

YANK

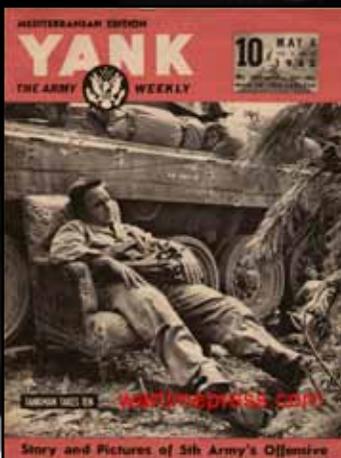
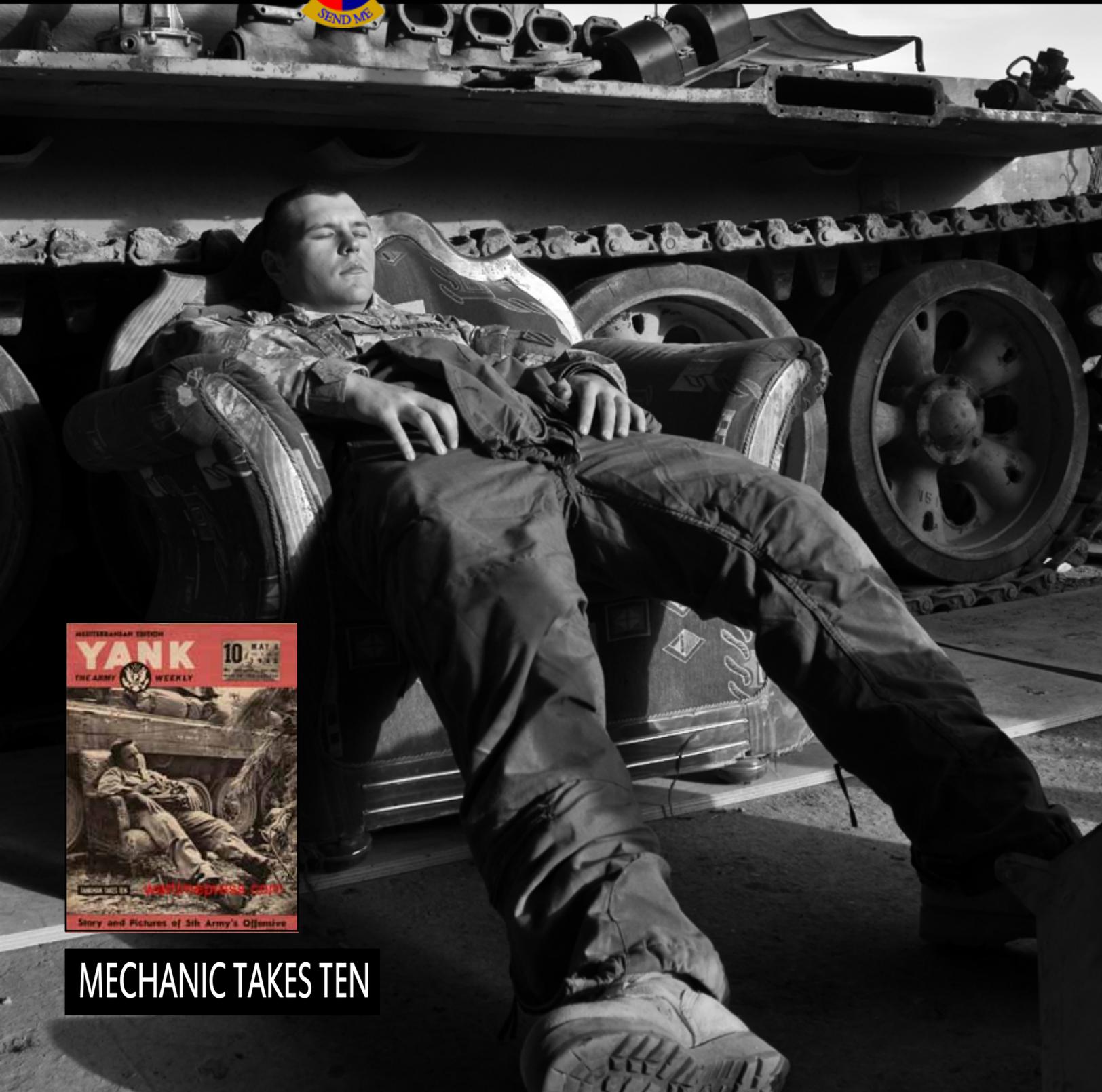
ARMY

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*By the Soldiers... for the
Soldiers in the service*

THE SPARTAN  BI-WEEKLY



MECHANIC TAKES TEN

Pictures of 1-36th Infantry's Joint Sniper Training



COVER

Specialist John Laskowski, takes a break from 26th BSB's restoration project of a tank pulled from a nearby tank graveyard near FOB Marez.

PHOTO BY PFC. GREGORY GIESKE

YANK

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STT-Room Clearance

Risen from the Grave

Black History Month

COMMANDER

TO ALL THE SPARTANS: For most of us, we have come to the end of our first 120 days here in Iraq and I am incredibly proud of you as professional Soldiers. Every day your actions against the enemy are proof you are the *Walking Pride of Uncle Sam*. You are here in combat, in tough times, working countless hours to accomplish any mission you are assigned. Like the Marne Soldiers that fought against overwhelming odds on the Imjin River in Korea in 1951.

While on the defense along the 38th Parallel your predecessors were not satisfied with sitting idly by. Other units sat in their defensive positions waiting for the enemy to come to them, dreading and fearing an attack. Marne Soldiers never wait to be attacked. The Marne Soldiers of Korea continually patrolled, probed, ambushed, sniped, and counterattacked.

Every time they found the enemy. They were aggressive, unwavering and lethal. As a result the 3rd Infantry Division never gave ground, while those around them crumbled. You are the same as the Marne Soldiers from the Korean War. You are not satisfied to sit in your Firebases, CCPs, COPs, JSSs, or FOBs. You constantly attack the enemy.

This aggressive spirit lives within you. The spirit lives in Soldiers like Spc. Howard Nazareno who, while manning a RAID Tower, detected enemy IED emplacements trying to get the drop on us. Reacting quickly, he directed the effective fires of his comrades on the Firebase to eliminate the enemy four-man team. Soldiers like Pfc. Justin McRae who spotted that same group of IED emplacements and leveled his M4 Rifle against the enemy force, and at a range of about 300 meters, successfully engaged them. His actions allowed a maneuver force to

successfully capture the remaining enemy. The cool professionalism and fighting spirit of these two Soldiers illustrates the quality we have in our Brigade no matter which patch

you wear on your shoulder. Like our fellow Marne Soldiers who fought an active defense here today in Iraq: never giving ground and always on the offense. You are linked to the Marne Soldiers before us by more than just a blue and white patch - you are linked by an attitude and fighting spirit. Marne Soldiers will forever be the *Walking Pride of Uncle Sam*.



Spartan 6

COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR



Black History Month, which initially began as Black History Week, has been recognized annually since 1926 as a remembrance of important people and events in regards to people of African-American descent. The remembrance was founded by historian Carter G. Woodson who chose the second week in February because it marked the birthdays of

two Americans who greatly influenced the lives and social condition of African-Americans: President Abraham Lincoln and abolitionist and former slave, Frederick Douglas.

As we celebrate Black History Month, let us take the opportunity to reflect on the lives of African-Americans and the many contributions they have made to our society. From the athletes to the scientists, the activists to the politicians, the authors to the entertainers, African-Americans have played a dynamic role in the success of our country. There has been no war fought by the United States in which African-Americans did not participate, from the Revolutionary War to the Global War on Terror. African-American accomplishments continue to be highlighted because of the surmountable disadvantages they faced

but triumphed over because of their unconquerable will.

With February being Black History Month, I ask everyone to celebrate the similarities and not focus on the differences between people of different races. Being a global power with global outreach, the diverse makeup of our armed forces has given us the capability to operate successfully in any part of the world. Learning and understanding cultural differences are important to ensuring a more stable and prosperous nation. As a people, we must continue to stand together to accomplish the mission. "Strength through diversity helps keep our Army strong."

Spartan 7

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The *YANK* is published in the interest of the Soldiers, Families and friends of the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division. Contents of the *YANK* are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army or the 3rd Infantry Division. All editorial content of the *YANK* is prepared, edited, provided and approved by the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division Public Affairs Office.

SCOPE

NEWS, SCOOPS, AND THE FRONT AT A GLANCE



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1-36 INFANTRY MORTARS IN ACTION

BY 2ND LT. JOSEPH G. JANKOVICH



THE WHISTLES AND hisses of indirect fire echo across a hazy, early morning sky in Mosul. However, unlike other times, the intent behind this action is a peaceful one.

Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 36th Infantry Regiment's Mortar Platoon recently conducted an indirect fire mission to register their mortar tubes and practice anticipated missions to support and protect the citizens of Mosul.

