZAR

2nd, 159 ARB
SGT KATE ANN CANDELARIA
SGT BRADLEY CLINTON HARRIS

5th Bn, 158th AVN
PFC BRANDON CLAIR BUZZELL
SGT WILLIAM KEVIN EBEL
SGT JEREMY RYAN BOYD
SSG ELIKA ERIC TUIALUULUU

412th ASB
PFC THOMAS MATTHEW WILLIAMS
SPC WILL B STERLING
SPC DANIEL ACCIME

SPC PATRICK DILLON USHER
SSG BRYAN MAGALLANO MALINIS

1st INF DIV

HQ and Support
SPC JAMES A. ELLISOR
SSG MICHAEL A. FRAZIER
SPC SHAWN P. CONNOLLY
SPC MATTHEW W. KALDOR
SPC JUSTIN W. ADAM
CPL ERICA L. LOPEZ

Signal Co
SSG ROBERT L. MITCHELL
SFC EARL G. BROWN JR.

1ID Band
SPC WILLIAM S. MILFORD
SPC TRISTAN M. CALABRESE

I and S Co
SSG DANIEL D. DRAKE
SSG DAVID L. SMITH
SGT MATTHEW D. H. WAGNER
SFC CLIFFORD D. BARBER

Have a suggestion to make *Danger Forward* better? Send a SIPR email to our suggestion box: 1IDPAO SUGGESTIONBOX@1id.army.smil.mil

This week in Army history

This week in Big Red One history

The 1st Infantry Division entered combat in World War II as part of "Operation Torch", the invasion of North Africa, the first American campaign against the Axis powers. On May 9, 1943, the commander of the German "Afrika Korps" surrendered his force of 40,000 and North African operations for the Big Red One ended.

This week in OIF history

May 7, 2003 - President Bush lifts economic sanctions on Iraq.

This week in 3rd ID history

Berchtesgaden – home to Hitler's infamous Eagle's Nest retreat – was freed from the Nazis around May 5, 1945. Some say that the liberation of Berchtesgaden by the 101st Airborne Division's Easy Company is a myth propagated by the book and television miniseries "Band of Brothers" and that 3rd Infantry Division were the actual liberators.

Murray Simon, 84, a retiree from Columbia, Mass., served as a private first class with the 3rd Inf. Div. and recalled marching into Berchtesgaden with the first American troops that month and said that the 101st Airborne Soldiers replaced the 3rd Inf. Div. after they departed for Salzburg, Austria.

Relations building part of joint patrols

By Spc. Maurice Galloway
17th FiB PAO

COB BASRA – Soldiers with 1st Battalion, 377th Field Artillery Regiment, 17th Fires Brigade and the Tactical PSYOP Detachment, 318th Psychological Operations Company, recently conducted one of their routine joint patrols with the Iraqi Army to search out leads on suspicious behavior leading to mortar and rocket attacks in Basra Province.

Reliance on the cooperation from local residents makes their job easier.

“Building relationships in the communities is how we gather intelligence on potential indirect fire attacks,” said Sgt. Nicholas Fraley, team leader with the Personal Security Detachment, 1st Bn., 377th FAR. “The more joint patrols we conduct with the Iraqi Security Force, the smaller the window of opportunity for our enemies.”

While patrolling a new neighborhood in Jesaizah, Sgt. Evan Whitlock, team leader for the TP Det., 318th PSYOP Co., and native of Pacific, Mo., spoke with individuals such as tribal leaders about the security of the area and the services provided by the government.

“We are asking these people to report



Photo by Spc. Maurice Galloway
Sgt. Evan Whitlock, team chief for the Tactical PSYOP Detachment, 318th Psychological Operations Company, handed out approximately 250 tip cards carrying emergency response contact information during a counter-indirect fire patrol throughout in Basra, April 16.

suspicious activity in or around their city,” Whitlock said. “We know that we’re not going to receive good information if the people behind these attacks are doing more for the area than the government.”

Shaykh Hameed Khalaf Al-Darajy, a tribal leader of the Jesaizah district, spoke with Whitlock about the security of his community.

Whitlock said that it is everyone’s responsibility to ensure that Basra remains safe, and that turning-in people who are out to cause harm makes it easier for the

local government to focus on providing services to the neighborhoods.

“We are deeply concerned about the criminals that cause these attacks. We are concerned with the safety of our families,” said Darajy.

Whitlock suggested that the shaykh work with the local council and bring up their neighborhood concerns to the local government.

“We will place your concerns in our reports as well. We will do what we can to make sure your area receives the services it needs, but we need the area to stay safe so that the government can focus on meeting the needs of these people,” Whitlock told Darajy.

Members of the IA and U.S. forces handed out approximately 250 tip cards carrying emergency response information that links them directly to the Iraqi Security Forces’ call centers.

“Our goal is to make the people of these communities aware that these attacks are on Iraqi infrastructure and slow the growth of their communities,” Whitlock said. “Allowing people to commit these crimes is just as bad as committing the crime themselves.”



