

The Expeditionary Times

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celebration in
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CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq— Bank of Baghdad employees, Sahir Mahmood (from left), regional manager, Elaf Shukur, Victory Base Complex branch manager, Saraj AlDeen A. Bahjat, marketing manager, Abdul Ameer Al Shameri, executive manager of engineering, and Khaldun Khalid, customer service representative, dig in on Camp Liberty ground as the Iraqi Based Industrial Zone's Golden Construction Company prepares to build the Bank of Baghdad. The bank is expected to open in about 10 weeks, and is being built to help stabilize the country as the U.S. prepares for the responsible draw down of its forces.

US partners with Iraq to stabilize economy

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. TRESA L. ALLEMANG
199TH GARRISON COMMAND

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq—

Officials and employees with the Bank of Baghdad recently began construction

on a new branch at Victory Base Complex, Iraq, and a stronger Iraqi economy.

"Iraq's Victory Base Complex vendors, contractors and civilians will soon have a new bank to meet their financial service needs," said Maj. Andrea Singer, theater financial management liaison

officer with the 326th Theater Financial Management Center and a Los Angeles native.

Singer said the Victory Base Complex branch of Bank of Baghdad will be one of 10 Iraqi banks to be established on U.S. bases throughout Iraq, and is the second on VBC, as part of the Banks on Bases Initiative.

The new bank, expected to open in about 10 weeks, will ease the impact on the Iraq Joint Operations Area as the financial management units help set the conditions for the upcoming responsible draw-down of U.S. troops and equipment from Iraq, said Capt. Eric C. LaBay, banking and

e-commerce officer with the 15th Financial Management Company, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Denver, Colo., native.

Singer explained that the goal of the Banks on Bases Initiative is to transition the installation eventually, as well as the rest of the country, into using the Iraqi Dinar, instead of U.S. currency, to help strengthen the Iraqi economy.

"The dependence on U.S. currency has resulted in the dollarization of the Iraqi economy, which increases the probability of fraud and exposes service members to unnecessary risk by creating

a potential funding source for our adversaries," she said. "By de-dollarizing the Iraqi economy we are helping to strengthen the Iraqi business and banking infrastructure and improving the value of the local currency."

Singer said this bank will be available for use by local nationals, third-country nationals, and contractors working on Victory Base Complex, and also noted that the Bank of Baghdad was approved by the U.S. Treasury to hold government funds for U.S. Army finance companies.

"Having banks on bases throughout Iraq also allows

Economy cont. page 23



**"They will be sore;
tried, by night and by
day, without rest, until
the victory is won"**

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For distribution, contact the 13th ESC PAO at Joint Base Balad, Iraq

Joint Base Balad :
318-483-4603

COB Adder:
318-833-1002

COB Taji:
318-834-1281

Al Asad Air Base:
318-440-4103

COB Speicher:
318-849-2501

e-mail:
escpao@iraq.centcom.mil

Add a little extra for sweet lemonade

LT. COL GARRY LOSEY
13TH ESC DEPUTY COMMAND CHAPLAIN



Jimmy Johnson once said, "The difference between ordinary and extraordinary is that little extra."

That little extra makes a big difference. It can be the difference between failure and achievement. And, in most cases, it takes very little to do the little extra required to achieve great outcomes. We just have to put forth our energy and strength to accomplish what we have been asked to do.

What does that little extra consist of? Maybe it is time, a little extra planning, or a little extra work. Let's move beyond the ordinary and become "extra" ordinary by doing just a little bit more, trying a little bit harder and making a bigger difference.

In a 2001 issue of "Work In Progress" magazine, I found this story about, "lemons and lemonade."

Many of us are familiar with the expression "If life gives you lemons, make lemonade." Lemons, in this case, are referred to as a negative because of their sourness, and the common use of the word to imply something that goes wrong.

So, when things go wrong, make the best of them. Some-

times that sounds a bit corny. When we are stuck in a bad situation, the last thing many of us are in the mood to do is step back and look for the opportunities to make lemonade. Some of us positively revel in our anger or distress.

Just to provide some inspiration, here's a wonderful example from an entertainment star of such stature, that she could probably throw any kind of temper tantrum she wanted and no one would be surprised.

But she didn't.

My newspaper tells me that earlier last month actress Whoopi Goldberg's tour bus was stopped for speeding. Obviously, the driver, not Whoopi, was responsible. The star might be excused for anger at the delay while the driver filled out paperwork and posted bond at the local jail. Instead, she not only chatted with, and signed autographs for, the jail staff members, but she also visited the female jail inmates to give them an off-the-cuff motivational talk.

That's making lemons into lemonade!

There might be times here when you feel that you have been given a great big glass of lemonade. What are you going to do with it? You have a choice. Go the extra mile, by your attitude and positive spirit, and by putting a little extra work into what is happening, you might find that the glass of lemonade is sweeter because you added something to it.

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EXPEDITIONARY TIMES

13th ESC Commanding General, Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz

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Contact the Expeditionary Times staff at:
escpao@iraq.centcom.mil

13th ESC G2, Security Manager
(318) 433-2155

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13th ESC PAO, Managing Editor
Maj. Raul Marquez, 13th ESC PAO
raul.marquez@iraq.centcom.mil

13th ESC PA NCOIC
Staff Sgt. Joel F. Gibson, 13th ESC
joel.f.gibson@iraq.centcom.mil

13th ESC Staff Writers
Spc. Naveed Ali Shah, 13th ESC
naveed.alishah@iraq.centcom.mil

Cpl. Rich Barkemeyer
richmond.barkemeyer@iraq.centcom.mil

196th MPAD Commander
Capt. Marshall Jackson
marshall.jackson@iraq.centcom.mil

196th MPAD First Sergeant
1st Sgt. Steve Toth
richard.toth@iraq.centcom.mil

196th MPAD Production Editor
Sgt. 1st Class Steven Johnson
steven.r.johnson1@iraq.centcom.mil

196th MPAD Layout and Design
Sgt. Eunice Alicea Valentin
eunice.alicea@iraq.centcom.mil

196th MPAD Copy Editor
Staff Sgt. Randall Carey
randall.carey@iraq.centcom.mil

196th MPAD Staff Writers
Sgt. Michael Carden
michael.carden@iraq.centcom.mil

Sgt. Kimberly Johnson
kimberly.a.johnson@iraq.centcom.mil

Sgt. Chad Menegay
chad.menegay@iraq.centcom.mil

Sgt. David A. Scott
david.a.scott@iraq.centcom.mil

Contributing public affairs offices

3rd Sustainment Brigade
15th Sustainment Brigade
36th Sustainment Brigade
224th Sustainment Brigade
256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team
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The Weekly Standard: Utilizing the chain of command

LT. COL. GARY H. DAVIS
INSPECTOR GENERAL



“Leadership is solving problems. The day Soldiers stop bringing you their problems is the day you have stopped leading them. They have either lost confidence that you can help or concluded you do not care. Either case is a failure of leadership.” — General Colin Powell

Do you have an issue for the IG? The first question you will be asked is whether you have discussed the issue with your chain of command.

IG regulations and policies encourage Soldiers to first discuss any complaints, allegations or requests for assistance with the commander, chain of command or supervisor. The IG will always reinforce the chain of command and be

careful not to undermine it by simply accepting an issue. IGs encourage Soldiers to use their chain of command but do not require it. IGs must maintain a clear distinction between being an extension of the commander and their sworn duty to serve as fair, impartial, objective fact finders and problem solvers. At the same time, IGs must be sufficiently independent so those requesting assistance will continue to do so, even when the complainant feels the commander may be the problem.

So do you have an issue for the IG? Ask yourself the following questions.

- » What do you want the IG to do for you?
- » Do you have any supporting documentation?
- » Have you requested assistance from any other source or agency?
- » Have you given your chain of command an opportunity to address the problem?

Inspector General Contacts

Joint Base Balad (13th ESC): DSN 433-2125
Lt. Col. Reginald Howard (Command Inspector General)

Maj. Christopher Minor (Deputy)
Sgt. 1st Class Robert Christian (NCOIC)
Sgt. 1st Class Sammy Johnson

Taji (278th ACR): DSN 834-3079
Master Sgt. Richard Faust

Adder/Tallil (224th Sust. Bde):
Lt. Col. Andrea Shealy - DSN 833-1710
Sgt. 1st Class Alexander Arce

Rawhide Brigade transfers authority to Dragonslayers

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. KIMBERLY JOHNSON
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE

ADDER, Iraq—The mission of the 36th Sustainment Brigade comes to an end as they handed over the reins to the 224th Sustainment

Brigade during a transfer of authority ceremony June 9 at Memorial Hall here.

Col. Lisa Costanza, commander of the 224th Sust. Bde. and a Long Beach, Calif., native, assumed command from Col. Sean Ryan, commander of the 36th Sust. Bde. and a Cedar Point, Texas, native, both under the command of Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz, commander of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Mansfield, Ohio, native, who attended the ceremony.

“Our mission is to pick up where the 36th (Sust. Bde.) left off and continue the fight to have a successful drawdown of forces and materials back to home station,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Vickie Dunlap-Jones, command sergeant major of the 224th Sust. Bde., 13th ESC, and a Sacramento, Calif.,

native.

The lineage of the 224th Sust. Bde., also known as the “Dragonslayers,” dates back to World War II. The unit earned the Presidential Unit Citation streamer for its actions, from October 17, 1944 to July 4, 1945, in the Pacific theater of operations.

While the 36th Sust. Bde., also known as the “Rawhide Brigade,” leaves theater, the unit adds to its history of providing Soldiers to support Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, Bosnia, Kosovo and Operation Noble Eagle.