"Rehearse! Rehearse! Rehearse!," yells 1st Sgt. Christopher Lewis of the Headquarters Company for 1-36 Infantry. A former mortarman himself, the first sergeant emphasizes to his Soldiers the importance of going through every motion.

A great deal of 1-36's top leadership attended the training. "It was great to have the battalion commander, sergeant major and my company commander on the ground in full support of our mission," said 2nd Lt. Matthew Richards, the mortar platoon leader. The presence of these leaders shows the importance of the mortars and their abilities.

"This live fire was a great opportunity," said 2nd Lt. Richards. His Soldiers not only refined their mortar skills, but conducted a combat patrol as well.

Now, whenever the call comes in for a combat fire mission onto a hostile target, 1-36 Infantry mortars have the knowledge, equipment and experience to provide accurate, effective fire.

HANDING OVER JSS IT2 AND SCORPION TO THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAQ

BY CAPT. HEATHER S. DETERS



1-64 Armor OFFICIALLY handed over Joint Security Stations IT2 and Scorpion to the Government of Iraq.

This marks the first official base handover in 2nd Brigade's area of operations and is a landmark event, working towards the responsible drawdown of U.S. Forces in Iraq.

The United States Army will continue the process of steadily reducing its role and giving more responsibility to the Iraqi Forces until it is finally set to exit Iraq by the end of 2010.

JSS Scorpion has been "home" to Company C, 1-64 AR for three months, and has been in service to the U.S. Army for nearly five years. Located in the center of an Iraqi Army compound next to the city of Hammam Al Alil, it has been a constant reminder of America's commitment to partner with Iraqi Security Forces. The purpose of JSS Scorpion has been to help U.S. Forces

partner with the Iraqi Security Forces to help secure the towns of Hammam Al Alil, Arij, and the surrounding region.

While Company C resided in JSS Scorpion, Company B split up and settled in on JSS IT2 and JSS Tal Abtah. JSS IT2 is the first of two Company B owned JSS to be handed over to the Iraqi Army.

The relationship between Company B and the Iraqi Army battalion is not quite over, and the Iraqi Army will continue working closely with Company B operating in the Tal Abtah area as they have over the past several months.

The Iraqi Army, along with Company B in support of Tal Abtah, have conducted several missions to deny the insurgents the ability to target the people of Tal Abtah. This has caused a drastic decrease in enemy activity in the region.

These and upcoming closures represent the responsible drawdown of US Forces and the commitment of the Iraqi people to their own security.



SENIOR LEADERS AND Soldiers of the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, congregated at the FOB Marez Main Gym to participate in a walk to educate and support the prevention of sexual assault.

The walk began with an opening prayer, delivered by Chaplain Sid Taylor, 2nd Brigade Combat Team's chaplain, to pray for the victims of sexual assault and to pray for an Army that would be free of such occurrences from happening in the future. Command Sergeant Major Valmond Martin, 2nd Brigade command sergeant major,

led the Soldiers on a two-mile walk throughout FOB Marez to stop and remind every Civilian and Soldier the importance of sexual assault prevention.

Senior NCOs and Soldiers from the 26th Brigade Support Battalion were enthusiastic about the event and led the walkers with the chants "Sexual assault, we say no!" and "Sexual assault, no means no!"

One Soldier commented at the walk, "It is outstanding to see Senior Army leadership participating in such an important event."

The Soldiers ended the walk by signing a banner that signified their commitment to having zero sexual assaults at FOB Marez, Iraq.



THE END OF AN ERA

BY 1ST LT. RYAN GREER



FEBRUARY 4 MARKED the end of 3-7 CAV's Disputed Internal Boundary combined checkpoint training program. The checkpoint stands empty, the LSA unpopulated and the training lanes deserted. Containers were packed full of signs and equipment used for training. The Mayor's Cell is vacated and locked up. The grounds seem deserted. This was not the case over the course of the last 36 days. Since January 1, over 2,000 Iraqi, Peshmerga, and American Soldiers were trained on these grounds. The site stands ready, waiting for the order for training to recommence.

3-7 CAV received the mission to execute the Combined Checkpoint Training on Dec. 17, 2009. By January 1, the site was ready, the lanes prepared and the classes rehearsed.

The construction of the site was a joint effort, pulling manpower and supplies from Headquarters and Headquarters Troop and Crazy Troop, 3-7 CAV, and Engineers from the 1313th Horizontal Engineer Company, Indiana National Guard.

Elements of Saber plans and Crazy Troop arranged and planned the classes. Desperado Troop, the 3-7 CAV Forward Support Company. KBR provided the logistical arms of the operation, supplying the site with food and water, lights, power,

and latrine and shower service.

"Working with the Engineers was a blast and KBR hooked us up with everything we needed to get the job done," said Capt. Highstrom, 3-7 CAV's FSO, who was responsible for coordinating the construction of the checkpoint lane.

In just two short weeks, 3-7 CAV prepared a training regimen, coordinated the construction of a checkpoint and turned an old obstacle course into a training ground that would service over 2,000 Iraqi, Peshmerga, and US Soldiers.

The first day of training was marked with anticipation by the Crazy Troop Soldiers picked to serve as the trainers and cadre for the site.

"Initially we were all fearful of what we had heard about ethnic tensions," said Capt. Mat Moore, Crazy Troop Commander, "but for the most part everyone got along great and built teams that will hopefully follow them to the battlefield."

The training kicked off without issue, and remained free of incident through all six rotations. "Anytime you can bring ISF out of the combat zone and into a training environment, I believe you will receive positive results because they can focus on training and nothing else," Capt. Moore said of the Iraqi students.

The training focused on checkpoint operations along with classes devoted to-

wards basic warrior tasks such as first aid and weapons capability training. Military Police from 2-3 BTB taught classes on vehicle search techniques and Mr. Scott Ketcham, a military contractor, taught personnel search methods to the students. Soldiers from Crazy Troop taught classes ranging from construction of range cards and sector sketches, to detainee operations and patrol techniques. Students even received basic casualty recovery and first aid from elements of the 3-7 CAV Medical Platoon.

"All of the Soldiers put in many long hours to turn bare land into a training facility capable of teaching nearly 2,000 students from five organizations in three languages - an effort we should all be proud of" said Capt. Moore.

Elements of the Iraqi Federal Police comprised the last of the six total training rotations. The training proved invaluable to all parties involved.

When asked about the effectiveness of the training, Capt. Moore replied: "Being able to see a marked improvement in the ability of the ISF in just four days made all of the effort worthwhile."

With the final graduation ceremony finished, the Combined Checkpoint Academy gracefully closes its doors until called on again to provide needed expert training.



WITHIN ANCIENT WALLS OF MARBLE AND STONE

BY 1ST LT. TODD C. GIBSON



THERE WAS A STRONG air of anticipation as the Chaplain of 2-3 Brigade Troops Battalion, Chaplain (Capt.) Luis Anda, gave a nod to the driver and the passengers were taken on a short ride to Dair Mar Elia Monastery, located within Forward Operating Base Marez, Mosul, Iraq.

“It feels like I’m back at school going on a field trip,” someone said, and perhaps in some aspects, it truly was a field trip. The excitement grew mostly with the idea of breaking away from the grind and repetitiveness all Soldiers experience while deployed.

The monastery is said to date back to 350 A.D. It has a rich, if not absolutely confirmed, history throughout the various empires that rose and fell around its stone walls. Approximately 1,420 years ago, around 590 A.D., a well-known Assyrian Christian monk, Mar Elia, journeyed to the monastery that now bears his name in order to help with its continued construction, organization, and religious operations.

It was Chaplain Anda’s first tour, and over 20 service members from various units and civilians crowded around him as he escorted the group along the exterior of the monastery.

He began with a disclaimer, “I just

want to let you know much of what I’m about to say is speculation. There isn’t a whole lot of data out there about this place. Most of what we know comes from oral tradition passed down through generations.”

The site has never truly been excavated or analyzed in great detail by archaeologists. After the Iraqi Republican Guard took it over as a headquarters in the 1970s, pilgrimage halted and awareness of its historical value was almost completely forgotten.

The tour stopped on the left side of the ruins, and the chaplain wanted to emphasize the significant damage to the stone wall. “By most accounts, the Iraqi Army had a tank positioned right here, when Coalition Forces engaged it, the turret was blown off and slammed into the side of the monastery.”

As the tour continued around the walls, Chaplain Anda recalled historical accounts and paused to highlight various architectural features of the monastery. An enormous stone pit captured everyone’s attention. It could have been the remains of a cellar, but as he stated earlier, this was mostly based on theory.

After the group had all passed through the entrance, the chaplain let everyone roam the grounds for a short time. It was as if their teacher just let them out for recess; the crowd scattered, examining

dormitories once inhabited by monks for hundreds of years, feeling the cold marble doorways and windows, taking photos of each other underneath the massive arches.

Unfortunately, one could not help but notice the graffiti scrawled and etched into the walls, both in Arabic and English. One room was riddled with bullet holes, while the interior of the chapel had started to give way from the impact of the turret: somber reminders of the war’s effects.