Photo by Spc. Maurice Galloway
While patrolling the streets of a new neighborhood, Soldiers of the Personal Security Detachment, 1st Battalion, 377th Field Artillery Regiment, 17th Fires Brigade, search the area for signs of potential threats in Basra, April 16.

For more from 17th FiB, visit
<http://www.lewis.army.mil/17FA/>

MOI budgets time for learning

By Master Sgt. David Bennett
367th MPAD, USD-S PAO

BASRA – The Ministry of Interior, partnering with Iraq Training and Advisory Mission officials, conducted two financial management courses at Basra International Airport from March 28 to April 15.

While the concepts were easily managed by most attendees, the intent behind the training was as topical as any activity going on in southern Iraq as the county continues to transition to an independent state as U.S. Forces drawdown. The central focus of the workshop was program management, planning, budget formulation, and contracting processes

The MOI represented all provinces and included a cross-section of expertise ranging from budget and program managers to Personal Security Detail personnel. Each participant is in some way, responsible for compiling budget requirements for their subordinate organizations.

The ministry's financial management, accounting, contracting, planning and programming advisory team co-hosted the training seminars. The courses were attended by participants from the Kurdistan Ministry of Interior, the Iraqi Ministry of Defense, and the Iraqi Counter Terrorism Service.

Senior instructors from the Naval Postgraduate School's Defense Resource Management Institute from Monterey, Calif. took part in the training. The inter-ministerial participation is significant in the development of a holistic strategy for Iraqi security.

Mark Hladky, a lecturer at DRMI, said the opportunity to participate at this time in Iraq's movement as a free sovereignty was enticing.

"Our goal is to enhance the effective allocation of resources within the MOI through developing an understanding and appreciation of the concepts, techniques, and analytical decision making skills re-



Photo by Master Sgt. David Bennett

Essam Hamed Al Shayaa, director of accounting at the Iraq's Ministry of Interior discusses contracting processes during a recent seminar at Basra International Airport. MOI officials are heading an effort to streamline how Iraqi ministries conduct fiscal planning.

lated to resources management," Hladky said.

DRMI conducts professional education programs in analytical decision making and resources management for military officers of all services as well as senior civilian officials of the United States and 162 other countries.

The first course was the two week Manager Planning and Tracking Officer Course. The second course was the one week Action Officer Planning and Tracking Course.

Instructors covered topics in strategic

planning, problem analysis, program management, planning and budget formulation and contracting. In addition to the DRMI instruction, the courses included ministry-led instruction on MoI strategic planning system, and MOI budget formulation process.

These courses are just two components of a multifaceted training and education program established by the Iraqi MOI to establish and refine a Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution System (PPBES) within the Ministry. The Iraqi PPBES process will significantly improve the ministry's ability to direct resources to achieve the goals and objectives required to support the strategic objectives of stability and security within Iraq.

Led by the MOI, all nine major Iraqi ministries are developing strategic budgeting plans for the 2011-2013 state budgets. This affects all Iraqi provinces, including Basra, where Maj. Gen. Fasil Kadim Ali, director of planning and tracking for Basra Province. Fasil said that the province has made strides in its budgeting and contracting processes including establishing competitive bidding procedures.

These processes are essential, he said, as Basra looks to build three new police stations, a medical center and new housing for its police. Fasil explained that before last year, when this office received help from Iraq Training and Advisory Mission officials, his staff made several trips to Baghdad to hammer out fiscal matters pertaining to Basra. Currently, that work is done in the province where the money is spent — all according to new MOI guidelines.

"Now, we don't have to go through the old system," Fasil said. "Now, we prepare our plans at the beginning of the year."

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Ag conference looks to Iraq's future

By Sgt. Francis Horton
367th MPAD, USD-S PAO

COB Basra – A meeting of agricultural minds took place on Contingency Operating Base Basra, April 27, focusing on reforming Iraq's agricultural businesses.

Both Soldiers and civilians met for two days to discuss the problems and potential solutions to issues arising in agriculture, fisheries and livestock in southern Iraq.

"This stage is more about making contacts," said Franco Scotti, an Italian Agro economist working with Inma, a private sector agricultural growth development agency.

It is important to make contacts within the local governances of the nine provinces comprising United States Division – South, Scotti said.

One of the goals of the meetings is to teach elected officials how to identify the problems they are encountering and how to go through the proper channels to fix the issues, said Sean Currans, a U.S. Department of Agriculture advisor working on the COB Basra Provincial Reconstruction Team.

"We've engaged the provincial agriculture committee. We had our first meeting



Photo by Sgt. Francis Horton

Maj. Robert Bonifacio, officer in charge of the agricultural cell, 486th Civil Affairs Battalion takes notes for the Agricultural meeting held on COB Basra, April 27.

in early January," he said. "We're teaching them how to go through the process."

The issues facing the Iraqi agricultural committees are complex and multifaceted.

One problem is with food imported

from Iran undercutting local Iraqi vendors. Regulations are needed to encourage Iraqis to buy local food, said Maj. Scott Vance, a civil affairs officer with 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division.