“I am so very proud of the professionalism (of the Soldiers) I’ve served with during this deployment,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Elizabeth Shockley, command sergeant major of the 36th Sust. Bde. and a Richardson, Texas, native. “They didn’t settle for the status quo. They accepted these challenges of working with limited resources to support the reduction of forces. They served living the Army values.”

During the ceremony, Dunlap-Jones echoed Shockley’s comment on the professionalism of the Soldiers in the 36th SB.

“I would like to thank the 36th Sustainment Brigade for their professionalism, their openness, their receptiveness and their



Brig. Gen. Paul Wentz (right), commander of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Mansfield, Ohio, native, speaks during the transfer of authority ceremony between the 36th Sustainment Brigade, 13th ESC, and the 224th Sustainment Brigade, 13th ESC, June 9 at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq.

commitment to our success in what they left us,” she said. “It’s unparalleled. If this is what any other unit experienced during their

(transfer) of authority, there’s no wonder that we’re the greatest Army in the entire world, and I’m proud to be a part of it.”

3rd Sustainment Brigade receives combat patch

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. GAELLEN LOWERS
3RD SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq— Nearly 300 Soldiers with 3rd Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) received their Shoulder Sleeve Insignia-Former Wartime Service during a ceremony June 3 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

“For many Soldiers, this ceremony represents their first time receiving a combat patch (SSI-FWTS), denoting their first time in a combat zone,” said Capt. Vanessa Parker, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Special Troops Battalion and a Cincinnati native. “For others who have served with previous units, it is their

second or third, and in some cases, fourth time receiving a combat patch, but their first time while serving in 3rd Sust. Bde.”

The origins of the shoulder sleeve insignia-former wartime service, or combat patch, dates back to World War II. Since 1945 the purpose of the patch has been to recognize Soldiers’ participation in combat operations.

“Now-a-days it’s not uncommon to see Soldiers with a combat patch,” said Sgt. Brandi Brooks, non commissioned officer-in-charge of strength management with 3rd Sust. Bde. and a Harrisburg, Pa., native. “But this is my first one, so it definitely means something to me.”

This is HHC, 3rd Sust. Bde.’s fourth deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Parker said she believes that the Soldiers in the unit will provide the same first-class logistical support to Soldiers here in Iraq, as

this unit has always done in the past.

“You should all be proud to wear the 3rd Sustainment Bde. patch on both sleeves because the best unit you’ve been in should be the unit you are in now,” she said, “Each of you make this unit the best. I’m very proud of each of you and I challenge you to live up to the responsibility of being part of the ‘Titan’ Family.”

First Sgt. Paul Robinson Jr (right), first sergeant of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), awards Staff Sgt. Johnnie Martin, a platoon sergeant also with HHC, and a Miami, native, the unit’s Shoulder Sleeve Insignia-Former Wartime Service during a ceremony June 3 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. This is HHC, 3rd Sust. Bde.’s fourth deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Soldiers prepare their own for final farewell

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. GAELLEN LOWERS
3RD SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq— There are many stories on the news about Soldiers in harm's way. Many talk about a tragedy that has befallen a Soldier while out on a convoy. Some talk about the Families and friends of that Soldier and the how the unit pushes on.

What one may not see are the people in the background who dedicate their work to making sure Soldiers receive their proper farewell and the Family has a chance to say goodbye. These are the men and women of mortuary affairs.

"This is the last step for fallen Soldiers to get back to their Families," said Sgt. Agustin Soto-Miranda, a native of Manati, Puerto Rico, and the noncommissioned officer-in-charge of the 111th Quartermaster Company, 13th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary). "We, as mortuary affairs, make sure that happens. We take care of the final trip the Soldiers have back to their Families, and we make sure they receive the proper respect."

"We are here for the Families," said Staff Sgt. Natalie Goulet, a native of St. Paul, Minn., and the liaison between the 111th



Quartermaster Co. and the 13th CSSB. "We provide closure."

Soto-Miranda explained the importance of mortuary affairs. Back in Vietnam, he said, there were mass graves where many Soldiers were not identified, and their Families were never given the opportunity to pay their proper respects to these great men and women.

"I don't think that's right," he continued. "Those Soldiers gave their lives for freedom, and I think they deserve more respect."

Although not always a pleasant job, all of the Soldiers said they believe in the work

they do, and said they make a difference.

"This is a job that we chose," said Spc. Alexander Olivieri-Rodriguez, native of Arecibo, Puerto Rico, and member of the 111th Quartermaster Co. mortuary affairs team. "We know this is a tough job. We make sure every step is taken care of, the flag is ironed as best as possible, and the remains are presentable so when the Soldiers return to their Families, the Families can say, 'I got somebody up there in the Army taking care of my Soldier.'"

The Soldiers of the 111th Quartermaster Co. understand the concept of Family very

well. In fact, they consider themselves a Family.

Spc. Christopher Lane (From left), a native of Pittsburgh, Pa., Spc. Delayna Certo, from Modesto, Calif., and Spc. Spring Meyer, a native of Rochester, Minn., all attached to the mortuary affairs section of the 111th Quartermaster Company, 13th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), iron a large American flag to show what they would do in preparing a U.S. casualty for display.

"This job honors every branch of the armed services," said Spc. Romeo Shear-Smith, native of Sacramento, Calif. and member of the 111th Quartermaster Co. mortuary affairs. "It's a very small, so we're a tight group."

"I come and visit as much as possible, because these guys are my Family," added Goulet, who had just transferred from the 111th to the 13th CSSB. "When I found out that we were deploying at the same time I got really excited because I would be back with my people."

Each member of this "Family" has the same goal, said Olivieri-Rodriguez. "The Family members are waiting," he said. "They are waiting to see their Soldier one more time before they say goodbye. We don't work for any NCO or sergeant major; we are working for the Family members so that they get that chance."

Task Force 38 medics provide aid to JBB military, civilians



STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SGT. BETH GORENC
TASK FORCE 38

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq— The Task Force 38 medical section worked hard to support its brigade, its subordinate units, aviators, civilian contractors or anyone else seeking medical care here at Joint Base Balad, even though the section was only a team of seven Soldiers.

"To date we've seen over 4,500 patients with more than 440 being civilians," said Indiana Army National Guard Capt. John Beagle, Task Force 38 medical operations officer and clinic officer in charge. "We've seen various civilian contractor and support units, and we've seen all branches of the

military."

Task force medics supported JBB by running a multitude of missions from the Spc. Michael Cote Aviation Medical Clinic here. They conducted daily sick call, immunizations updates, hearing tests, flight physicals, maintained medical logistics and records, ran a pharmacy, worked as base emergency first responders and transported troops to the JBB hospital when a higher level of care was needed.

"With medical being a small community and a valuable asset, we regularly try to assist where we can to ensure maximum medical coverage to all of JBB's tenants," said Beagle, a Carmel, Ind., resident.

Beagle said to cover all of the missions, his team had to rely on each other to go above and beyond what would normally be expected of his Soldiers' ranks.

"Most of my staff were wearing multiple

Soldiers trained others in Task Force 38 to spread their medical knowledge and skills.

"We taught combat life saver courses, educated commanders on theater guidelines, and provided weekly training for medical professionals," said Good, of Carmel, Ind. "We also trained new providers and medics from other units as they rotated in and out of the base."

Good said as a group, she felt the medical section met its deployment goals of providing optimal patient care and maintaining medical coverage for the base.

"Everyone has worked hard and done a lot to make the clinic function smoothly," said Good.

As Task Force 38 prepared to end its deployment, the medical section Soldiers worked on training their replacements on all of the missions, processes and responsibilities of being a troop medical center at Joint Base Balad, while still providing aid to Soldiers and civilians. Good said training the group's replacements included ensuring they had access to electronic systems and accounts to place medical supply orders.

"We had to make sure the new medics had the ability to work in their area effectively," she said. "The leadership on both ends was able to adjust appropriately to meet both units' sets of mission requirements."

Throughout the deployment, Task Force 38 medics demonstrated their care-giving abilities while taking care of patients, assisting base medical facilities and training fellow Soldiers for success. The unit is scheduled to return to Indiana this summer after their nearly yearlong deployment.

Between juggling their job demands and schedules, Indiana Army National Guard Capt. Leslie Good, Task Force 38 registered nurse and case manager, said the group of

Tiger Brigade runs to honor fallen comrade

STORY AND PHOTO BY
1ST LT. ANGELA FRY
256TH INFANTRY BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE

ADDER, Iraq— The day before Memorial Day, Louisiana National Guardsmen with the 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom at Contingency Operating Base Adder, ran with heavy hearts in honor of a fallen comrade.

Thirty Soldiers with 2nd Squadron, 108th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Battalion, 141st Field Artillery Regiment and 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, all under the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), ran in the 36th Sustainment Brigade's Texas Memorial 10-kilometer run May 30, to honor the memory of one of their own — Maj. Ronald Wayne Culver.

First Sgt. Trinity Edwards, first sergeant with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 2nd Sqn., 108th Cav. Regt. and a Shreveport, La., native, said participating in the 6.2-mile event gave him the opportunity to keep the memory of his close friend alive.

"This Memorial Day is especially personal this time after recently losing a great friend," he said. "Maj. Culver and I had planned to run the 10K after spending the last two months running and working out together."

Culver was killed May 24, when his vehicle was struck by a roadside bomb in southern Iraq.

Edwards explained the importance of completing the race.

"At first I did not really want to run because of the lack of sleep and the fact that I had not ran since his passing," he said. "He would have convinced me to do it if he was here ... and in a way he still was. I ran this 10K for him, because I truly believe he would have run it for us."

Although honoring the memories of fallen comrades presented a more somber tone for the event, the chance to relax was an added benefit for many Soldiers who participated in the race.

"We've been in country just long enough to see some strain on our guys," 1st Lt. Patrick Wilson, operations officer with A Company, 1st Bn., 116th Inf. Regt. and an Arlington, Va., native.