This wasn’t the first time the monastery had seen its share of violence. In 1743 a Persian leader ordered the execution of the monks who dwelled there and up to 150 perished within the grounds.

It is unclear, however, whether restorations will be able to preserve the ruins in their current condition. Only time will tell if these ancient walls of marble and stone can weather the elements long enough for repairs to be made.

The chaplain closed with a short prayer for those who wished to listen, and when enough curiosity was satisfied and all the photos were taken, the ‘field trip’ ended. It stirred the senses to walk through a place that has stood for so many centuries, and despite enduring constant hardship and degradation, it is still not forgotten.

ON THE EDGE OF SURVIVAL

BY 1ST LT. THOMAS BRETT



A CONTINUED UPHILL battle for villages along the Iraqi/Syrian border is the economic struggle to keep their towns alive. Due to geographical location and the associated weather trends, a phenomena known as desertification has continued to plague the region.

This process of turning fertile lands into rolling desert terrain continues to creep up from the Jazeera Desert into the southern Ba'aj district which includes the frontier villages on the Iraq-Syrian Border.

Increased efforts of U.S. projects and increased GoI capacity continue to give hope for a brighter future for the remote areas.

The obvious roadblocks for villages like Ila Tisouk, Hamdiniyah, and Jugayfi, are lack of roads, business options and clean water. Historically, these border villages used to be the home of some of the most affluent and economically influential people in the area.

The people of this area used to make their money through raising livestock and agriculture. However, weather changes and lack of rain, has severely inhibited their ability to do what they do best. Most families that could afford to relocate to the north have already done so, leaving the most economically challenged to endure.

At this point, the opportunity to make any profit to provide for one's family outweighs the consequences and thus many Iraqis in western Ninewah Province have turned to smuggling cigarettes into Syria to support their towns and families.

Although smuggling cigarettes presents a benign appearance of having no effect on the security of the area, we must understand that these trade routes have been utilized for thousands of years and that they are proven and historically effective. If and when foreign fighters attempt to infiltrate, weapons and personnel into Iraq, it's highly likely they will utilize these proven corridors.

Soldiers of Troop C, 1-4 CAV operating along the border, continue to work with local sheiks, mukhtars, and district council representatives to focus on economic development in hopes of strengthening village ties with the Ba'aj district government, and provide smugglers with alternative economic options.

"The people are extremely willing to work with us and would rather work legitimate jobs than smuggle," said Staff Sgt. William Schryver, 1-4 CAV.

Projects such as restoring wells and public buildings provide basic needs to keep townpeople conducting business in the area. There are major steps in building infrastructure in which Iraqis can build an economic base. Also, US forces have begun providing Iraqis with micro grants to start small businesses.

Another focus is to strengthen relationships between district governments and villages. With better understanding, the towns and governments can work more effectively on larger projects, such as restoring roads.

"Some of the towns were not even sure about what steps to take with the district governments to start projects," explains Spc. Tristan Price, 1-4 CAV.

Continued partnership will give these struggling border towns a chance to keep their towns and hope alive.

SCOPE

DISRUPTING THE ENEMY

BY PFC. JESSICA LUHRS



"TODAY WE WILL DISRUPT the enemy," said an Emergency Services Unit leader to his troops before conducting a search in the Aruba District with a purpose of capturing persons of interest and confiscating contraband material, on Feb. 10.

Disruption of the enemy is exactly what happened, because of the partnership between 2nd Plt., Delta Co., 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, out of Fort Stewart, Ga., and the Kirkuk ESU 'Lions', according to 2nd Lt. Oleg Green, 2nd Plt. Leader and a native of Jacksonville, N.C.

Not only did these partners disrupt the enemy but they were also able to show the population of Kirkuk that the ESU is a self-reliant security force, according to Capt. Jeremiah Fritz, the commander of Company D.

This was proven because the operation was completely run by the ESU with the U.S. Forces simply observing what they had taught their partners.

The U.S. Forces observed the 'Lions' properly patrolling an area, clearing multiple objectives and interacting with the population.

Through interaction with the population U.S. Forces and ESU were able to find out that the people of Aruba feel very safe in the area and plan on participating in the upcoming elections, according to 2nd Lt. Green.

One local national said he is confident with the security of the area thanks to the Iraqi and U.S. Forces and that he is looking forward to the elections and will be taking his daughter to vote with him.

"The population understands the ESU is in control of the area and is here to help them no matter the situation," said Lt. Green.



SPARTAN SOLDIERS RECOGNIZE INNOVATIVE NINEWA BUSINESS- WOMEN

BY SPC. CRYSTAL M. O'NEAL

SPARTAN SOLDIERS, DEPLOYED within northern Iraq, recently recognized several Ninewa Province women for their business endeavors during a Forward Operating Base Marez luncheon.

These women, some of whom are widows due to insurgency attacks, have stepped up, with the help from 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division and the Provincial Reconstruction Team, to form

several businesses with the intent of improving Iraq's economic status and to increase women's role in the country's financial and political development.

Through hands-on training, such as teaching how to advertise their businesses on the internet, as well as receiving guidance from successful organizations run by women in the United States, these women have been able to establish lucrative laundries, bridal shops, sewing shops, pastry shops, and other businesses throughout the Ninewa Province.

The entrepreneurs, excited by their contributions to the Iraqi economy, expressed thanks to Spartan Soldiers and the Provincial Reconstruction Team.

"I would like to thank Col. Sexton and his Soldiers as well as the PRT for helping us with our businesses," said the president of one of the organizations. "During the regime, women across Iraq, especially here in Ninewa province, suffered a lot. The terrorists killed our husbands, our families."

"To be able to start businesses, making money to provide for our families as well as giving job opportunities to those in the community is wonderful," she said.

Colonel Charles E. A. Sexton, 2nd HBCT, 3rd ID commander, said when his Brigade was requested to help jump-start the women's organizations, he consulted his most trusted advisor - his wife.

"I asked my wife what she thought of this project. She responded, 'Do it!' and I took her advice. I think the bond my wife and I have built from 28 years of partnership represent what is to come in Iraq - both men and women working together to build a life and strong economic base for people of this country," said Col. Sexton.

The intent behind the grants given to the women who underwent this training is that they will instruct their individual members in starting or expanding a business.

Captain Lea Lato, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd HBCT, 3rd ID commander said what these women are doing is outstanding.

"These ladies have overcome tremendous adversity. Being they are from a society where there are very limited roles for women to play in the economy, what they are doing is excellent and courageous," Capt. Lato said.

"As a woman also in a leadership role, I was honored to be there, supporting the women's achievements and representing our Brigade's involvement," she said.

Future plans include training another 25 women's associations in business and strategic planning, forming a network of women's associations across Ninewa and creating sister organizations with like-minded associations in the United States.



NINEWA POLICE OFFICERS FACE AN INNOVATIVE, PROMISING FUTURE

BY MASTER SGT. DUFF E. MCFADDEN

PROSPECTIVE POLICE OFFICERS within Iraq's Ninewa Province face a bright, new future thanks to a progressive partnership between the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, and Province officials.

More than 300 people turned out for opening ceremonies at the Ninewa Police College, built as a joint effort between U.S. forces, local Iraqi support and the Ministry of the Interior. With the simple snip of a pink ribbon, Iraqi Minister of the Interior

Jawad Al-Bulani helped usher in a new era for northern Iraq police officers.

A three-year institution, students are taught by Iraqi law enforcement veterans. Students will graduate with a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice and enter law enforcement as newly-commissioned police officers.

All curriculum and rules are derived from the Baghdad Police College, Ninewa's sister school, and the Ministry of the Interior. Direct funding also comes from the Ministry of the Interior.

The sprawling \$19 million, 20-acre complex features 36 classrooms, 12 barracks, a mock police station, several crime-scene rooms, a vehicle driving range, dining facility, student recreation room, school headquarters, dean's office and a football field. More than \$1 million has been invested in

state-of-the-art equipment to provide future Iraqi police officers the most innovative law enforcement techniques and tactics.

"Use of the driving simulator will educate students on proper driving procedures," said Lt. Col. David Sanders, Task Force Shield commander. "The crime scene facilities will allow staff to video tape students as they set security, process a crime scene and collect evidence. This video will then help students to correct deficiencies in their approaches and techniques as evidence is gathered and prepared for analysis at a crime lab."

Two essential classes are also taught here, said Lt. Col. Sanders. Those classes are Human Rights and Ethics. Through progressive academies and training such as this, the Iraqis are bringing in new officers and a more professional image, he added.

Everything is provided to ensure Iraqi students have a safe and secure place to sleep, eat and learn.

There are currently 190 cadets vetted to attend the first class, with another 40 from

CONT. FROM PG 10

the Ninewa Province in the process of being vetted. It's expected another 70 will arrive as overflow from Baghdad's Police College.