Training the Iraqi Agricultural Department in ways to improve their businesses has not been an easy task.

"Producers in Iraq are in an information vacuum," said Jeff Bonner, the Inma regional manager.

Farmers are seeing low harvest yields and a decline in access to international markets. Without the ability to expand, the farmers will continue to struggle, Bonner said.

Agricultural reform in the country will need help, however, and the crucial assistance will come from the Iraqi government, Bonner said.

"More Iraq governmental control is needed," he said. "The goal is to improve practices, techniques and bring in new technology, products and varieties."



Photo by Sgt. Francis Horton

The participants of the agricultural conference take a moment to take a photo together. This conference was held to discuss and plan the reconstruction of Iraq's lagging agricultural.

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Fit to Fight

Danger Forward

May 3, Issue 14

Boston Marathon comes to Iraq

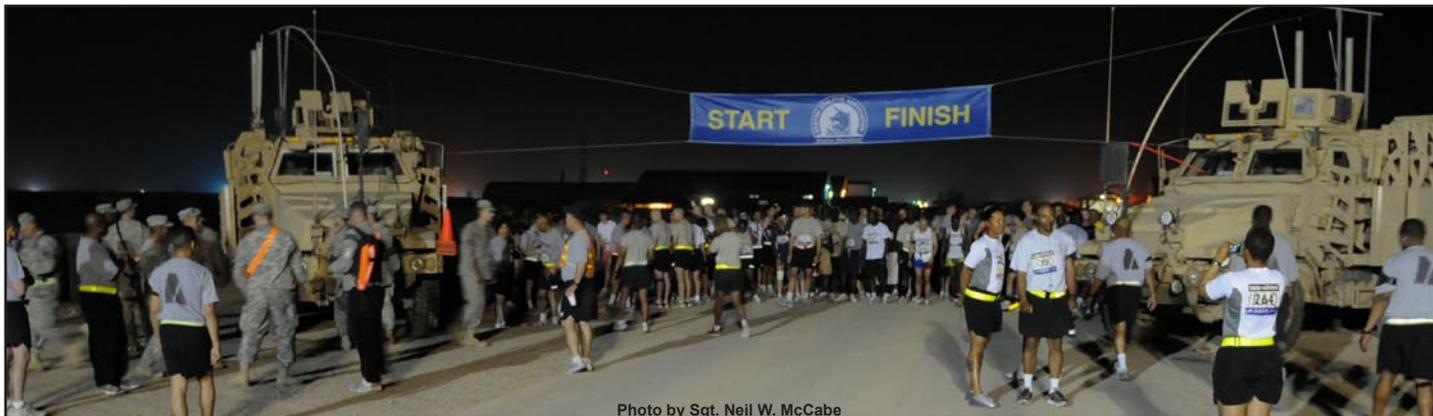


Photo by Sgt. Neil W. McCabe

By Sgt. Neil W. McCabe
4th BCT, 1st Armd Div PAO (4BCT-1AD)

COB ADDER – Besting roughly 400 other civilian and military runners from all over Iraq, Army Sgt. Derek Miller won the sixth-annual Boston Marathon at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq April 18, with a time of 3:01:00, and shared the laurels with Spc. Janelle A. Drennan, whose time of 3:40:09 made her the first female finisher.

Sanctioned by the 114-year-old race's sponsor, the Boston Athletic Association, runners completing the 26.2-mile course qualify to run in the namesake race in Boston, said the COB Adder marathon organizer, Command Sgt. Maj. Lauro F. Obeada, command sergeant major of the 4th Special Troops Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division.

Obeada said that in addition to their certificates, all runners finishing receive the same blue and yellow enameled pewter medallions presented to runners in Boston, as well as the official BAA Boston Marathon long-sleeve tee-shirt and lapel pin.

Like the namesake race and its iconic hills in Massachusetts, the race at COB Adder has its own unique challenges. Among these challenges are the uneven surface of some of the roads and the wind, which can vary from brief gusts to full-blown sandstorms, such as the vicious storm that postponed the race the previous day.

To avoid the brunt of the Iraqi sun, the race began at 4:30 a.m.

The early start sent racers onto a dark course, illuminated by streetlights and guided by chemical light sticks set out to make sure runners did not take the wrong turn. All along the route, there were water points, medic stations and portable toilets staffed by dozens of volunteers.

When Miller and the others began to come in, just past 7:30 a.m., the temperature was already in the 80s.

"I was pacing at a 6:30-mile until I hit the wall at mile 18, after that it was just survival," said Miller, a native of Hersey, Pa., who is assigned to Obeada's personal security detachment.

Miller said that after the fifth mile, he was part of a two-man leader-pack with second-place finisher, Francis Yiga.

Yiga, who finished at 3:16:00, is a Ugandan security guard at the COB.

"Running together, we took turns drafting each other from the wind," he said.

At the 18-mile mark, Yiga, a former Uganda marathon champion, also had trouble and stopped at the water point.

"I looked for him, I saw he was 100 meters back," he said.