"Most of us have yet to get a day off," he said. "The idea of the Texas 10K race just gave us something positive to focus on and mark the Memorial Day weekend. No beach, beer or bratwurst, but we did at least shake the schedule up a bit."

Wilson also took a moment to express his gratitude to the 13 Virginia Soldiers who participated.

"I was very proud of the (1st Bn., 116th Inf. Regt.) for having so many guys come out for the race," he said. "Spc. Solomon Zemene of Alexandria, Va., made us all look



Maj. Keith Robinson (left) operations officer with 2nd Squadron, 108th Cavalry Regiment, 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a New Orleans native, and 1st Sgt. Trinity Edwards (second from left), first sergeant with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 2nd Bn., 108th Cav. Regt. and a Shreveport, La., native, participate in the 36th Sustainment Brigade's Texas Memorial 10-kilometer run May 30 at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq.

good by finishing at the top of the field."

Zemene, a crew member on a convoy escort team with B Company, 1st Bn., 116th Infantry Regt., finished second in the 24-29-year-old category and a respectable third place overall. Capt. Mike Ruffin, plans officer with the 2nd Sqn., 108th Cav. Regt. and a New Orleans, native, finished third in the 36-39-year-old category and 1st Sgt.

Patrick Sellen, first sergeant with A Battery, 1st Bn., 141st FA Regt., finished in first place in the 40-44-year-old category.

The Soldiers with Louisiana's "Tiger Brigade" are deployed to support the upcoming responsible drawdown of U.S. troops and equipment from Iraq. The brigade is scheduled to return home some time at the end of this year.

Wounded Louisiana Soldier expected to return to U.S

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. TRESA L. ALLEMANG
199TH GARRISON COMMAND

CAMP VICTORY, Iraq

Spc. Kenneth D. Boyer, a vehicle gunner with 2nd Squadron, 108th Cavalry Regiment and a Pineville, La., native — injured when the vehicle he was in was struck by an improvised explosive device near Numaniyah in southern Iraq — will be returning to the United States soon.

Boyer, a member of B Company, from the 199th Brigade Support Battalion and now attached to 2nd Sqn., received shrapnel wounds from the explosion that took the life of a comrade travelling with him, Maj. Ronald "Wayne" Culver, of Eldorado, Ark., the executive officer for 2nd Sqn., 108th Cav. Regt., headquartered in Shreveport, La.

Doctors at Victory Base Complex in Baghdad, where Boyer is currently receiving care, said he is expected to make a full recovery, and will soon be sent to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington to receive the remainder of his treatment.

Boyer, who volunteered for this mobilization, said he wanted to deploy and found the perfect opportunity when he learned that friends in a different unit would soon be on their way to Iraq.

"I have several friends in B Company, 199th Brigade Support Battalion, so I knew this would be my best opportunity," he said.

More than 100 Soldiers volunteered to deploy with the battalion, said Lt. Col. Marc Kelly, commander of the 199th BSB and a



Deville, La., native.

"Command Sgt. Maj. William Migues and I were both overwhelmed and humbled by the sheer number of volunteers who could have probably stayed at home and never deployed," he said. "However, those young men and women answered the call when their country and state needed them, and Specialist Boyer was one of them."

Boyer, 23, said that he underwent a drastic change to deploy as a gunner for the convoy security team, but if he could do it over again, he would not change his mind.

"I really believe in this mission," he said. "I thought the convoy security mission would be a great one to be on because I wanted to support the troops and everyone here to help set the stage for the drawdown."

"It was quite a transformation for me, but

it's something I've always wanted to do, and I have no regrets," Boyer said. "I am still glad that I made the decision to deploy with the brigade ... they are fantastic, and I can't imagine a better group than the Soldiers from the 256th (Infantry Brigade Combat Team)."

Boyer described how he met Culver only two days before the convoy mission, but quickly became friends with him.

"He was truly a great guy," Boyer said. "He was highly motivated and always wanted to get in on the action."

He said Culver reminded everyone on the convoy several times that if anything happened, he had no problems dismounting and pulling security.

"He loved this kind of stuff," Boyer said.

Lt. Col. William Rachal, commander

Spc. Kenneth D. Boyer (right), a vehicle gunner with 2nd Squadron, 108th Cavalry Regiment, 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Pineville, La., native, injured when an improvised explosive device struck his vehicle during a convoy movement, visits with Command Sgt. Maj. William Migues, command sergeant major of the 199th Brigade Support Battalion, and a New Iberia, La., native, at Victory Base Complex, Iraq, where he is currently receiving treatment. Boyer is expected to return to the U.S. in a few days where he will receive further treatment at Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington.

of 2nd Bn., 108th Cav. Regt. and a Breaux Bridge, La., native, and Command Sgt. Maj. Albert Vanzant, command sergeant major of the squadron and a Campiti, La., native, visited Boyer at the hospital in Baghdad to present him with the Purple Heart and the cavalry "combat spurs" he earned during the deployment.

He was also visited by Command Sgt. Maj. William Migues, command sergeant major of the 199th BSB and a New Iberia, La., native.

"Everyone has been so great to me and I'm amazed every day at how supportive everyone is," he said during one of the nightly visits with Migues. "If I could send a message to everyone back home it would be to keep our fellow Soldiers in their thoughts in prayers ... they need it the most right now."

"I'm just glad to be here and to have had the opportunity to serve with the Soldiers from this brigade," he said. "It's truly been an honor."

15th Sust. Bde. preps Q-West for turnover



STORY AND PHOTO BY
STAFF SGT. MATTHEW C. COOLEY
15TH SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE

ADDER, Iraq— Soldiers with the 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), finished a base-

wide inventory June 4 of equipment and structures at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, in preparation for the July turnover of the base to the Iraqi Air Force.

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Hector Rivera, property book officer with the 15th Sust. Bde. and a Coamo, Puerto Rico, native, said it took Soldiers four months to inventory the \$45 million worth of equipment purchased commercially by units in Iraq or furnished to the military's civilian contractors, not including permanent structures or "real property."

Much of the equipment to be turned over has been on the base since the beginning of the war, said Sgt. 1st Class Jose Rodriguez, base closure noncommissioned officer-in-charge with the 15th Sust. Bde. and a Ponce, Puerto Rico native.

Rivera said giving the Iraqi forces the equipment was more cost effective than other methods of reallocating it.

Before deciding to turn over the equipment to Iraqi forces, Rivera and his team made a list of the equipment so other U.S. forces could request any items they needed, he said.

After that, Rivera's team consolidated many of the items into multiple locations for security and ease of inventorying with Iraqi Air Force personnel. His team, along with a team from the Iraqi Air Force, then inventoried all of the equipment together, he said.

Equipment for turnover included desks, chairs, containerized housing units, air conditioners, generators, toolboxes, and washing machines, Rivera said.

"It may seem like business as usual," he said, "but it's not."

Rivera explained the guidelines and processes of documenting the turnover, intended to ensure no one tried to steal or illegally sell government equipment.

"It is a complicated system," he said. "There are so many layers of reporting; there is always someone checking what we do."

"From trash cans to dumpsters to (refrigerators), everything given to the Iraqi forces was accounted for," Rodriguez said.

It was a team effort by multiple organizations, Rivera said.

"We started this process four months ago and we're just happy that it's coming to a conclusion," he said. "We did a lot of hard work."

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Diogenes Acosta (from left), maintenance chief with the 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and an Enterprise, Ala., native; Pierre Gant, a client-owned equipment specialist contracted by the U.S. Army; and Staff Sgt. Linda Franco, an ammo specialist with the 15th Special Troops Battalion, 15th Sust. Bde. and a Los Angeles native, work with Iraqi airmen June 2 at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq, to inventory equipment scheduled for the July turnover of the base to the Iraqi Air Force.

Troopers draw on bond throughout deployment

STORY BY
1ST LT. DESIREE NICELY
278TH ARMORED CAVALRY REGIMENT

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-West, Iraq— Soldiers with 1st Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), performing force protection and convoy security in support of the upcoming responsible drawdown of U.S. troops and equipment from Iraq, got to bring a little piece of home to Iraq — each other.

Many units, both active duty and reserve, deploy with people they know well and live close to, but Soldiers with 1st Sqdn., 278th ACR a National Guard unit out of Carroll County, Tenn., were able to deploy with relatives, lifelong acquaintances and high school friends.

"It's different when you deploy with people you've gone to school with and have grown up with," said Pvt. Brent Baker, a vehicle gunner with A Troop, 1st Sqdn. and a Carroll County native. "I'm even related to another Soldier here; he is married to my cousin. We're a real tight-knit community, and I'm glad to be surrounded by familiar faces for this deployment."

Spc. Blake Speer, a vehicle gunner with A Troop, 1st Sqdn. and a Carroll County native, said that while he misses his wife and son, it helps to be deployed with such good friends.

"It's a humbling experience for Lt. Col. Jimmie L. Cole, Jr. and myself to be in a position to watch these young Soldiers perform their missions, knowing the sacrifices they are making, as well as the sacrifices that Family, friends and employers back home are making to support us," said Command Sgt. Maj. Michael L. Butler, command sergeant major of 1st Sqdn. and a Carroll County native. "It's also humbling when you realize that the Soldiers you are serving with are the children of your high school classmates, old friends, fellow church members and people you know in general around the community. Carroll County is well represented here by some of its finest."

There are Carroll County natives woven throughout the entire 278th



Armored Cavalry Regiment, and "Cobra Squadron" happens to be home to quite a few.

"Carroll County should be extremely proud of these Soldiers and their performance here in Iraq," Butler said. "They represent the true volunteer spirit of Tennessee and are performing flawlessly. They are making history by being part of the drawdown and the final days of Operation Iraqi Freedom."