Lieutenant Colonel Lee Porterfield, from Task Force Shield, advises and assists Iraqi Police Brig. Gen. Khalid, the Ninewa Police College dean, with the many challenges in operating and providing quality instruction at the new school.

"This is a critical milestone in establishing police primacy within the Ninewa Province," said Lt. Col. Porterfield. "There are still a lot of challenges ahead, but in working with Brig. Gen. Khalid and the Provincial Headquarters, I'm confident this important Iraqi police institutional training facility will produce quality IP officers within three years."

Students must meet stringent criteria prior to acceptance: they must be 17 to 22 and-a-half years of age; must have a high school education; their father and mother must be Iraqi nationals; they can't belong to a political party; they must have no criminal history; and they must pass a medical exam and interview process, as part of their vetting process.

"The basic mission is to get these officers educated and into the Iraqi police force," said Lt. Col. Sanders. "When they sign their contract, they agree they can be placed anywhere in the country. However, since they have the right dialect and are familiar with the local people, it's hoped they'll remain here in the province. In return, the people of Ninewa will get to see them perform critical tasks for both the local police force and their community."

Graduates will also have the opportunity for numerous hours of annual refresher training, to keep current with modern police procedures.

A better educated police officer is a win-win situation, no matter how you look at it, said Lt. Col. Sanders.

"The Iraqis receive a more educated and proficient police officer. The province benefits from improved department manning and leadership, which provides for a safer community. Meanwhile, U.S. forces, such as Task Force Shield, have the opportunity to work with more experienced, skilled colleague," he said.



SPARTAN FAMILIES POUND PAVEMENT IN SUPPORT OF TROOPS

BY SPC. CARA MENNINGER

IT WAS A COLD, CRISP MORNING as over 400 Spartan Family Members and pets arrived at Fort Stewart's Donovan Field to support the forward deployed Soldiers of 2nd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division during the Walk to Iraq/Afghanistan.

Spartan Family members rallied together to walk the "first mile" to Iraq as a unit. From 23 January to April 24 Family Members will walk, run and swim adding those distances to the 6,752 miles it would take to reach Iraq from Fort Stewart.

Even for the Brigade's newest spouses it wasn't difficult to determine where the Spartan Brigade was located. They were the largest crowd, all huddled around a tent covered in Spartan Brigade banners. As the Families arrived, they were greeted by the Rear Detachment leadership, as well as the Brigade's senior spouses and Family Readiness Support Assistants.

While the Families and friends gathered, some of the senior spouses

and their children passed out 2nd Brigade buttons to wear during the walk to identify 2nd Brigade participants and to build spirit throughout the already excited crowd.

Prior to the walk, families assembled behind their respective battalion banners and watched "shout out" video messages from their Soldiers in Iraq. It was tearful for some spouses to hear their Soldier express how much they miss their families and how they planned to run the distance back to the States in conjunction with their loved ones.

As everyone assembled at the starting point, it was hard not to notice the outpouring of spirit displayed by family members of all sizes. Adorned with homemade t-shirts, matching outfits, pink guidons, and children wearing mini ACUs, every participant made the event a fun occasion. The high levels of spirit made the walk a great opportunity for Families to take pictures to send to their Soldiers show the Soldiers forward that the Families are supporting them.

Not only were Families taking pictures, but some had the opportunity to tape video messages of their own to send to their Soldiers, while others were interviewed by local TV stations covering the event.

Even though Families are 6,752 miles away, this "first mile" event brought the 2nd Brigade Families closer to their loved ones. The Walk to Iraq was yet another way to help support the 2nd BCT and foster esprit de corps among the Families back in the Rear Detachment.



PARATROOPER COOKS SERVE MEALS ON THE **FRONTIER** OF FREEDOM

BY CAPT. ADAM L. TALIAFERRO



ARMY COOKS FROM Bounty Troop, Task Force Thunder, 3-73 CAV (Airborne), 2/3 ID in Iraq do not let their austere surroundings stop them from providing delicious meals 24/7.

The Task Force Thunder cooks deployed from the 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, NC operate at Joint Security Station (JSS) Heider, a small remote outpost shared with the Iraqi Army that is on the Iraqi/Syrian border. “One of the missions of Bounty Troop, 3-73 CAV is to partner with the Iraqi Army and Iraqi border police to secure their border and deny violent extremists entry into Iraq,” said Capt. Adam Taliaferro, Commander, Bounty Troop and JSS Heider. “Our Paratroopers operate long hours and late nights and our cooks ensure that there is a great meal waiting for them every time, regardless of our location and remoteness.”

Bounty Troop cooks consists of Sgt. Bizer, NCOIC, Spc. King, and Sgt. McNeal, who is actually a fueler. “All three of these Paratroopers are capable of performing jobs outside of their MOS,” said 1st. Lt. Nick Alex, Troop Executive Officer. “They understand mission first and it’s more important to just get the job done, regardless of whose job it is.” The team cooks breakfast, then conducts the JSS refueling mission,

prepares lunch and dinner, then conducts another refueling operation.

What makes it more impressive is that the Bounty Troop cooks prepare some of the tastiest meals around. The cooks operate out of a mobile kitchen trailer (MKT), a small transportable kitchen station that is known for its limited appliances and room. It is in stark contrast to the KBR multimillion dollar facilities located in Iraq that are known for their extensive selections of food and beverages. You would assume these cooks are operating out of a full service fine dining kitchen with the meals they produce.

It is not unusual for Soldiers to shake their heads in disbelief with the meals the cooks create. For Christmas dinner, Spc. King prepared mixed berry glaze for the ham and a pineapple glaze for the turkey. Spc. King, a Dallas, Texas native, studied culinary arts before joining the Army.

“Cooking is a passion; it is something that I always loved to do. I was cooking before joining the Army and I strive to do it the best that I can. It’s something that I love to do.”

“My biggest pleasure is not having guys going hungry and that they are fulfilled,” said Sgt. Bizer, “A great meal lifts morale and it lets me know that I am doing my job.”

Sgt. Bizer only has one rule for his cooks -variety “I don’t like to eat the same old

thing every time, I like flavor, if I don’t like it, why would anybody else,” he said.

Ground beef turns into an Italian meatball sandwich; shredded beef transforms into Philly cheese steaks with onions, peppers and melted cheese.

“Food is a good morale booster,” said Sgt. McNeal from Philadelphia, Penn. “If the food is right, they eat and leave happy. Especially around here, it is a big thing. If you keep it different and mix it up a little bit, you never know what you’re going to get.” “While we are fueling, we discuss the menu for the day,” said Spc. King, “since we don’t get what big FOBs get, we make do with what we have.”

“We realized that we can pull anything off. It’s a lot of prep and people don’t see what goes on behind the kitchen,” said Spc. King. “It’s not just food in a box, it’s fresh food. You cannot make mango barbecue sauce in a box. We made meatball subs with marinara from scratch. We did not have wine so we used sparkling grape juice.”

These Task Force Thunder cooks embody the phrase “adapt and overcome” and provide more than just the necessary meals for consumption; they provide food that is second to none, and they provide a little bit of home in each bite.

GLADIATOR SOLDIERS EMBRACE THEIR CHALLENGING MISSION SET

BY 1ST LT. TIFFANY ACKERS



FOR THE GLADIATORS of Golf Company 1-9 Field Artillery, the diverse set of combat missions they execute in northern Iraq are a welcome challenge. In addition to the standard Forward Support Company (FSC) missions of maintaining the Battle King fleet of vehicles and other sustainment operations, the Gladiators have executed security related combat missions supporting the Spartan Brigade that are not normally associated with logisticians. These missions include securing repair operations on the dirt berm around the city of Mosul, supporting the Brigade's mission to construct combined checkpoints across Ninewa Province, and assisting the 3rd Federal Police in re-routing traffic on the major highway leading into Mosul from Baghdad.

All of the aforementioned missions are high visibility and high priority missions. The repair mission to the dirt berm surrounding Mosul, locally known as the Riyadh Line, was executed in conjunction with 2-3 Brigade Troops Battalion engineer assets, and required a keen eye and constant vigilance on the part of the

Gladiator Soldiers. The operation lasted over a 14-day period and required multiple patrols to the Riyadh Line along the western border of Mosul. Golf's Distribution Platoon provided security for the Engineers as they inspected breaks in the Riyadh Line to assess the damage and repaired the breaks. A typical mission included Troop Leading Procedures (TLP), a combat patrol to the Riyadh Line, and the establishment of defensive positions as the engineer equipment was downloaded and the gaps were assessed and filled in. As required, the platoon also established traffic stops and minimized unnecessary movement and activity in the vicinity of the work site. The mission objective of repairing the Riyadh line is to denying insurgent freedom of movement into western Mosul was met.

The Combined Check Point (CCP) operations are currently the highest priority mission set for the Spartan Brigade as we partner with Iraqi Security Forces and prepare for the upcoming Iraqi National Elections. In order to establish these CCPs the Gladiators of Golf FSC provided security escorts for 26th BSB as they transported many tons of barrier material to the various CCPs located near the city

of Mosul. The barriers are used to fortify the CCPs against attack. As with the Riyadh line operation, these missions began with TLP followed by execution of the mission. One major difference between the Riyadh line security mission and the CCP mission is that the CCP missions are conducted exclusively at night.