As he hobbled from the finish line to the medic station setup inside COB Adder's Memorial Hall, Yiga said he stopped because he tweaked a thigh muscle and had to walk it off before he could jog the last eight miles.

"The most important thing is to complete the course," he said.

Miller said when he saw Yiga had pulled up he took advantage.

"If you fall behind at mile 18, you don't have it in your legs to pick it back up again. You have to save your move for when you feel you are the strongest," Miller said. "I just told myself: 'Don't panic. Just keep this pace - he doesn't have the legs to keep up with you.'"

Running is a mental struggle more than a physical one, said Drennan, an intelligence analyst with the 201st Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, who battled sore knees during the race.

The Denver native and a track star at Eaglecrest High School in Aurora, Colo., said because this was her first marathon after competing in 10 half-marathons, her first mental struggle came at mile 13.

"I kept hearing the voice of my father, who was also my track coach telling me: 'Keep going. Keep fighting.'"

Drennan said her first call would be to her father, who was waiting to hear how she did.

Although the race was promoted throughout U.S. Forces Iraq, the number of runners was restricted to 400, said Spc. Stevan H. Gonzalez, a Texas National Guardsman from San Juan, Texas.

Gonzalez, who handled the day-to-day preparations for the

See **MARATHON**, page 11

Sledgehammer squads square off

By Pfc. Erik Anderson
3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf Div PAO

COS KALSU – Squads representing each of the six battalions that make up the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division met at Contingency Operating Site Kalsu, April 15, to compete in a two-day event designed to test their strength and teamwork.

The first day represented traditional warrior tasks and drills with a surprise road-march to end the day. The following day, Soldiers squared-off in non-traditional events that brought some fun to the competition.

“Being in a combat zone, it is very important these Soldiers operate as a squad,” said Sgt. Maj. Rick Hairston, 3rd HBCT. “The squad as a group is much stronger than any one individual can be.”

Warrior tasks on the first day were completed in body armor, as if the squads were on patrol in the streets of Iraq.

The first event was a road march to an obstacle where teams carried a stretcher loaded with simulated body weight. Teams traversed three trailers with the stretcher through a lane that required them to work together.

“It took teamwork, a lot of teamwork,” said Spc. Derrick Hodges, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 203rd Brigade Support Battalion. “Running with the flak vests on, that is something new. You have to be ready.”

Squads flipped two, 500-pound military tires end-over-end for 80 meters before moving on to a grenade-throwing station. The next task was a weapons assembly station, where they were given a pile of parts and assembled working firearms while timed for points.

“Teamwork is important because it is what combat is based on,” said Spc. William Johnson, 203rd BSB. “Without your battle buddy to your left or to your right, you’re no good.”

Moving to the next obstacle, squads were presented with a standard resupply point consisting of water cans, pre-pack-



Photo by Pfc. Erik Anderson

Soldiers representing 203rd BSB, 3rd HBCT, flip a tire meant for a Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle April 15 at a station during the best-squad competition at COS Kalsu. The competition tested the teamwork and physical abilities of teams representing the Sledgehammer Brigade’s six battalions.

aged meals and ammunition. The task was to move the supplies over a 6-foot tall wall, carry them across a water-filled ditch, and deliver them to a waiting military vehicle.

“If they don’t have leadership directing them, they won’t accomplish it that quick,” said Hairston. “But if they work towards the same goal, and understand what each other’s strengths and weaknesses are, they will be able to move quicker.”

After the supplies were loaded onto the truck, squads moved to the COS Kalsu pistol range and were awarded points based on accuracy.

Following the range, teams were given a much-needed rest until the next event, a 5-mile road march.

During the march, teams pushed a disabled humvee and carried a loaded stretcher the final 100 meters.

“We are trying to make them work as a squad,” said Hairston. “Making the leadership think about what they are going to

do and how they are going to plan the attack to do the next event.”

The second day of competition had the participants tossing horseshoes, shooting hoops, throwing footballs, and trying to hit a barrel with a softball after some very dizzying bat maneuvers, to earn points for their squads.

“It’s basically teamwork,” said Johnson. “You start as a team and it’s up to the team whether you are close-knit enough to actually finish as a team.”

After the dust settled and the points were tallied, the squad representing 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment took top-squad bragging rights.

“I’m really proud of my guys,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Mark Moore, 1st Bn., 15th Inf. Regt. “They worked hard and they deserve it.”

For more from 3rd HBCT, visit www.facebook.com/3hbct3id

Casey tours USD-S Operations

By Spc. Samuel Soza
1st Inf Div, USD-S PAO

COB BASRA – Gen. George W. Casey Jr., U.S. Army chief of staff, met with leaders of United States Division-South April 28 to discuss operations within the division and the work being done as U.S. Forces transition out of Iraq.

Casey joined Soldiers from various brigades for lunch and then met with Maj. Gen. Vincent K. Brooks, commander of 1st Infantry Division and USD-S.

Casey said of the four-hour visit that he was struck by the work accomplished by the 1st Inf. Div.