Soldiers with 1st Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) pose for a group photo April 15 at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq.

Tiger Brigade's UAS platoon takes to the air

STORY AND PHOTO BY
1ST LT. ANGELA FRY

256TH INFANTRY BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE

ADDER, Iraq—

Armed with a passion for flying and the determination to assist Troops, the Louisiana National Guard's Tactical Unmanned

Aircraft Systems platoon formally took to the sky May 21 out of Contingency Operating Base Adder on their first mission in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The 16-Soldier UAS platoon with the Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, arrived in theater in March to assist in the upcoming responsible drawdown of U.S. troops and equipment in Iraq.

"The platoon was first fielded last summer," said Staff Sgt. Brandon Smith, readiness noncommissioned officer with the platoon and a Gardner, La., native. "Since that time, we have been pretty much on continuous orders in preparation for this mission and training at Camp Shelby (Miss.) with the rest of the brigade."

The aircraft the "Tiger Brigade" platoon operates, formally known as the RQ-7B Shadow, is a 275-pound unmanned aerial vehicle used to gather intelligence, and conduct surveillance and reconnaissance to support U.S. Armed Forces deployed in combat zones.

"The plane may be called an unmanned aircraft," explained Warrant Officer Mike Gray, a Pineville, La., native. "But this system is anything but 'unmanned.' This aircraft is flown and maintained by humans and the video and the intelligence it captures is interpreted by humans. We are flying the aircraft ... just not physically in it."

Gray, the UAS platoon leader, said another six Soldiers will report to Iraq to augment the mission within the next couple of months. At that time, the Soldiers will be able to completely utilize the unit's \$40 million in equipment, which includes four fully-functioning Shadows.

"Once we have the full platoon, we will be able to fly two planes at a time," Smith said. "We have all completed a minimum of



Pfc. Travis Hampton (second from left), a Jonesboro, La., native, Staff Sgt. Donald Segura and Sgt. Mike Lejeune, both Lafayette, La., natives, complete pre-combat checks and inspections on the RQ-7B Shadow Tactical Unmanned Aircraft System May 21 before its first flight from Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq. The Soldiers are deployed with the Unmanned Aerial Aircraft Systems Platoon, Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) in support of the upcoming responsible drawdown of U.S. troops and equipment from Iraq.

six months to a year of schooling as pilots and maintainers and know how to get the job done."

Although the UAS platoon's primary mission at this point is to assist Soldiers on the ground in Iraq, the use of this unmanned aircraft is also invaluable back in the United States to support the National Guard mission.

"I can fly my entire system of four planes for seven days on the same amount of fuel it takes to fly three Black Hawks on one mission," Gray said. "Post-hurricane it is important to have that situational awareness ... to be able to survey that damage via the video imagery when communications and infrastructure are down."

As Louisiana has been inundated with four catastrophic storms over the past five years, Gray is adamant about the importance of the unmanned system and the potential for its future growth, he said.

"With this system, we can push out in front

of the storm, wait for the storm, then launch the aircraft," Gray said. "With the information we collect, we can give the commander the ability to go in and determine the priorities of work. He can know what the first focus should be; whether search and rescue operations or to stop the flood."

The ability to instill that same confidence in a commander in a combat zone by providing real-time video to a ground control station via the aircraft's digitally-stabilized, infrared camera is another aspect to the system that Gray takes pride in.

"Stopping someone from planting an improvised explosive device is one part of this system," he said. "But being able to tell that commander that there is no IED on that convoy route is just as important. Having eyes on a target, even when an IED goes off, gives us the ability to react with information that is timely and accurate."

The troops of the UAS platoon look

forward to future growth of the program with dreams of an even larger and more-state-of-the-art unmanned system.

"We have our eyes on the Gray Eagle," Gray said, regarding the Army's version of the Air Forces Predator UAV. "This aircraft has a 56-foot wing span, is 38-feet long, weighs 4,000 lbs and is armed with hellfire missiles."

Even though the pilots and crew chiefs joke about their jobs' likeness to video games, the importance of this mission is always the priority for them.

"I have some of the greatest Soldiers in this platoon," Gray said. "We have a 100 percent volunteer acceptance for this mission."

"Whatever we do here and when everything is said and done, my 16 Soldiers are here to win," he said. "We are cheap, deadly and effective. For us, going out and finding the bad guys is what we are here for. This mission is much bigger than us."

Quartermasters keep rations on the move

STORY BY

SGT. JORGE L. ANAYA

40TH QUARTERMASTER COMPANY

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE

ADDER, Iraq—

Soldiers with the 40th Quartermaster Company, 110th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 36th Sustainment Brigade,

13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) are keeping Soldiers fed and hydrated in Iraq by running operations at the Class I yard at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq.

The Class I yard is a storage and issue facility for supplies such as rations bottled

water, and U.S. Central Command approved supplements.

"From the movement of large bulk parts and equipment taking place in the joint distribution center yard, to the receiving and issuing of parts to customers in the supply (support) activity, though this is a section not large in size, its mission is very important, the Class I yard," said Sgt. Queshawnia Franklin, the noncommissioned officer-in-charge of the yard with 40th Quartermaster Co., and a New Orleans native.

"We support all of COB Adder in addition to seven outlying forward operating bases within the southern region of Iraq," she said. "On a daily basis, we prepare pallets going to the flight line for transportation to other forward operating bases containing supplements and rations."

Franklin said she believes that without her Soldiers performing their duties, other units on bases around Iraq would be insufficiently sustained.

"Our job here at the Class I yard plays a key role in daily operations, because we ensure that Soldiers and civilian personnel have the most vital components necessary for survival in the desert — water and rations, she said. "The supplements we carry are a bonus and help to build the morale of the Soldiers and civilians."

Every Soldier working in the yard plays a vital role in the unit's performance.

Spc. Christopher Rodriguez, a clerk with the 40th Quartermaster Co. and a Dallas native, ensures all orders are confirmed so customer's needs are met.

"We simply want for the customers to

know that a request received is an order placed," he said. "We will follow up and confirm the orders, therefore providing (peace) of mind since there are so many other missions taking place."

"We don't work according to time...we work until we are certain that all customers are taken care of," Rodriguez said.

Much of the success of the Class I yard is accredited to the Soldiers' dedication to customer service and work ethic.

Franklin said the Class I teams are the unsung heroes of mission-sustainment for many isolated bases. The section with the 40th Quartermaster Co. at COB Adder might be a small section, but their contribution to the mission is instrumental and essential for survival.



Trans. Bn. provides transient visibility of equipment

Pfc. Kyle Lemanski, a transportation management coordinator with the 635th Transportation Detachment (Movement Control Team), 14th Transportation Battalion (Movement Control), 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Maryville, Tenn., native, finishes an inspection of a cargo pallet manifest May 25 at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq. The 635th MCT organizes and synchronizes the movement of personnel and equipment out of Iraq in preparation for the upcoming responsible drawdown of U.S. troops and equipment.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SGT. CHAD MENEGAY
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq— As the 14th Transportation Battalion (Movement Control), 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) manages the removal of millions of pieces of equipment from Iraq in support of the upcoming responsible drawdown, its 14 movement control teams work 24 hours per day, 7 days per week to track the cargo.

Lt. Col. James Rupkalvis, commander of the 14th Trans. Bn. and a Mitchell, Neb., native, said this is perhaps the largest movement of troops and equipment executed in such a short time period in military history.

To add to the battalion's challenge, increasingly fewer troops will be available to carry it out.

The 14th Trans. Bn. will go from 14 MCTs to nine, but its concentration on the withdrawal of equipment and Soldiers won't change, and its workload won't decrease, said Command Sgt. Maj. Jason Runnels, command sergeant major of the 14th Trans. Bn. and a Baton Rouge, La., native.

"We've got to move all this equipment that's built up after eight years of war in a short amount of time," Runnels said. "We only have a few months left until we have to be down to 50,000 troops. With all those troops, trucks, containerized housing units, containers and all those things we've dragged into country with us, we've got to push that back out, get it back into the Army inventory and back into units for future operations."

Soldiers working in the 14th Trans. Bn. headquarters gather requirements through the process of transportation movement

releases for the movement of equipment, and request assets from the sustainment brigades.

"We maximize each piece as we go," Runnels said, "getting the right piece of equipment with the right cargo, with the right customer, at the right time."

Soldiers at headquarters then coordinate with their respective MCTs in an effort to optimize efficiency.

"They support us with anything that we need down here at (Contingency Operating Base) Adder to complete our mission," said Capt. Tasherra Marshall, commander of the 635th Transportation Detachment (Movement Control Team), and a Tacoma, Wash., native. "They provide in-transit visibility of convoys' cargo equipment moving throughout Kuwait and Iraq. They provide movement trackers and movement plans. They build convoys, allocate assets and provide command and control."

Rupkalvis referred to COB Adder as the lynchpin hub for moving equipment and troops out of Iraq.