Golf's support of the 3rd Federal Police has greatly assisted them in establishing a better flow of traffic into Mosul from Baghdad. These security escort missions require Gladiator Soldiers to again work at night and secure a worksite so engineers can emplace barriers along a one mile stretch of highway. The 3rd Federal Police partner with Golf Company in securing the area and even provide Iraqi tea or "chai" to the Soldiers working late at night and into the morning hours.

Although these security missions may be standard for some units, they are a new experience for the sustainers from Golf Company. As with everything the Gladiators are doing to support our Nation's efforts in Iraq, the Soldiers of Golf Company have approached these non-standard missions with the competence and confidence emblematic of all the Soldiers assigned to the Battle Kings and the Spartan Brigade.



SURROUNDED
BY
NOBLENESS

CHAPLAIN SID TAYLOR

TO BE HUMBLE TO SUPERIORS IS
DUTY, TO EQUALS COURTESY, TO
INFERIORS NOBLENESS.

- BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

IN TERMS OF THEIR HUMANITY, IRAQI soldiers are equal to American Soldiers. However, Iraqis would agree that American Soldiers are more experienced and better trained at war fighting. Rather than look down on Iraqi soldiers, our Soldiers respect their courage. A willingness to fight for liberty and justice is always admired.

We want the Iraqi Army to succeed. Therefore, we train them well. To know the beauties of liberty is to desire it for everyone. To take actions which assist others toward liberty is nobleness. I am surrounded by nobles. It is a great blessing.

REMEMBERING THE FORGOTTEN WAR: KOREA

THIRD INFANTRY DIVISION Soldiers have left a legacy for Soldiers serving in its ranks today. Their role in the wars fought during this century have been significant as they have helped shape history, a history that is still being read by young and old today. Not to be forgotten is the story of the division's Soldiers during the Korean War.

The 3rd Infantry Division was known as the "Fire Brigade" for its rapid response to crisis. When North Korea invaded the border of South Korea in 1950, the 3rd Infantry Division was one of 10 active divisions in the U.S. Army. Shortages in personnel resulted in the 30th Infantry Regiment and the 41st Field Artillery loaned out to replace members of other units.

The 3rd Infantry Division was brought up to strength with Republic of Korea replacements and the addition of the "Borinqueneers," the 65th Infantry Regiment from Puerto Rico. The division arrived in Korea in September 1950 and joined operations in the Hamhung-Hungnam area.

On Nov. 23, 1950, China entered the war and the massive strength of the Chinese Army was felt all along the front. The Allies were forced to retreat. From November 30 to December 24, the 3rd Infantry conducted the

most massive beachhead evacuation in American military history: 105,000 troops, 100,000 refugees, 17,500 vehicles, and 750,000 tons of cargo.

The 3rd Infantry Division went on to support combat missions of the Eighth Army. Marne Soldiers fought valiantly and proved their mettle during the Battle of the Chosin Reservoir, at the Chorwon-Kumwha area, Jackson Heights and Arrowhead outposts.

By 1951, elements of the 3rd Infantry Division helped recapture Seoul, the Korean capital, and the Chinese were pushed back to the 38th Parallel. As the Chinese tried to recapture the capital, the brunt of the attack fell on the 3rd Infantry Division's sector and the Marne Division became known as the "Rock of Seoul."

Again the Chinese were driven back to the 38th Parallel and the 3rd Infantry Division settled into front-line duty, defending all attempts by the Chinese to seize strategic positions. The war ended in July 1953 and by October 1954 the division returned to Ft. Benning, Ga.

The 3rd Infantry Division received 10 battle stars for its role in the Korean War. Eleven Soldiers were Medal of Honor recipients and were added to the division's list of heroes during the Korean War.

HONORING LT. CHARLES MURRAY

CITATION: FOR COMMANDING COMPANY C, 30th Infantry, displaying supreme courage and heroic initiative near Kaysersberg, France, on Dec. 16 1944, while leading a reinforced platoon into enemy territory. Descending into a valley beneath hilltop positions held by our troops, he observed a force of 200 Germans pouring deadly mortar, bazooka, machine-gun, and small arms fire into an American battalion occupying the crest of the ridge.

The enemy's position in a sunken road, though hidden from the ridge, was open to a flank attack by 1st Lt. Murray's patrol but he hesitated to commit so small a force to battle with the superior and strongly disposed enemy. Crawling out ahead of his troops to a vantage point, he called by radio for artillery fire. His shells bracketed the German force, but when he was about to correct the range his radio went dead. He returned to his patrol, secured grenades and a rifle to launch them and went back to his self-appointed outpost.

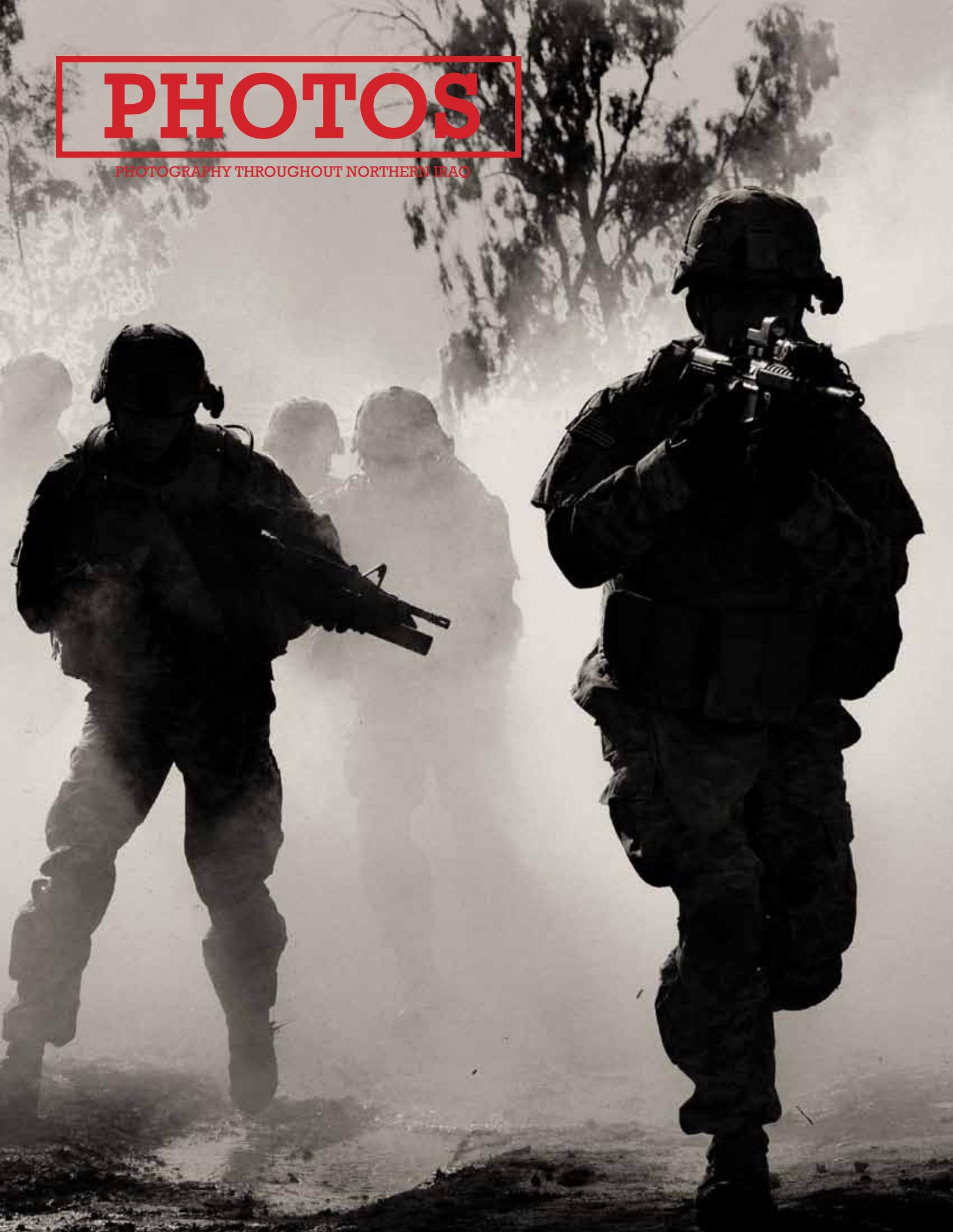
His first shots disclosed his position; the enemy directed heavy fire against him as he methodically fired his missiles into the narrow defile. Again he returned to his patrol. With an automatic rifle and ammunition, he once more moved to his exposed position. Burst after burst he fired into the enemy, killing 20, wounding many others, and completely disorganizing its ranks, which began to withdraw. He captured 10 Germans in foxholes. An eleventh, while pretending to surrender, threw a grenade which knocked him to the ground, inflicting eight wounds. Though suffering and bleeding profusely, he refused to return to the rear until he had chosen the spot for the block and had seen his men correctly deployed.