“The Big Red One always does a magnificent job and my association with the division goes back many, many years,” Casey said. “Having been in Iraq for two-and-a-half years, dealing with these provinces, I’m very impressed with the way the division has organized [itself], and the plan that they have to execute the transitions that have been laid out.”

During the course of the visit, key leaders informed the general on various aspects of that plan, including overall efforts to train Iraqi Security Forces, as well as their approach to build more civil capacity in southern Iraq.

“I think they’re exactly on the right track and I have every reason to believe that the division’s going to be more than successful in accomplishing the mission,” Casey said, following a comprehensive briefing.

During the information sessions, Casey was also briefed by commanders of several brigades working in USD-S, including 4th Brigade, 1st Armored Division from Fort Bliss, Texas; 3rd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division from Fort Benning, Ga.; and 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division from Fort Carson, Colo.

Brigade commanders discussed their units’ evolution into “advise-and-assist” brigades. Casey said this transition is in line with the Army’s goal for a responsible



Photo by Spc. Samuel Soza

Maj. Gen. Vincent K. Brooks, commander of United States Division-South and 1st Infantry Division, welcomes Gen. George W. Casey Jr., U.S. Army chief of staff, during a visit to USD-S headquarters on Contingency Operating Base Basra April 28.

drawdown of forces, as well as its modular template.

The Army chief of staff said that the modular formations allow brigade commanders to tailor their units to meet their own unique needs best suited for their area of operation and was a crucial part of the transition from a tactical mission in Iraq to one focused on advising and assisting the ISF.

According to Casey, the Army has converted 90 percent of its 300 brigades to modular formations, explaining that these formations are much more versatile than past models.

“There’s not a cookie cutter solution; there’s a general design,” he said. “Each of the brigade commanders have taken the resources that we’ve given them and applied them in their areas. I think, again, it’s just a demonstration of the versatility of the organization of our modular formations.”

Casey talked about newer efforts being put forth to ease the stress that deployed

Soldiers face today. According to Casey, 500,000 Soldiers have already taken the Global Assessment – a tool to help Soldiers identify where they rate within a five-pillar wellness concept that includes: physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and family support.

“The comprehensive fitness program is designed to bring mental fitness up to the same level that we give to physical fitness,” he said. “It’s intended to give all of the Soldiers the skills they need to be better Soldiers and to be more resilient and to deal with challenges. I’m very pleased with the progress that we’ve made.”

Acting on the resiliency concept, Brooks plans to open a resiliency campus on COB Basra in August.

In October 2009, the Army began training Master Resilience Trainers to help Soldiers facing deployments.

“The most powerful part of the program is the Master Resilience Trainers,” Casey said. “Those trainers are designed

See **OPERATIONS**, page 11

A three time Veterans story

By Sgt. Jason Kemp

1st Inf Div, USD-S PAO

COB BASRA – When he decided to get out of the Army after Operation Desert Storm, Staff Sgt. Jimmie Taylor, supply sergeant, Operations Company, Division Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 1st Infantry Division, soon felt that there was something missing in his life.

In 1975, after going to college, a young Jim Taylor joined the Army as a ground station operator, responsible for supervising or participating in detecting, locating and tracking ground targets, ships, missiles and aircraft.

“I was stationed in Germany and just had a really good time, but, like a lot of people, I did my three years and got out. I went home and went back to college at Arkansas State University and got my business degree,” Taylor said.

In 1981, Taylor decided to join the Army again and went to Fort Gordon, Georgia to train as a communication specialist.

“I was stationed at Fort Bragg and got to jump out of air planes; while I was at Fort Bragg I also deployed to Honduras twice for two long exercises. I also was stationed at Fort Clayton, Panama, which was really a lot of fun and that was wonderful assignment,” Taylor said.

“When I left there I went to Joint Readiness Training Center at Little Rock Air Force Base, Fort Chaffee, Arkansas as an observer controller for a couple of years and that was a lot of fun,” Taylor said. “It was a special assignment; there was a lot of time in the field but it was fun being an OC.”

After his time as an OC at Fort Chaffee, Taylor was selected to be an instructor at the U.S. Army’s Signal Center at Fort Gordon. During his time as an instructor, Operation Desert Storm happened, yet he was in a position that was not deployable and wasn’t sent to Saudi Arabia for the conflict.

“I watched it on CNN like most of the Army did,” said Taylor. “When Desert Storm was over, they (the Army) started offering de-enlistment bonuses as incen-

tives for them to get out of the military,” Taylor said. “At that time my wife had just finished her degree and there were just a lot of reasons for me to get out then so I went back to college and got a second degree at University of Arkansas this time.”

After earning his second degree, this one in operations management, Taylor and his wife, Joan, moved to Tucson, Ariz., where he became a high school history and government teacher.

“While I was teaching high school kids of all ages, and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan had begun, my students came to me for advice about joining the military,” Taylor said. “I got to know all of the recruiters in the area during that time. Well, kids started coming back

and some were injured so, knowing the recruiters, I spoke with them about joining the Reserves.”