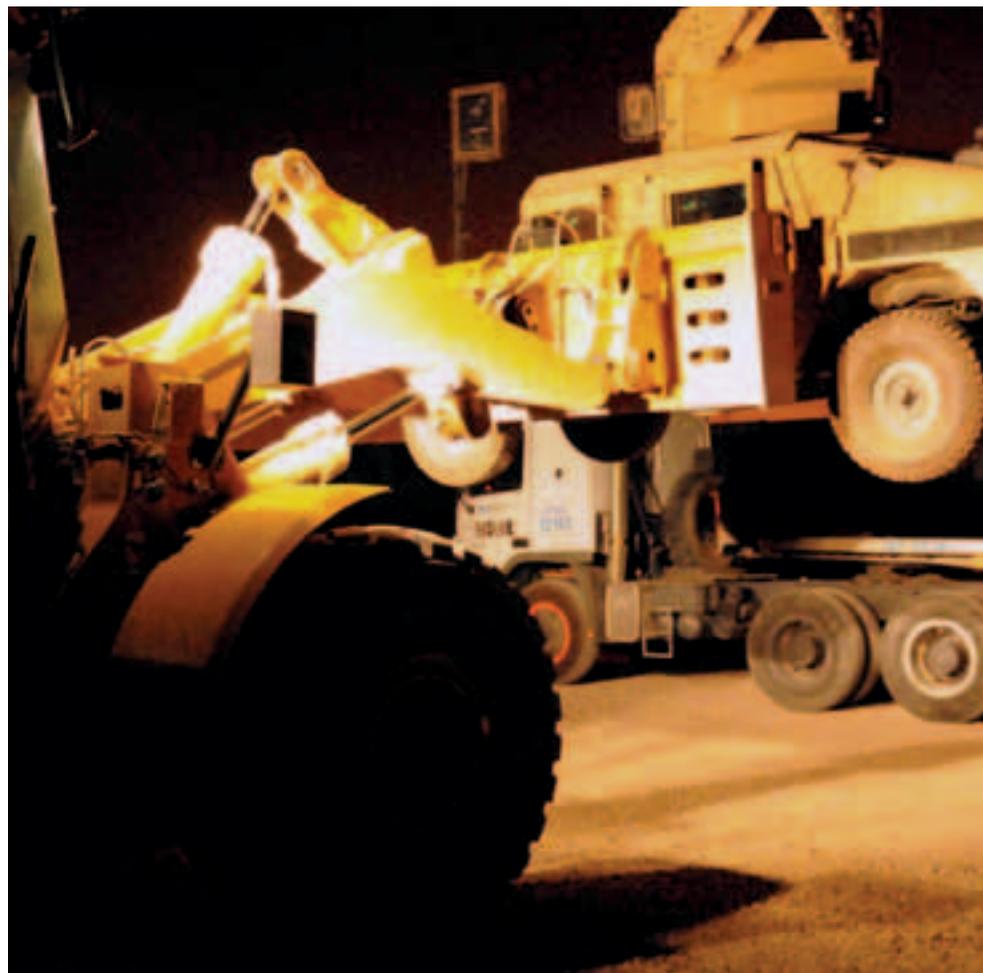
About 75 percent of departing Soldiers and equipment are expected to move through COB Adder, as troops and equipment are pushed south into Kuwait, he said.

Camp Cedar closed recently and its convoy support responsibilities were transferred to COB Adder. Marshall said the 14th Trans. Bn.'s 622nd MCT closed Camp Cedar.

The consolidation of bases will continue as Convoy Support Center Scania is expected to close next month and its operations transferred to COB Kalsu.

"Scania has been a truck stop for years," Runnels said. "It was established early on in the war as a stopping point for pushing farther north. Most Soldiers were there for less than 24 hours before they moved to another location."

Runnels called the consolidation efforts significant events.



Leaders with the 14th Trans. Bn. recently travelled to COB Adder, CSC Scania and COB Kalsu "to make sure that the (movement control) teams were prepared and executing a solid system for receiving cargo, both theater and corps cargo and sustainment supplies," he said.

"The volume has definitely increased," Marshall said, "but there's enough space here to receive, stage and move cargo."

Marshall said units depend on the 21-person MCTs to track their cargo.

A forklift operator maneuvers a humvee onto a semitrailer May 31 at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq. Members of the 635th Transportation Detachment (Movement Control Team), 14th Transportation Battalion (Movement Control) work day and night to track and manage the convoy downloads and uploads at COB Adder.

"We have a specific job to keep a firm grip and a good eye on where their equipment is at all times," she said.

JBB Protective Services escorts VIPs



Spc. Trevor Wright, a Protective Services Detail driver for the 1073rd Service Maintenance Company, 2nd Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Scanton, Mich., native, cleans the headlights of his Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle June 1 at Contingency Operating Base Kalsu, Iraq.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SGT. CHAD MENEGAY
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq— Incoming and outgoing VIPs at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, rely on a group of mechanics to safely travel the highways and byways of Iraq.

The Protective Services Detail with the 1073rd Service Maintenance Company, 2nd Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), consists of about 20 mechanics out of 25 personnel.

“That they are wrench-turners instead of drivers gives us an upper hand,” said 1st Lt. Jesse Brumbaugh, platoon leader of the PSD, and a Cincinnati native. “If something goes wrong with the vehicle, we can take care of it enough to accomplish the mission.”

The last thing a unit needs is a broken-down vehicle while carrying high-profile personnel, said Staff Sgt. Val Tyler, a squad leader with the PSD, and a St. Johns, Mich., native.

Tyler said the mechanics have a lot of experience with vehicles and understand the Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicles.

“They can identify a problem just by how the vehicle feels and responds,” Tyler said. “They’re able to recognize problems before they break down on the road. (In addition), when our guys do preventive maintenance checks and services they know exactly what they’re looking for.”

The PSD, which runs convoys during the daytime and higher traffic, hasn’t had any incidents on the road so far in Iraq — no rollovers or traffic accidents.

Tyler, who previously deployed with the 1st Infantry Division, said the Status of Forces Agreement has changed the traffic dynamic in Iraq, because convoys are now integrated with civilian traffic.

“Before, the civilian traffic got off the roads or it was not a good day for them,” he said. “Now, some of them will wave as they go by, and you see the smiles. It shows there’s a paradigm shift

in just the last few years, where they don’t seem as terrified of what could happen.”

Still, some local national drivers have not adapted to the new traffic accords.

“Cars will cross the median and drive 60 mph down the wrong way on Main Supply Route Tampa,” said Spc. Trevor Wright, a driver with the PSD, and a Scanton, Mich., native. “They’re still under the impression they can’t be around the convoy in any aspect, so they go around it to avoid us. It’s something you’re not used to seeing in America.”

Traffic, of course, is not the only danger for convoys in Iraq.

“If we get hit, our VIPs are the people we take care of first,” Brumbaugh said. “Everybody has got that heightened sense of security, constantly checking on things and communicating. We make sure we’re looking out for one another as much as we can to prevent any sort of enemy contact. Our sense of discipline has maintained since day one. We still communicate far more than a lot of other convoys that are going out.”

Wright said he keeps his eyes open for things that could possibly make the MRAP roll over or any other dangers.

“We communicate, watching for stopped or broken down vehicles on the side of the road,” Wright said. “If Iraqis are standing on the side of the road, we watch their hands. We stay vigilant for that sort of thing.”

Drivers with PSDs have seen a great deal of Iraq from behind the windshield.

“When we first hit the ground, MSR Tampa was littered with trash and debris, old steel, old cars just strewn all over the place,” Wright said. “Over the last few months a lot of that trash has been removed. Shops are being built. It looks to be progressing. That’s an indication the country is trying to get itself back on its feet.”

A Protective Services Detail gunner for the 1073rd Service Maintenance Company, 2nd Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), prepares for departure June 1 at Contingency Operating Base Kalsu, Iraq.





Celebrating the Jewish holiday with Shabbat

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. DAVID A. SCOTT
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq— Every Friday night at the Gilbert Memorial Chapel at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, weekly Shabbat services are conducted, following traditions dating back to the earliest days of the Jewish religion.

Other Jewish holidays are recognized in theater as well. The Jewish festival of Passover was celebrated in nine locations in Iraq in 2010. Fourteen Seder meals took place March 29 and March 30, ranging in size from three to 52 participants.

Although Jewish-American Heritage Month is not an official Department of Defense recognized ethnic month, every April the DoD sponsors a National Day of Remembrance Commemoration for the victims of the Holocaust, said Sgt. 1st Class Johnnie Mitchell, equal opportunity advisor with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Sylvania, Ga., native.

“If Jewish-American Heritage Month were to become an officially sponsored DoD commemoration, it would probably be well attended,” she said. “It would probably get an awesome turnout.”

“This past year, we have done all eight of the officially sponsored DoD ethnic heritage observances,” Mitchell said. “We usually have a large turnout; sometimes more than 250 people at a time.”

Although they represent a small percentage of American Veterans, Jewish-Americans have served in the defense of the United States for more than 355 years.

Many Jewish-American Soldiers at JBB find it possible to attend worship at most Shabbats, even in the relatively austere environment of the Gilbert Memorial Chapel.

Sgt. 1st Class Michael S. Fischer, an information technology specialist with the 38th Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force 38, 38th Infantry Division, and a Franklin, Ind., native, serves as an assistant lay leader for the Jewish community at JBB.

Fischer bakes the unleavened Challah, a traditional Jewish bread, on the day of the Shabbat using raw materials from donations supplied by the Jewish community in the

United States.

“All of these Shabbat rituals are about following in the tradition of what has been there for thousands of years,” he said.

Fischer said the 38th CAB has been very understanding and supportive of his need for time to worship on Friday evenings. In conversations with his supervisors, the topic of accommodating Fischer’s weekly day for rest and recuperation came up.

“My unit asked me when I wanted my reset day,” Fischer said. “They have been inquisitive, which is very understandable.”

Fischer said the religious and ethnic diversity in the Army roughly approximates the diverse experiences of his youth.

Fischer lived in Detroit, Baton Rouge, La., and Los Angeles County, Calif., as a youngster and saw segregation and discrimination first hand, he said.

Prejudice is an old way of looking at the world, he said.

“Far too often, people are locked into their concept of the way things were,” Fischer said. “The differences are there but in the end, people are people. I see you for who you are.”

A deployment by a National Guard or Reserve unit is a major change in lifestyle for those who are called to duty, Fischer said.

“Deployments tend to be a change in rituals,” he said. “It depends on the individuals involved. For most people, it is a time of growth.”