By his single-handed attack on an overwhelming force and by his intrepid and heroic fighting, 1st Lt. Murray stopped a counterattack, established an advance position against formidable odds, and provided an inspiring example for the men of his command.



PHOTOS

PHOTOGRAPHY THROUGHOUT NORTHERN IRAQ







THE UNSEEN HEROES

PHOTOS BY PFC. GREGORY GIESKE





TIGER IN THE GRASS

Stalking their objective while using high grass for cover, (Left) two Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-36 Infantry Division's Sniper Team, pursue a closer observational vantage point to sight their target during a training exercise at Iraqi Army Base Al Kindi in northern Mosul. Using vegetation for camouflage, (Above) a sniper from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-36 Infantry Division attached to the 3rd Infantry Division, aims at his target during a training exercise.







Iraqi Soldiers stationed at Al Kindi, a base in northern Mosul, Iraq, take part in a week-long Air Mobility course taught by a U.S. Scout Squadron from Headquarters and Headquarters



Company, 1-36 Infantry Division currently attached to the 3rd Infantry Division, by tactically loading and unloading from a helicopter at Joint Security Station India, Feb. 4.



As part of a combined Air Mobility exercise at Joint Security Station India, Iraq, U.S. Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-36 Infantry Division currently attached to the 3rd Infantry



Division, train Iraqi Army Soldiers how to tactically clear a building, detain an insurgent (role-played here by 1-36's XO, 1st Lt. Larry Richardson), and safely advance to a helicopter with detainee in hand.



LEARNING THE ROPES

Wrapping up the end of a week-long combined forces Air Mobility training course held at Joint Security Station India, Iraq, with applause for a job well done, U.S. and Iraqi Soldiers (Above) prepare for the upcoming elections, Feb. 4. Two helicopters (Right) depart after detaining an insurgent role-played by a U.S. Soldier, as part of a combined Air Mobility training exercise facilitated by U.S. Forces from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-36 Infantry Division currently attached to 3rd Infantry Division.





PHOTO BY DAMODAR GURJARI



FIRE IN THE SKY



Illuminating the night sky, (Left) lights can be seen through the fog, from the nearby Iraqi Army base, just past Joint Security Station India's firing range, Mosul, Iraq, Feb. 15. Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company (Above), 1-36 Infantry Division attached to the 3rd Infantry Division, light up the night by firing 120mm illumination rounds over combined security checkpoints near Al Kindi, Iraq in preparation for the March elections.



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MARNE

SOLDIERS STRENGTHEN MOSUL POLICE WITH TRAINING

BY SPC. CRYSTAL M. O'NEAL



“Boom,” an explosion thunders through a small three-room house as thick smoke clouds the air. Four U.S. Soldiers, armed and ready, enter the house strategically, one behind the other, their eyes and ears open, focused and ready.

They patrol each room, searching high and low for explosives, dynamite, weapons, and other harmful devices. They search the occupants of the house thoroughly, ensuring that they have no weapons on their person.

After finding several incriminating items, the Soldiers apprehend the criminals, gather the evidence, and document all of their findings.

Before the drawdown of U.S. Forces in Iraq, house clearing missions may have been done by U.S. Soldiers, but now 417th Military Police Company attached to 317th MP Company are passing on this task, training local Mosul policemen at Forward Operating Base Marez in northern Iraq to ensure that the policemen will be able to provide adequate protection to the people of Mosul, Iraq once all U.S. forces have gone.

These Task Force Marne Soldiers have set up mock houses with hidden explosives and armed personnel at Forward Operating Base Marez in northern Iraq for the policemen to search, secure and compile sufficient evidence to convict discovered terrorists.

Private Daniel Pierce, 417th MP Company, said that the training exercises teach the Iraqi policemen a great deal and they are grasping all aspects rather well.

“These guys seemed to be not only excited but also passionate about what they are doing. They go through the rooms in the house, searching up and down. Once they are done, they gather everything they find, take pictures and make documentation of it,” said the private.

“They have also been doing a great job on arresting and questioning any culprits found at the house in question. They do realize the importance of their jobs and this training,” he said.

Specialist Sean Cortes, 417th MP Company, said that the training is definitely empowering the Mosul Police Force.

“In the past, only detectives and high ranking officers have actually been able to go out to suspected dangerous sites. Now, the lower ranking officers are receiving this training from us, giving these young officers an opportunity to learn something new and valuable that will benefit themselves and their entire police unit as a whole,” he said.

The policemen have been training and will continue to train weekly to perfect their skills.



RISEN FROM THE
GRAVE







Welding a fabricated mount he just made for an Iraqi Army tank being refurbished after spending years in a tank graveyard left for scrap, (pg. 15) Chief Warrant Officer Reynaldo Recinos, Co. B., 26th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd ID, and several of the mechanics are restoring the machine to give to the Iraqi Army as a gift. Taking a break (Above), Pfc. Adams Silver, 26th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division, cleans his hands with a grease rag after a hard day's work in the garage of 26th BSB's motorpool at Forward Operating Base Marez, Iraq, Feb. 13.

Sgt. Wheeler takes a moment to look over his work and to run his hand over the rough and dirty surface of the T-55 sitting in his maintenance bay.

In his mind, though, he doesn't see the rust or dirt that makes his job seem impossible. In three months, he hopes to have this tank running, so it can be presented to the Iraqi Army.

Fixing this broken tank, which was sentenced to a junk yard, and making it run before presenting it to the Iraqi Security Forces they are partnered with is a project being done by the Spartan Brigade.

For a challenge like this, the task was given to Sgt. Mark Wheeler, B Company, 26th Brigade Support Battalion.

"I went down to the yard and looked for a tank that was in good mechanical shape and restorable. That's how we ended up picking this one," Sgt. Wheeler said.

"The engine is in excellent shape. The transmission is in excellent shape," Sgt. Wheeler said. "I opened the covers on the engine. I've seen race car engines that look worse than that. It's beautiful. It looks like they put 500 hours on it and parked it."

Progress on the restoration is going slow, but in the end, according to Sgt. Wheeler, the finished product will be something everyone can be proud of.

"Progress is a little slower than where I want it to be, but we're making headway. There are things we're doing on this that normally we wouldn't have to do or go as far, but I don't turn out anything that's not quality," Sgt. Wheeler said.

"My plan is to have the engine running in one month and have it fully mission capable in three months. The rifling for the gun is perfect and can be functional in one hour. The breach is a little rusty but can be cleaned up," Sgt. Wheeler said. "Once it's up and running, my first drive will be to take it to the chow hall where everyone can see it."

Soldiers passing by the maintenance bay, seeing the old tank parked inside, have their curiosity sparked and stop to check its progress. They ask Sgt. Wheeler where he will get the parts needed to finish the project.

"We're trying to take this tank and not order anything other than expendable items like hoses and bolts," Sgt. Wheeler answers. "We're trying to take the tanks on hand and use parts from them to make it functional. What we can't come up with, we'll fabricate."

Sgt. Wheeler's efforts are fittingly captured in the phrase "Yankee ingenuity," an American English reference describing an attitude of make-do with materials on hand; it is inventive improvisation, adaptation, and overcoming of dire straits when faced with a dearth of materials.

According to Lt. Col. James Kazmierczak, battalion commander, 26th Brigade Support Battalion, his Soldiers from Bravo Maintenance Company see the tank restoration as a challenge.

"The Soldiers look on it as a personal challenge," Lt. Col. Kazmierczak said. "They want to say 'Here's what it looked like before and here's what it looks like now.'"

Progress on the project is done a little at a time, as the mechanics use what time they have available when they are not working on other vehicles needing repairs in the shop.

Working on the tank gives B Company mechanics a chance to gain valuable experience in learning how to fix different engine types and is one way to relieve stress.

"The Soldiers want to come and help out. Whoever is stressed can come and work on the tank and get unstressed. It's kind of like the mental health stress dog," Sgt. Wheeler said. "I've got coveralls; we welcome any and all because there's always something to do."

For Col. Charles E. A. Sexton, brigade commander, 2nd HBCT, having his mechanics work on restoring run-down vehicles not only improves their ability to work on different engines, but bridges a gap for the Iraqi army.

"Giving this tank to the Iraqis shows them what people are capable of if they apply themselves," Col. Sexton said. "It bridges a gap between the U.S. and Iraqi Security Forces and illustrates that hard work and desire can build something to be proud of."

Sgt. Wheeler said as far as he can tell, the tank being restored is a Russian T-55 or Chinese T-69 sold to the Iraqi Army. The difference between the nomenclatures is whether any modifications were added in the form of better turret shape, improved NBC protection, improved fire-control equipment and night-vision equipment.

Sgt. Wheeler hopes once the Iraqis are given the tank, they will continue to provide maintenance to keep it running. For now, though, he and the other Soldiers in his maintenance crew are having a blast restoring the tank to its original condition.