“My loving wife was very supportive about my decision to come back into the Army. She never questioned it,” Taylor said.

The unit Taylor joined had just come back from a deployment and wasn’t due to be deployed again for quite some time, so he decided that he would volunteer to deploy as an individual augmentee to any unit in need of Soldiers.

“It wasn’t two weeks after I volunteered that I was notified that I was going to be deployed with a unit out of Los Angeles, Calif., to Afghanistan,” Taylor said. “When I arrived in Afghanistan, the unit made me the transportation management coordinator. I had such a good time that I started looking for a way to join the regular Army again.”

There was just something missing in



Photo by Sgt. Jason Kemp
Sgt 1st Class Jimmie Taylor, supply sergeant, Ops. Co., DHHB, 1st Inf. Div., reenlists April 6 with the 1st Inf. Div. while on deployment at COB Basra.

his career, Taylor said. His father had been deployed to combat areas as well as his brother. Rejoining the active Army was a way for him to finish what he started all those years ago. He said there was always a part of him that felt that he hadn’t finished all the things that were available to him.

“I wasn’t too old yet, that I would rapidly be too old; the opportunities would be gone, and the wars would be over,” Taylor said. “There would always be a ‘I wish I would have’ or a ‘When I could have I didn’t.’”

Taylor feels that if he hadn’t gotten to come to these two theaters that something would have been missing.

“I’m a Soldier through-and-through, and have always felt that way,” Taylor said. “Not only did I get to go to Afghanistan but now I’m here in Iraq.”

For more from USD-S PAO, visit www.facebook.com/1stInfantryDivision

WOUNDED, from page 1

many Soldiers at each base and were assisted by those currently deployed.

“They had dedicated Soldiers for every wounded Soldier – to show them around, help them with their [individual body armor], take their bags and whatnot,” Julio said. “And that was across the board, everywhere we went.”

The mission seemed to be a success overall, but how exactly it helped was something unique to each Soldier, Julio said.

“For everybody, it was something different,” he said. “They get to see the changes from when they were here. A lot of them mentioned they didn’t hear gunshots or bombs going off and stuff. So, that’s how it’s changed.”

For the brothers who grew up in California – 6,000 miles away — the opportunity now to share time together has helped heal a wound that has affected his whole family.

“As it is, at home my brother is surrounded by a lot of Soldiers wounded in many ways.” Julio said. “Everyone I meet has a different story and I got to meet this great group of guys who came. It’s a great program that they’ve got set up – I’m glad.”

This most recent visit marked the fifth trip by Operation Proper Exit, started by the Troops First Foundation in June 2009, and is supported by the USO.

Julio said he was especially thankful to his leadership, who allowed him to go on the trip, and also all the people involved in coordinating the effort.

“The Army’s been a part of this. And Troops First Foundation are the ones that set it up with a lot of help from the [United States Forces – Iraq] sergeant major and his staff,” he said. “It wouldn’t be possible without everybody putting in work in order to get these birds and a dedicated C-130 to fly them from Kuwait.”

Even though Operation Proper Exit focused on the wounded warriors, Julio said the benefits of the trip extended to help him as well.

“With my brother, we’d never served together,” he said. “Not that this was serving together, but in a way it was – for us. We thought that way – getting a chance to hang out in theatre; it was good.”

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Photo by Sgt. Rebekah Lampman
Sgt. (Retired) Juan Arredondo, of Coachella, Calif., speaks to an audience of Soldiers at Al Asad Air Base, April 6, about his experiences. Arredondo, formerly an Avenger crew member with Company D, 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, returned to Iraq to the site in Ramadi where he lost his left hand to an improvised explosive device. The trip, made possible through Operation Proper Exit, was designed to help in the recovery process.

MARATHON, from page 7

race, said the last slot was filled April 15 by an email registration at 3:37 p.m.

Despite the 400-runner cap, Gonzalez said he told last-minute applicants to show up at the race anyway, and there was a good chance there would be enough no-shows to give the walk-ups a slot. After the race, he confirmed that everyone who wanted to race was given an official num-



Photo by Sgt. Neil W. McCabe
Identical twin Soldiers deployed with the Virginia National Guard, Specialists Eskinder and Solomon Zemene ran in the sixth-annual running of the Boston Marathon April 18, at COB Adder. Despite the likeness, the Alexandria, Va., residents did not have identical times: Solomon was clocked at 3:36:56 besting Eskinder’s 4:00:07.

ber and allowed to compete.

Two of the last applicants were identical twin brothers deployed to Iraq with the Virginia National Guard, Spc. Solomon Zemene, #399, and Spc. Eskinder Zemene, #398.

“We got here two weeks ago and when I saw the poster for the marathon, I told my brother we should do it,” said Solomon, whose 3:36:56 time beat his brother’s 4:00:07 time.

“He always beats me. I think he is just tougher. He keeps going when I feel like quitting,” said Eskinder, who, like his brother, is a resident of Alexandria, Va., and a student at Northern Virginia Community College.