Maj. Anthony F. Beatman, executive officer with the 118th Multifunctional Medical Battalion, 1st Medical Brigade, and a West Hartford, Conn., native, serves as one of the primary lay leaders for the Jewish community at JBB and said the Jewish-American experience in the United States normally takes place in small communities.

“Because there are so few Jewish people, usually they are pretty close knit,” he said. “Most people know each other. There were a decent amount of Jewish people in my neighborhood, but the majority was non-Jewish.”

Beatman, a 15-year Veteran of the National Guard, said his religious practices have been accommodated on this deployment.

Although Jewish-American Heritage Month for 2010 has officially ended, the legacy formed from the patriotic service of Jewish men and women in the pursuit of freedom and fairness for all continues.



ABOVE TOP: Sgt. 1st Class Michael S. Fischer, second shift non-commissioned officer-in-charge, 38th Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force 38, 38th Infantry Division, and a Franklin, Ind., native, prepares to use a Yad to read a passage from a Sefer Torah prior to evening Shabbat service during a May 2010 Jewish-American Heritage Month celebration in the Gilbert Memorial Chapel at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. The first Jewish-American Heritage Month was celebrated in 2006 in the United States.

ABOVE BOTTOM: Sgt. 1st Class Michael S. Fischer, an information technology specialist with the 38th Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force 38, 38th Infantry Division, and a Franklin, Ind., native, returns a Sefer Torah to the protective locker known as the Aron Kodesh, or Hekhai, May 14 prior to veiling it in a protective curtain known as a Parakhet in the Gilbert Memorial Chapel at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.



“This is a time that is very special to the Buddhist community.”

Chaplain (1st Lt.) Thomas Dyer, with the Regimental Support Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Memphis, Tenn. native, meditates during a Wesak celebration May 27 at Contingency Operating Base Taji, Iraq. Dyer is the first Buddhist chaplain in the U.S. Army.

First Buddhist chaplain performs Wesak

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SGT. MICHAEL CARDEN
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CONTINGENCY OPERATING

BASE TAJI, Iraq— As a full moon rose into the Iraq night’s sky, more than 200 Buddhist worshipers bowed their heads in meditation May 27 at Contingency Operation Base Taji, Iraq, to celebrate Wesak, the holiest day of the Buddhist calendar.

The celebration was a milestone, being the first Wesak celebration hosted by the U.S. Army, and with the Army’s first Buddhist chaplain, 1st Lt. Thomas Dyer, a chaplain with Regimental Support Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Memphis, Tenn. Native.

“This is a time that is very special to the Buddhist community,” Dyer said. “Traditionally, Buddhists cannot practice unless a teacher is present. They can offer prayers, and celebrate meals but actually having a full Buddhist service; or teacher has to be present.”

The Army has never had the capability to provide a full Wesak service due to the absence of Buddhist chaplains. Dyer’s presence allowed deployed Buddhists to celebrate an authentic and official service, he said.

“It is very important for Buddhist Soldiers to be able to experience this,” Dyer said. “It is more than just a first amendment right. It is kind of a quality of life issue. It’s a resiliency issue. For Buddhist Soldiers to come and experience (this) for the first time in Army history, with the hope that this will be a continuing thing; it’s really exciting.”

Soldiers from across the Iraq joint operations area were invited to the Wesak celebration.

Spc. Heidi Sanders, a supply specialist

with the 585th Military Police Company, 151st MP Battalion, 49th MP Brigade and a Kent, Ohio, native, traveled from Camp Ramadi to be a part of the ceremony.

“It was put out as an invitation to all Buddhists in Iraq,” Sanders said. “I don’t take it for granted. I really appreciate it. Chaplain Dyer is very gracious; very humble. He is just what I need as a teacher.”

Dyer frequently travels throughout Iraq to provide religious support for Buddhist Soldiers.

“The Chaplain Corps cares about every one of their Soldiers,” Dyer said. “(Other chaplains) want to have access to a Buddhist chaplain, so they can provide that service for their Soldiers.”

Officials in the Chaplain Corps believe there are more Buddhists in the military than most people realize, he said.

Dyer is currently working with the Department of the Army to develop a plan to better provide services and support for Buddhist Soldiers throughout the Iraq joint operations area, he said.

According to Department of Defense policy, while Soldiers’ welfare is the main focus of the Chaplain Corps, chaplains are also concerned with, and instructed to provide for, the welfare of contractors.

Hundreds of civilian contractors live at COB Taji, many of them from Nepal and Sri Lanka, which have large Buddhist populations.

After the meditation ceremony, the civilians hosted a traditional Buddhist dinner, a simple vegetarian meal.

Chaplain (1st Lt.) Thomas Dyer, a chaplain with the Regimental Support Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Memphis, Tenn. native, meditates during a Wesak celebration May 27 at Contingency Operating Base Taji, Iraq. Dyer is the first Buddhist chaplain in the U.S. Army.



“Our sons, pride of our nation, this day have set upon a mighty endeavor, a struggle to preserve our republic, our religion and our civilization and to set free a suffering humanity ... They will be sore; tried, by night and by day, without rest, until the victory is won ... Men’s souls will be shaken with the violences of war ... Some will never return. Embrace these, Father and receive them, they heroic servants...”

— *President Franklin D. Roosevelt*

116th Inf. Regt. ce



U.S. Soldiers aboard a landing craft approach Omaha Beach during the D-Day invasion June 6, 1944. (Public domain photo from www.commons.wikimedia.org)

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SGT. KIMBERLY JOHNSON
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



Maj. Michael Petterson (standing), executive officer with 1st Bn., 116th Inf. Regt. and a Burke, Va., native, speaks to Soldiers about the unit’s role in the World War II invasion at Omaha Beach in Normandy, France, during a D-Day celebration, June 6 at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq, on the 66th anniversary of the operation. The 116th Inf. Regt., 29th Infantry Division was the only National Guard regiment that participated in the beach landings on D-Day.

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE ADDER, Iraq— On the 66th anniversary of D-Day, Soldiers with the 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, celebrated their lineage, in honor of the Veterans of that fateful day, June 6, 1944.



The 116th Inf. Regt., one of four National Guard regiments comprising the 29th Infantry Division created during World War II, were part of the initial invasion of Normandy, France.

“This day is huge for us, not only as a company, but as a battalion,” said 1st Sgt. Kevin Stewart, first sergeant with Alpha Company, 1-116th Inf. Regt., attached to the 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and an Appomattox, Va., native. “Alpha Company had a significant role in WWII because the unit was part of the Allied invasion of Omaha Beach in Normandy.”

During the commemoration ceremony, the 1-116th Inf. Regt. Soldiers received a first-hand idea of what their predecessors endured during the historic day at Normandy by listening to Stewart read a

celebrates D-Day



Sgt. William Henderson, a chaplain assistant with 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Lynchburg, Va., native, reads a prayer June 6 at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq, originally given by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to Soldiers in 1944 before the invasion of Omaha Beach in Normandy, France. The 116th Inf. Reg., 29th Infantry Division was the only National Guard regiment that participated in the beach landings on D-Day.

letter written by Bob Slaughter, who was one of the few survivors of Company D, 116th Inf. Regt., 29th Inf. Div., a unit that participated in the first wave of landings on the area of Omaha Beach, known as the Dog Green Sector, according to Slaughter's official biography.

In addition to the readings by Stewart, a prayer, offered to Soldiers on D-Day by President Franklin D. Roosevelt also echoed in the ears of the current 1-116th Inf. Regt. Soldiers.

President Roosevelt prayed that historic day, "Our sons, pride of our nation, this day have set upon a mighty endeavor, a struggle to preserve our republic, our religion and our civilization and to set free a suffering humanity... They will be sore tried, by night and by day, without rest, until the victory is won... Men's souls will be shaken with the violences of war... Some will never return. Embrace these, Father and receive them, they heroic servants..."

As the decades pass, the original WWII veterans are dwindling in numbers, leaving their legacy to be remembered and retold by younger generations.

Maj. Michael Petterson, executive officer, with the 1-116th Inf. Regt., 256th IBCT, 13th ESC, and a Burke, Va., native, takes it upon himself to remind people of the more than 200 years of Army service and sacrifices made and encourages Soldiers to learn and relearn the lessons of

freedom.

"As an Army officer, I believe a lot of what the Army has gone through in the past can be used to educate and teach Soldiers of the future," Petterson said. "If time is taken to study what our Army has done and what it's accomplished, there's a realization the Army doesn't change much. People are still the same. A lot of them are driven by the same patriotism to serve their nation."

He thinks it's important to remember the men and women in America's history who have done difficult things and reminds Soldiers to keep that in mind as they deploy to Iraq, he said.

"If you don't know that, you can get down and think you're going through a very unique situation," he said to Soldiers during the D-Day ceremony. "If you look at the regimental crest, the division patches you wear and the battle streamers, all those mean something. The men and women who have gone before us have earned those things. The fact that this battalion received a Presidential Unit Citation for its actions means a lot to me to come out and help educate the Soldiers."

The honorable decorations of the WWII veterans with the 116th Inf. Regt. are displayed in Bedford, Va., where the National D-Day Memorial is located.

"The town of Bedford lost more Soldiers, per capita, than any other city," Stewart said. "I have the privilege of being the first

sergeant of that unit, there."

If the 1-116th Inf. Regt. was not deployed, they would be part of the D-Day ceremonies back in Bedford, Va.

"If we were there and not here, the company would go out in Class A uniform and participate in the memorial. Many of our Families are in Bedford, attending the ceremony there today," Stewart said. "It was important for us, today, to do something in honor of the men who fought and died that day."

The 116th Inf. Regt., 29th Inf. Div. is the only National Guard infantry regiment that landed in the beach assault on the June 6, Petterson said.