After all, he says, not everyone has the chance to restore an Iraqi tank.

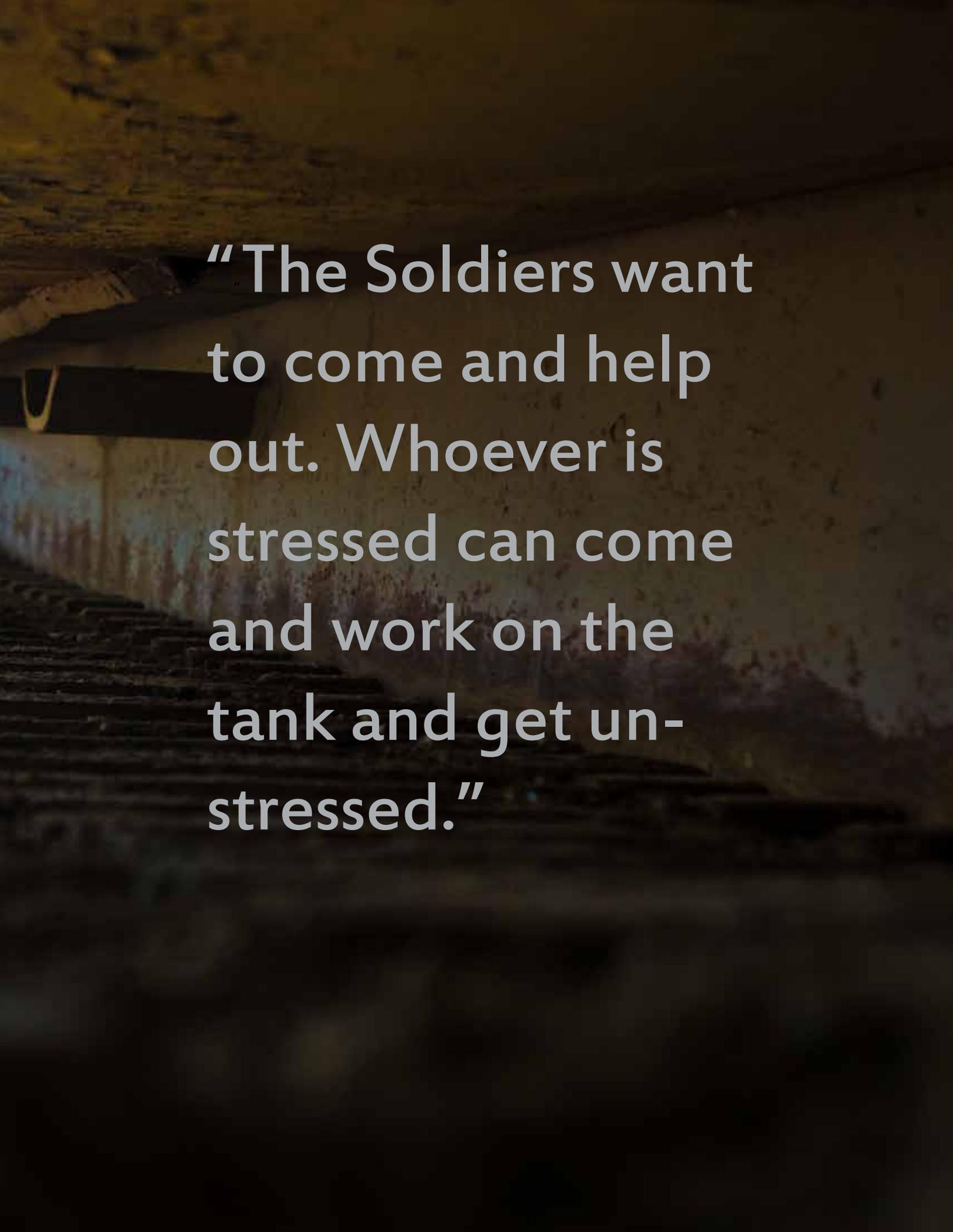
When asked how he can possibly restore an Iraqi tank rusting in a junk yard for so long to serve as a gift to the Iraqis, Sgt. Wheeler smiles and proudly affirms his battalion motto – "No challenge too great."

By Maj. Stephen Holt
Photographs by Pfc. Gregory Gieske



Color-coded parts line the restoration bay in 26th BSB's motor pool. The parts were originally color-coded for the former Iraqi mechanics did not have the ability to read the maintenance manual for the tank. The colored parts allowed the original mechanics to know which parts connected together.





“The Soldiers want to come and help out. Whoever is stressed can come and work on the tank and get unstressed.”

African-American warriors: past *and* present

BY SPC. CRYSTAL M. O'NEAL

A man, armed with a **musket** and gunpowder wades through the swamps of

South Carolina. Looking right, then left, he sees his comrades positioned as he is; poised and ready to defend against the approaching enemy.

Knees bent, shoulders squared, and weapon at the ready, he notices the sea of faces surrounding him. Although they're not all of the same hue, they still hold that same look of determination, that look when fighting for something you strongly believe in — freedom.

Approaching voices ring out and the sounds of men and horses sloshing through the swamp can be heard. His knuckles lighten in color as he tightly clenches his rifle. His mind relaxes, as he prepares to fight to the death.

This Revolutionary War Soldier smiles, not allowing the threat of death to lower his spirits. He knows he won't actually fight to the death; he has to survive.

"After all," he thinks happily, "my master says after we win this war, I am my own man."

With this joyful thought, he pushes forward, determined to fight, to survive, and to become free.

From the battle for America's independence against the English, to the present Operation Iraqi Freedom, black Soldiers

have ably proven themselves as American Soldiers, defending the American flag in every major war fought by the United States, as well as several minor conflicts.

Many of these servicemembers served honorably, giving their lives in battle, while enduring racial discrimination. These warriors faced unfair and unequal treatment, due to the belief they were inferior, due to their skin complexion.

Despite the way they were treated, blacks continued to serve in the Armed Forces in segregated units with inadequate supplies and uniforms, performing menial jobs, which were thought to take little brain power to perform.

After the historical military inroads made by units, such as the Buffalo Soldiers, the first peacetime all-black regiment in the regular U.S. Army, formed in 1866, and the Tuskegee Airmen, America's first black military airmen who battled in the skies of World War II, President Harry S. Truman desegregated all of U.S. Armed Forces on July 26, 1948 via Executive Order 9981, making it illegal, by military law, to make a racist remark against any servicemember.

Thanks to former President Truman's order and the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, black servicemembers today are guaranteed, by law, both military and civilian, equal and just treatment while

on and off-duty.

According to Command Sergeant Major Jesse Andrews, 3rd Infantry Division command sergeant major, currently deployed to northern Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the present-day strides taken to ensure all Soldiers in the Armed Forces receive fair treatment are immeasurable.

"I am elated by the leaps and bounds that have been made to ensure all Soldiers are being treated fairly regardless of their race," said the command sergeant major.

"I am glad African-Americans in the military are finally being truly acknowledged and recognized for all the talents and hard work we bring to the military. Things have definitely come a long way, though there are still things we can work on as Soldiers and leaders, fighting for one common cause — our nation," he said.

This Task Force Marine leader said he hopes he serves as a role model, not only for black Soldiers, but for all Task Force Marine Soldiers.

"I always try to set a good example. I know my Soldiers look up to me,

and I strive to be a positive role model for them at all times; I want them to believe they can achieve anything in this world; just stay grounded, remember the discipline instilled in you from your upbringing, as well as the Army standards and you can't go wrong."

Sergeant First Class Nicolette Shields, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division Equal Opportunity (EO) Advisor, said programs such as EO guarantees equality among the ranks.

"In this program, we educate the Soldiers on each other's differences. We recognize several cultural observances, including but not limited to Black History Month, Asian-Pacific Week, and Hispanic Heritage Month," she said.

"By teaching the Soldiers why another Soldier may do things differently because of his culture, upbringing or background, we rid them of ignorance and they gain a sense of respect for each other. The Soldiers always appreciate this training; they

say it helps them to know their battle buddies better," said the sergeant first class.

Spartan command sergeant major, Command Sgt. Maj. Valmond A. Martin, said he challenges all his Soldiers, regardless of race, creed or ethnicity, to remember Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s famous dream: To judge people by the content of their character, instead of the color of their skin.

"As an Army of one, we must always, always remember the many that came before us, the struggles and injustices they suffered so we can stand and fight as we do today, one team, one fight," said Command Sgt. Maj. Martin.

"We must not forget. We must not take it for granted. It is our duty to make sure everyone, every single one of our Soldiers are treated as they should be."





A NON-LETHAL ALTERNATIVE: MILITARY POLICE CERTIFY ON LESS-THAN-LETHAL WEAPONRY

BY 1ST LT. TODD GIBSON



A SOLID STREAM OF PEPPER SPRAY impacted the Soldier's closed eyes. He opened them, initially tried to show no signs of pain, but the agonizing burn quickly overcame him. The instructor, Staff Sgt. Brandon Roe, told him to run a short circuit around the building to where stacks of water were sitting to flush out the irritant and then beckoned to the next Soldier. The long, anxious line slowly moved forward.