As the Zemene twins look forward to other races here in Iraq, Miller said he is slated to fly home with other Soldiers from his battalion before the end of the month, and he is already eyeing his next goal.

“I ran in Boston in 2004, but I dropped out with cramps at mile 5. I will absolutely be there next year.”

For more from 4th BCT, visit <http://www.facebook.com/4BCT1AD>

OPERATIONS, from page 9

to bring the skills down to platoon level – and that’s where this works best. It’s just something we’ve got to ingrain into our culture because we’re going to be deploying at a pretty steady tempo for the next 10 years.”

Casey said the progress he sees in Iraq — whether it’s better infrastructure and services for the Iraqi people, or taking care of Soldiers on the ground — is the evolution of a plan first set in motion in 2005.

“We’ve grown the Iraqi Security Forces to a level where they are taking control of their own country and that’s exactly what we set out to do five years ago,” he said. “So I couldn’t be prouder of what all the men and women of the Army have done and have contributed here in Iraq. We’re in a much different place today than we were five years ago – it’s a much more positive place.”

For more from USD-S PAO, visit www.facebook.com/1stInfantryDivision

Clark sentenced to life in prison

By Felisa Cardona

The Denver Post

DENVER - Willie D. Clark will spend the rest of his life in prison without a chance at parole for the murder of Denver Broncos player Darrent Williams.

Clark was also sentenced Friday to an additional 1,152 years in prison for 16 attempted-murder charges that included sentencing enhancements for his habitual criminal history.

"Mr. Clark, I will simply say from where I sit, barring a retrial of this issue, you are spending your life in prison, and you, too, can be a good person and make a change and make a difference with your life however it turns out," Judge Christina M. Habas said.

Clark's request to be excused from being present at the sentencing hearing was denied by the judge, but he listened intently when the victims addressed the court — especially Williams' mother, Rosalind Williams.

"I know he is still saying he is innocent," she said of Clark. "But for each and

every person who was in the vehicle, you guys are all guilty. Admit that." She said she watched members of Clark's family support him through the trial and knows they love him as much as she loved her son.

"They will be able to visit him in prison; I have to go visit my son in the cemetery," she said.

Clark, 26, was convicted March 11 of first-degree murder and 16 counts of attempted first-degree murder for firing a gun into Williams' stretch Hummer limousine early New Year's Day 2007.

The shooting followed a series of altercations inside and outside the Shelter nightclub between Williams, his fellow Broncos players, and a group of gang members and drug dealers.

Williams, a 24-year-old cornerback, was shot in the neck as his limousine traveled along West 11th Avenue and Speer Boulevard. Two other passengers were wounded.

Prosecutors believe bullets from at least two shooters were fired into the limousine

from a passing white Chevrolet Tahoe.

Drug dealer Daniel "Ponytail" Harris, who was riding in the Tahoe, testified Clark was driving and shooting out of the front passenger-side window. Another gang member, Vernone Edwards, testified that Clark confessed to the shooting and that he was always in possession of a .40-caliber handgun — the type of gun that killed Williams.

Tierria Leonard, the mother of Darrent Williams' two children, spoke of the mental trauma they suffered since their father's death.

Clark maintains that he is innocent and that he was set up to take the fall by fellow gang members.

Later this year, Clark and two other suspected gang members are expected to go on trial for the murder of a state witness. Kalonniann Clark, a woman who was set to testify that she was shot at by one of Clark's associates, was killed in December 2006

Denver is the hometown of Spc. Janelle A. Drennan, 201st Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, featured on p. 7

Jimmy Buffett in concert

By STEVE PICK

SPECIAL TO THE POST-DISPATCH

ST LOUIS - To walk into a concert by Jimmy Buffett is to venture into a fantasy world, where the water is blue and still (unless you're looking for a wave to surf, in which case they are perfect breakers), the drinks are cool and sweet, the women are gorgeous and the men are loved despite their fashion sense (who knew there were so many different Hawaiian print shirts?).

Buffett seems relentlessly happy on stage, and he shared his enthusiasm with a virtually sold-out audience at the Verizon Wireless Amphitheatre Thursday night.

Playing two sets of roughly 70 minutes apiece, Buffett led his Coral Reefer Band through its paces. Casual Parrotheads, who just remember "Cheeseburger In Paradise," "Margaritaville," and "Changes in

Latitudes, Changes in Attitudes" were rewarded with the songs still played on the radio for 30-plus years. Odds are, though, that casual Parrotheads were few and far between, as deep album cuts prompted enthusiastic sing-alongs throughout the night.

The biggest surprise was a largely rewritten version of Buffett's 1979 song, "Volcano." It was one thing to add lyrics referencing the recent volcano eruption in Iceland and the disruption in European air flights; it was even more impressive to include lyrics about the bugs he said were flying on stage, and then get a local reference in on top of it: "All over Europe nobody could fly / Spirit of St. Louis gonna lead my way."