"D-Day is part of our lives, part of our history," said Lt. Col. E. Scott Smith, commander of the 1-116th Inf. Regt., 256th IBCT, 13th ESC, and a Lynchburg, Va., native. "We're extremely

proud to wear the 29th (Inf. Div.) patch. It creates a kinship. The Soldiers know they are doing the same as their predecessors did and they share a certain bond. It's a same reason one is proud of their Family they belong to."

**Soldiers practice
art of Photography
in Iraq**



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I believe a lot of what the Army has gone through in the past can be used to educate and teach Soldiers of the future.



Trans. unit works to remain anonymous

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SGT. DAVID A. SCOTT
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE

ADDER, Iraq— A busy night of verifying containers and tracking personnel movements is routine at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq. If all of the personnel and cargo make it to their intended destinations, the unit responsible for making it happen will retain its anonymity for yet another day.

Working throughout the day and well into the night at COB Adder, the 635th Transportation Detachment (Movement Control Team), 14th Transportation Battalion (Movement Control), 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) is responsible for expediting, coordinating and monitoring cargo and passenger traffic moving through the transportation network in southern Iraq.

Teams like the 635th MCT are located near centralized, transportation hubs or in remote locations.

The 635th MCT's most recent deployment began in April and represents the unit's fourth Operation Iraqi Freedom deployment — serving initially in OIF I and on through the pending shift to Operation New Dawn.

The unit began preparation for its deployment to Iraq in Germany last year, practicing common Soldiering tasks in addition to tasks specific to the transportation corps.

"No matter where you go, you have to train on those skills to make sure that you are efficient and technically and tactically proficient," said 1st Lt. William Burke, a battle captain with the 635th MCT and a Corvallis, Mont., native.

Every one of the enlisted Soldiers with the 635th MCT is a transportation management coordinator. These logisticians organize and synchronize the movement of vehicles, personnel and cargo. They are also responsible for scheduling and selecting the appropriate modes of transportation for personnel and equipment, he said.

The latter determination is made by examining what transportation assets are available, most commonly resulting in ground movement, Burke said.

"It (the shipment) will go ground, unless there is an extreme need to have it go air," he said. "Because there are so many ground assets, it's easier to push things down there and haul more assets."

In order to meet the mission requirements of both surface and air demands out of COB Adder, the 635th MCT is divided into both a transportation movement section and an air movement section. The unit is further divided into both day and night shifts, providing a complete continuity of service to units in southern Iraq.

Burke, a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy and the U.S. Army Ranger School, said the most rewarding part of his job is how success in his mission is measured.

"There is a quantitative measurement of what you do," he said. "You can actually look back and say 'Hey, I moved 5 million pieces of equipment in a year. I moved (a given) number of trucks.' You can see where your coordination actually influenced the entire mission. You can see what actually happened."

Pfc. Kyle Lemanski, a transportation management coordinator with the 635th MCT and a Maryville, Tenn., native said the first two months of the unit's deployment have been hectic.

"It's been pretty busy," he said. "With the (upcoming) responsible drawdown, it will get busier. I am looking forward to this."

Lemanski said the 635th MCT is actively engaged in the transition and redeployment of equipment out of theater.

"We're taking all of the equipment from Joint Base Balad and everywhere in southern Iraq and sending it to Camp Arifjan, Kuwait," he said. "From there it is going back to the States along with personnel, or it is going to Afghanistan."

Lemanski said his first deployment has proven to be a learning experience despite his efforts to learn about Iraqi culture and climate before deploying.

Even though he researched Iraq, he still wasn't quite sure what to expect. The whole experience has been surprising, taking part in this phase of OIF, he said.

Despite the importance of the unit to the transportation functions at COB Adder, the 635th MCT works in relative obscurity at COB Adder, Burke said.

"One of the most overlooked parts of the whole process is the MCT," he said. "No one really knows that much about us because we are spread out and in such remote locations. When there is a problem, however, everyone knows about us."

Capt. Tasherra Marshall, commander of the 635th (Movement Control Team), and a Tacoma, Wash., native, said despite the relative lack of public recognition for her unit's deeds, she finds satisfaction in seeing cargo and personnel successfully arriving at their anticipated destinations.

"The biggest thrill is when movement goes right and you see everyone has everything they need, from food to shelter," she said. "Without transportation, none of it can happen."

ABOVE: Pfc. Kyle Lemanski, a transportation management coordinator with the 635th Transportation Detachment (Movement Control Team), 14th Transportation Battalion (Movement Control), 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Maryville, Tenn., native, performs an accountability inspection of a cargo pallet May 25 at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq. The 635th MCT out of Kaiserslautern, Germany, is deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom for the fourth time in seven years.



ABOVE: Pfc. Kyle Lemanski, a transportation management coordinator with the 635th Transportation Detachment (Movement Control Team), 14th Transportation Battalion (Movement Control), 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Maryville, Tenn., native, finishes an inspection of a cargo pallet manifest May 25 at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq. The 635th MCT organizes and synchronizes the movement of personnel and equipment out of Iraq in preparation for the upcoming responsible drawdown of U.S. troops and equipment from Iraq.

Commo Soldiers share passion for photos

STORY BY
STAFF SGT. JOEL F. GIBSON
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq— Just about every deployed Soldier has heard at one time or another that having a productive hobby can help make a deployment go by faster and cultivate skills during down time.

Two Soldiers in the communications section with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) used amateur photography as a diversion and hobby over the past 11 months during their deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Sgt. Maj. John Rosario, the senior enlisted adviser in the communications section, 13th ESC and an Agana, Guam native, said he's been involved in amateur photography since he was in high school.

Staff Sgt. Frank Bailey, night shift noncommissioned officer-in-charge at the

13th ESC help desk and a Barre, Vt., native, is much newer to the hobby, starting during his recent rest and recuperation leave.

Bailey's father gave him a single-lens reflex camera, which immediately ignited his passion for the hobby, he said.

"I mainly took photos of my 2-week-old son and my dogs, and seeing the clarity and options I had with this type of camera I knew it was something I wanted to get into," Bailey said.

Rosario, who entered the Army as a computer programmer in 1984, said his dad was an amateur photographer with a medium format camera and a dark room.

Rosario described medium format film as larger than 35 mm, "so you can produce bigger prints with higher definition."

Since switching to digital format a few years ago, Rosario has noticed a lot of differences in the hobby, he said.

"My dad used black-and-white film, and he would add oils to it to color it," Rosario said.

Rosario said when he first started taking

photos regularly, his father gave him an old Leica camera.

"I wish I hadn't thrown that one away, it's probably a classic by now," he said.

In addition to being a fun hobby, Rosario said amateur photography has helped him professionally.

"When I was attending the Sergeants Major Academy, I took the lead on designing the yearbook and taking photographs," he said.

Rosario and Bailey agreed amateur photography is a great way to pass the time, and being in the military offers unparalleled opportunities for photography enthusiasts.

Rosario said his favorite place to take photos was Japan, and Europe came in a close second.

"Being able to take pictures of various things throughout Iraq, Kuwait and other parts of the Middle East is something I would never have the opportunity to do if I was a civilian," Bailey said.

Like any other hobby, photography offers quite a few things to talk about with

other enthusiasts when you're not actively engaged in it.

"We talked about a lot of things — lenses, settings, trouble shooting lighting problems for indoor shoots without using flash," Rosario said.

Although new to photography, Bailey is quick to offer encouragement to prospective photographers.

"I think with anything in life, if you are truly drawn by photography, or anything else for that matter don't be afraid to jump into it," he said. "Buy the equipment, read the books, watch the videos, and shoot, shoot and keep shooting."

"One thing I have learned is the more pictures you take the better they get," he said.

Rosario said all the time, effort and expense of the hobby can be made worthwhile by taking the right picture.

"When someone sees a picture I take, and they look at it, and tell me it makes them see something a way they never thought of it before, it's a good feeling," Rosario said.

U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Maj. John Rosario

"Being able to take pictures of various things throughout Iraq, Kuwait and other parts of the Middle East is something I would never have the opportunity to do if I was a civilian."

— Staff Sgt. Frank Bailey

For photo tips
Technique Trumps Tech

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Sgt. Maj. John Rosario, the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)'s communications sergeant major, snapped this photo during his R & R from Iraq April 18 at Kowloon Bay in Hong Kong. The Agana, Guam, native, said, "I wanted to get a photo of an old Asian boat. I particularly liked that it was overcast, foggy, and that the boat was the only color in a backdrop of grey."

Photography 101:

Technique trumps tech

SGT. MICHAEL CARDEN
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



While not everyone is an expert with their camera, in the military, it is expected that you master your assigned weapon. Many of the same techniques taught during basic rifle marksmanship can be applied to shooting pictures.

» A steady firing position— Have you ever taken what you thought would be a great picture only to discover that it came out blurry or out of focus? It's similar with firing your weapon while moving. The camera (or rifle) is only seeing where you point it. If you are wobbling around, who knows where you are pointing when you take the picture (or pull the trigger). It is important to be perfectly still when taking a photo. By bringing your elbows close to your body you can ensure a clear, steady photo. Movement is even more pronounced when you are zoomed in; the tiniest bit of camera shake can ruin the whole picture. It is very similar to just the slightest miscalculation at the 300-meter target, where one jerk of the trigger and the shot will miss. That is why in photography, it is better to move into a closer position if possible, than to zoom in from a significant distance. Obviously no one has that same luxury on a firing line.

» Sight picture— While BRM doctrine teaches always to aim center mass, photography teaches to lead the target by two thirds of the picture. This is called the rule of thirds. It is done to provide lead space in the direction that the subject of the photo is going. Take one of the photos in this newspaper and draw a grid three squares high by three squares wide on the photo, dividing it evenly. The main focal point of the photo often should be at the intersection of two of those lines. The rule of thirds helps photographers compose their pictures for best effect, providing a focal point for the eye but also providing enough of a background to keep perspective.