One by one each Military Police Soldier received a short, second-long blast of the brutal liquid. That one second translated into several dozen minutes of nearly total physical impairment and hours of recovery. While staggering about pouring bottle upon bottle of water into his eyes, the platoon leader, 1st Lt. Justin Evander, stated, "This is the most painful experience of my life."

It was all part of the non-lethal training conducted for the Military Police of the 2-3 Brigade Troops Battalion. Three days of classroom courses and practical exercises familiarized the Military Police with more peaceable means of retaliation.

The MPs not only learned how to properly engage assailants with tazers and oleoresin capsicum spray, better known as 'pepper' spray, but were also subjected to the pain these non-lethal weapons inflict on their intended targets. A better knowledge of just how effective these methods are would allow the Soldiers to understand when it is appropriate to employ them.

A day after their encounter with the pepper spray, the line was formed again and every Soldier endured a five second jolt of electric current from the standard issue X26 Tazer they are authorized to carry. Even the company commander, Capt. John Evans, volunteered to be tazed by the instructor. Two prongs shot out, struck Capt. Evans in the back and the two Soldiers holding his arms assisted as he fell writhing onto a mattress laid out to prevent any injuries.

The platoon sergeant, Sgt. First Class Michael Odle, managed to stay standing to the amazement of the other Soldiers, although the obvious involuntary tensing and convulsing of his muscles made it clear he would not have been much of a threat.

The Military Police Platoon also conducted training on bean-bag projectiles as well as the FN303 less-lethal launcher; both are designed to inflict a blunt force strong enough to incapacitate but not kill the target. For obvious safety reasons, these weapon systems were not tested on the Military Police themselves.

Now fully certified to employ their less-than-lethal weaponry, the Military Police platoon has gained a new capability to combat operations. The idea of using these non-lethal means throughout Iraq would not have been considered an entirely viable option years ago, but as the violence begins to slowly subside it has become an ever more realistic course of action available to U.S. Forces.



IRAQI SECURITY FORCES UNDER- GO TRAFFIC CON- TROL TRAINING

BY SPC. CRYSTAL M. O'NEAL

A MAN DRIVES THROUGH AN IRAQI checkpoint dressed as the most respected figure in Iraqi tribal communities: the sheik. He wears the long dress-like apparel, known as the abaiyah, and the traditional head-dress, the kifeayah, draped over his head and hanging past his shoulders.

He pulls up, stops and is questioned by Iraqi Federal Police. He demands to keep going through the checkpoint, because, after all, he is the sheik.

A policeman tells the sheik in a command voice, "Shaikh, Aukhraj Men Al-Sayrah!" or in English, "Sir, step out of the car!" The sheik steps out of the car, and the IFPs then search him and his vehicle professionally and accurately, finding guns, knives and explosives.

Staff Sergeant Jose De La Sierra, an NCO assigned to the 114th Military Police Company, playfully pulls the head dress off of the "sheik" and tells him to replace it with his patrol cap. Specialist. Sean Cortes

puts it on and shakes hands with the IFPs. The IFPs smile, proud of themselves for exhibiting expertise and professionalism during the traffic control training given to them by the 114th MPs.

The IFPs along with the Iraqi Quick Reaction Force have been working with the 114th Military Police Company weekly on Forward Operating Base Marez in northern Iraq to perfect their policemen skills, sharpening their traffic control skills during this training exercise, Feb. 2.

Staff Sergeant De La Sierra, Task Force Marne noncommissioned officer in charge of the training, said the policemen have not only been enjoying themselves during the training, but they have also been doing an excellent job, soaking up all information taught to them.

"Our sole purpose is to teach them the proper procedures for searching vehicles and personnel during traffic control. We role play, giving them hands-on training so

CONT. FROM PG 42

when they are out there patrolling, this will all be second nature to them,” said Staff Sgt. De La Sierra.

He added this training will definitely give the IFPs a solid foundation to stand on once U.S. Soldiers have completely pulled



out of the police-
men's
area of
opera-
tions.

“We are em-
powering

the IFPs, teaching them to capture criminals and properly document all evidence found so that these suspects will be held and tried for their crimes instead of being released back into the population,” he said.

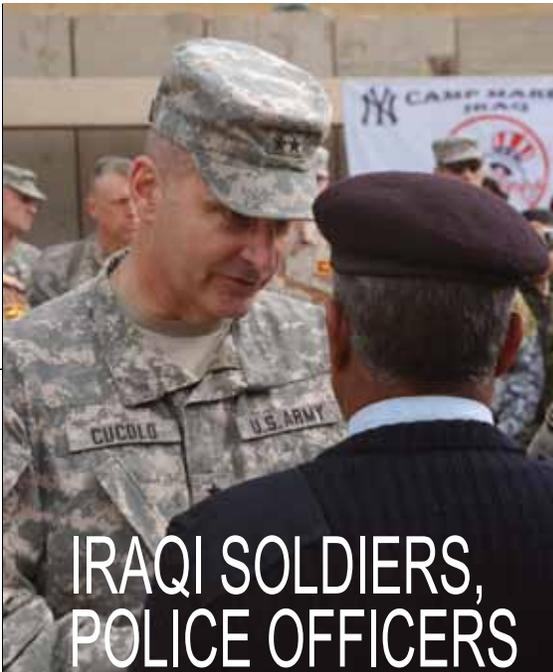
They are instructed to stop all vehicles, ask for identification, and if they have any

suspicious, search the vehicle and its passengers thoroughly.

“If any incriminating evidence is found, we taught them to compile it and to take pictures of the evidence, the criminals and the license plate of the vehicle. Following all these procedures, the bad guys are sure to be convicted leaving the streets of Mosul a much safer place,” said Staff Sgt. De La Sierra.

Miqdad Shukur Muhmmud, QRF member, said that the training has definitely proven beneficial, and he and his fellow co-workers are growing more and more confident with each training session.

“The training has helped a lot,” he said. “Once all the Soldiers leave, we will be able to protect our people, making sure our country is safe and the people are well.”



IRAQI SOLDIERS, POLICE OFFICERS RECOGNIZED BY U.S. FORCES OFFI- CIALS

FIVE MEMBERS OF THE IRAQI Security Forces were recognized Saturday by United States Forces officials during a simple ceremony at the Forward Operat-

ing Base Marez, in Mosul, Iraq.

Three Federal Police officers and two Iraqi Army Soldiers were responsible for identifying and preventing Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (VBIED) throughout the Ninewa Province.

Besides discovering the original VBIED on Dec. 15, the police officers safely evacuated civilians, military personnel and local emergency workers after they discovered a second VBIED, saving countless lives.

On Jan. 20, Iraqi Army soldiers discovered two more VBIEDS in separate incidents. One discovered multiple IEDs within the area, which were later disarmed.

On Jan. 21, upon the discovery of a VBIED, an Iraqi soldier identified, pursued and eliminated the person responsible for triggering the VBIED. Despite being wounded during the chase, the soldier was able to kill the insurgent before he could harm other Soldiers or Ninewa Province residents.

Iraqi Soldiers and Iraqi Police Officers were presented the Army Commendation Medal by Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo, Commanding General, U.S. Division-North during the ceremony.



FIXING THE FLEET

BY CAPT. JONATHAN FREDRITZ



THE HEAVY EQUIP-
ment Transporter and
Trailer System, commonly
referred to as the HETT, is
a large wheeled vehicle sys-

tem that consists of the M1070 Tractor and the M1000 Trailer. This system is playing a vital role in the USF-I military forces plan to drawdown its forces in Iraq.

With the high demand placed on the HETTs many of these vehicles can take a toll on any maintenance program. It is no secret that the terrain in Iraq can be rough and demanding on any piece of tactical equipment.

The 26th Brigade Support Battalion currently has the task of maintaining the operational readiness of these HETTs. This daunting task has been placed in the hands of Bravo Company's automotive section.

Lt. Col. Jim Kazmierczak, Battalion Commander, 26th BSB, states “Under the modular Division design, HETTs are no longer authorized within the Division's force structure, thus making it very difficult to move the brigade's heavy equipment”.

HETTs have been, and continue to be critical to the 2nd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division's mission in transporting, deploying, recovering and evacuating combat-loaded main battle tanks and other heavy tracked and wheeled vehicles to and from the battlefield.

As seen during the past Operation Iraqi Freedom rotations, the Brigade Support Battalions rely heavily on these vehicles to move equipment on the battlefield. With this in mind, Bravo Company, 26th BSB is ready to do its part in keeping this vital piece of equipment in the fight.

US SOLDIERS

IRAQI FORCES

SGT VINCENT ARELLANO
SPC SHAWN ELLINGTON
SPC HENRY CRESS

A 3rd INFANTRY DIVISION MISSION

TASK FORCE

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