Buffett gave special acknowledgement to three long-time members of his band

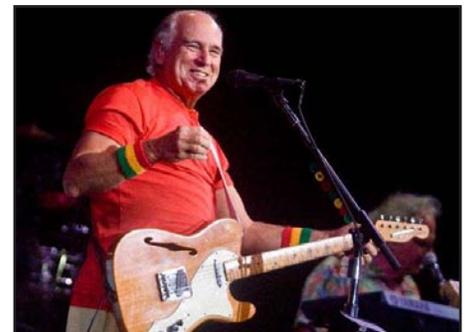


Photo by Sarah Conard

who are from St. Louis. Guitarist Peter Mayer, his bass-player brother Jim, and drummer Roger Guth have been playing with him for 15 years, and they grounded the often lilting arrangements with rock-solid work. Michael Utley on keyboards and Robert Greenidge on steel drums were also especially impressive. Mac McAnally, the 2009 Country Music Association Musician of the Year, is another long-time member of the band.

Pacific, MO. is the hometown of Sgt. Evan Whitlock, 318th PSYOP Co., featured on p. 4

AROUND THE COB

Danger Forward

May 3, Issue 14

Legal

(VOIP 858-4098)

Legal Assistance Office

Mon. – Fri.
0800-1800

Sat.
0800-1700

Trial Defense Services

Mon. – Sat.
0900-1130
1300-1700

USO

Every day

Closes 0600
Re-opens 1000

Religious Services

(COB Basra Chapel)

Protestant

Sundays

Contemporary Worship
1000

General Protestant
1130

Gospel Worship
1400

Liturgical Protestant
1700

Roman Catholic

Sunday Mass
0830

Saturday Vigil Mass
2000

Mon-Fri Mass
1130

Jewish

Friday
1800

LDS

(COB Basra House of Prayer)

Sundays
1400 - 1500

Chaplain Programs

Bible Studies

Regular

(HHB 17th FiB Conf Rm)
Wednesdays
2000

Gospel of John

(RIVRON MWR - Camp Alpha)

Wednesdays
1800

New Believers

(COB Basra Chapel)
Thursdays
2000

Fellowship

Men's Fellowship

(HHB 17th FiB Conf Rm)
Mondays
1900

The Truth Project

(308th MWR tent)
Wednesdays
1900

AA

(COB Basra Chapel)
Thursday
2000

Wild at Heart

(HHB 17th FiB Conf Rm)
Fridays
1900

Holy Joe's Coffee

Mon.-Sat.
0600 - 2200

Special Events This Week

Darryl Worley

May 3

1st ID Band

Every Saturday
1900 at Echoes

UFC 113

May 9
0500
In USO Theater

Cinco De Mayo Party

May 5
1900-2200

Mother's Day

May 9

NBA 2K10 Tournament (Xbox 360)

May 3
2100
USO

550 Cord Cuff Night

May 6
2100-2300
USO

Special Events Coming Up

AAFES New Release Movie Day

May 12
1900-0200
USO

Armed Forces Day Spades and Dominoes

May 15
2000
USO

Times & programs

Fire Warden and Fire Extinguisher classes

(Fire Station 1, across from D-Main)

Wednesday @ 1000

- All unit Fire Wardens are required to submit the USF-I Task Force Safe Fire Safety Checklist to the fire chief monthly. This form can be taken to either fire station or emailed to Mike White, mwhite@sallyport-global.com. For an electronic copy, email Mike White.

- Fire extinguisher exchange and re-service program: Expelled or unserviceable extinguishers can be brought to either fire station for exchange or re-service. We also have a limited number of extinguishers to hand out.

“A mother always has to think twice: once for herself and once for her child.”

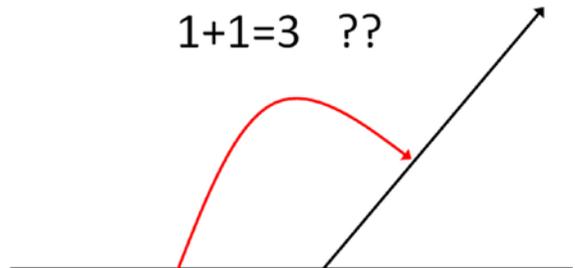
- Sophia Loren

Happy Mother’s Day!

To all the mothers sewing overseas and on the home front!

Big Red One Puzzle of the Week

1+1=3 ??



Hint for this week: Don't be thickheaded...

Each week, look for a new brain teaser here, with the answer in the following week's Danger Forward.

Solution for last week: Delta Force

Brought to you by the 1st Inf. Div. ORSA Cell

A look around USD-S



Photo by Martina Strong

The 1st ID at liberation ceremony, Cheb, Czech Republic. In attendance were members of parliament, veterans, and representatives of the Czech, German, and Russian armed forces

Have a photo from around USD-S? Email it, along with the photographer's name, rank and unit, the date and place it was taken, and a short description, to benjamin.kibbey@iraq.centcom.mil, and you could have it featured here and receive a coin from DCSM Jim Champagne.

Sudoku

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

For solutions visit: www.puzzles.ca/sudoku_puzzles/sudoku_hard_003.html