» Accuracy by volume— The only way to be a better shooter is to put more rounds down range, and this adage holds true with photography. The more photos you take, the better your photos will look. Memory cards are very economical nowadays, and with the storage space to hold hundreds or even thousands of high resolution photos, the freedom to be trigger-happy is of great help to the modern photographer. Taking many shots from many different angles, during different lighting situations will help you learn which shots work best and which don't work at all. The instructors at the Defense Information School at Fort. Meade, Md., the school where every Department of Defense journalist learns their craft, teach that to take one good photo, you should take 100. That's not always going to be realistic or feasible, but the more practice you get, the better your photos will turn out.

A bullet cuts through the air, moving as fast as the blink of an eye, as fast as the shutter snap of a camera. Both are frozen moments in time. To become a master photographer—as well as a master marksman, requires practice, patience and solid fundamentals. Whether shooting from behind a firing line or from behind a lens, improving your technique can provide a lifetime enjoyment and satisfaction.

Word on the street

What are you most looking forward to when you get home?



"Running on Town Lake in Austin"

Sgt. Austin Nightingale, executive administrative assistant, headquarters and Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a native of Missoula, Mont.



"Being with my Family and friends"

Spc. Melissa Posey, automated logistics specialist, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), Philadelphia, Miss.



"Walking my dog, and not having to travel to use the bathroom"

Spc. Martha Bolt, paralegal, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a native of Managua, Nicaragua.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

As we get deeper into summer, the rising temperatures will be hard, not only on our bodies, but on the facilities around Joint Base Balad. It's going to take more energy to compensate for those environmental challenges. Energy is a finite resource. Remember to comply with the prescribed conservation methods to ensure we don't lose power when we need it and where we need it.

- Set the thermostats in your office to 80°F/27°C
- Turn off your lights and air conditioner when you leave your room for the day



THEATER PERSPECTIVES

“As a result, al-Qaeda is in its weakest financial position in years. While the group undoubtedly maintains the capability to carry out attacks, its financial woes matter a great deal.”

U.S. Treasury Undersecretary Stuart Levey on the terrorist network's infrastructure after al-Qaeda financial officer Mustafa Abu al-Yazid, also known as Saeed al-Masri, was killed in a U.S. missile strike.

“We think any additional demand for oil, particularly in the Asian market, will have to be met by Iraq. We are confident that there is demand for Iraqi oil until 2020, 2030.”

Iraq Oil Minister Hussein as-Shahristani on a newly announced plan to boost crude oil production by 150,000 barrels per day

“Iraq has great potential as a destination for business and personal travelers, as well as long-term growth potential for religious and cultural tourism. Air Arabia's entry into the country will only boost such prospects.”

Air Arabia CEO Adel Ali on the air carrier's role in the progress of Iraq after announcing the launch of service to Najaf, Iraq

“I reiterate my personal appeal for an urgent and concerted international effort to resolve the ongoing tensions in the Middle East, especially before such conflicts lead to greater bloodshed.”

Pope Benedict XVI in a meeting with religious leaders from the region, in which he urged safety and support for Christians

“Our system will not be perfect from the beginning but over time it will tune and people will have good results.”

Google Regional Project Manager William Kanaan on the search engine juggernaut's preparation to launch a version of its Web site in Iraq

BAD COMPANY

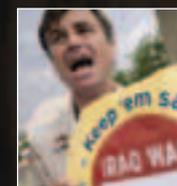
Bradley Manning was recently arrested for allegedly leaking more than 260,000 classified cables and videos of a U.S. airstrike in Afghanistan and an AH-64 Apache strike in Iraq. While not on the same scale as 2009 Fort Hood gunman Nidal Hasan or Abu Ghraib scandal-star Lynndie England, Bradley joins the hall of shame with several other service members who chose disloyalty to their country.



Former Air Force Reserve colonel Lawrence Franklin, was sentenced to 12 years in prison in 2006 for passing classified military information to Israelis while working as an analyst with the Department of Defense. He was also accused of conspiring with Israelis about U.S. weapons tests.



Eric David Waldman, a Soldier with the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell Ky., was arrested for trying to sell two unregistered machine guns and a Claymore mine to an undercover agent.



Leonard Clark, a former Arizona National Guard private first class was charged in 2005 with failure to obey an order and reckless endangerment. A statement released regarding the incident claimed his blog released classified information about attacks on U.S. convoys and troop movements in Iraq.

FITNESS CORNER

Smith Machine Routine



Lunges Kick

Start with the bar resting on your trapezius, with your feet hip-width apart. Step backward with your left leg bending the knee at a 90-degree angle and lower your body down until your right leg is bent at a 90-degree angle as well. Your knee should be directly in line with your ankle. When you stand back up, bring your left leg forward, balancing on your right leg. Bring your left leg into your chest, extend your left leg at your knee and kick forward. Keep your foot flexed when kicking out. Return your leg back to the starting position and repeat 12 times. Repeat the same movements, with your right leg 12 times. Perform three sets of 12 repetitions. (Adjust the weight based on your strength.)

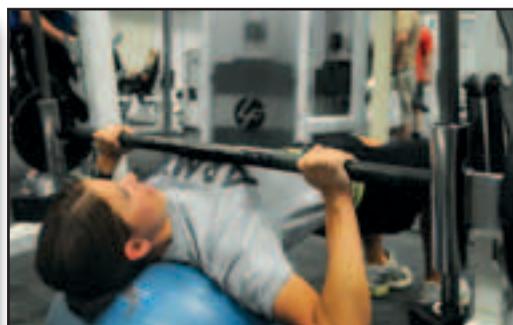
Advanced: Place your front foot on a step.



Pull-up

Start the bar on the fourth or fifth notch from the bottom of the Smith machine. Slide your body underneath the bar, extend your legs out in front of you. Place an overhand grip on the bar. Keep your body in a straight line, keeping your abs and glutes tight. Lift your body to the bar, until your chest touches the bar. Slowly lower your body down, until your arms are fully extended, keeping your body flat. Perform three sets of 15 repetitions.

Advanced: Place your feet on a flat bench.



Push-up

Instead of using a flat bench press to perform chest press, try an exercise ball. Place the exercise ball lined up under the Smith machine bar. Roll back on the ball until your head rests comfortably on the ball. Keep your body in a straight line (from your shoulders to your knees), align your knees with your ankles and keep your abs engaged. Place an overhand grip on the bar and slowly lower the bar down until it almost touches your chest. Push the bar back up extending your arms, but do not lock your elbows. Perform three sets of 15 repetitions. (Adjust the weight based on your strength.)

Advanced: Place your feet together, working on your balance.

Empty Calories

Soda, candy, chips? What do they all have in common? They are all top sources of what many dietitians refer to as “empty calories.” The Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary defines “empty” as “containing nothing, lacking substance.” And for all the calories these foods add to your diet, they bring along almost nothing else for your body — very little vitamins or minerals, very little protein or fiber. They basically offer nothing but a few extra pounds.

Do not be fooled by the word “empty calories.” The term refers to food items that are loaded with calories. They just offer little to no nutritional value. Some of these items include soft drinks, fruit juices, alcohol (at least you don’t have to worry about that here), chips and fast food menu items. You can reduce empty calories from your diet by learning which foods to avoid and healthier alternatives to include in your diet.

There are numerous foods that are considered filler foods. Foods made with refined white flour, like white bread, pastries, cake and cookies, fall into that category, as do white rice, pasta, soda and candy. The problem with these foods, besides the fact that they are not nutritious, is that they do little to satisfy hunger and leave you wanting more. All these fillers and empty calories can add up quickly and do not bring you any closer to the slimmer figure you’re working toward.

Now, don’t get crazy and pledge to eradicate all empty calorie foods like white rice, soda and candy. A blunt, but necessary, fact to accept is that we both know that’s not going to happen. Also, you have to start slow; changes don’t happen overnight. You will end up depriving your body, leaving you craving more. Here are some ways to make small adjustments to your eating style to see changes in your body and leave you feeling healthier. You can reduce empty calories from your diet by learning which foods to avoid.

Limit your Gatorade consumption (or other sugary flavored drinks)

Yes, I know Gatorade is your “thirst quencher.” It rehydrates, replenishes and refuels your body and everything else the company’s marketing campaign tells you. Well, guess what, so does water. Each 20 ounce bottle of Gatorade contains 130 calories, 34 grams of sugar and 270 milligrams of sodium. The nutrition facts are oddly similar to that of an eight ounce can of Rip it, Power flavor. There’s no way Gatorade and a high-octane energy drink can have the same ingredients right? Think again. The second ingredient in both drinks is the infamous high-fructose corn syrup — the culprit in most candies and sugary drinks, and with no nutritional value. Most people take in hundreds of empty, unhealthy calories each day with what they drink. Try Crystal Light or other low-calorie drink mixes as an alternative to add flavor to your water.

Be cautious of your choice of breakfast cereal

Not all cereals are created equal. Have you read the side of your favorite breakfast cereal container recently? Most packaged cereals are loaded with sugar and low on the nutritional scale. Even the so called “healthier” cereals have their flaws. Don’t be fooled by Kellogg’s Special K Fruit and Yogurt cereal, it contains the highest amount of carbohydrates (67 grams) compared to any other cereal at the dining facility. Instead look for Cheerios or oatmeal, which provide fewer calories and contain reasonable amounts of sugar.

Watch your uncolored starchy foods

Don’t be tempted by the short order line at the DFAC. Say no to french fries and instead walk over to the baked potato bar. Top the potato with cheese and broccoli for a nutrient-rich meal, but don’t go overboard. Dried beans and peas contain some starch, and they can be used as a meat alternative and they also contain ample protein. Always opt for brown rice over white rice. The more color foods have, the more nutrients the food contains.

The bottom line is we must be aware of the effects of empty calories on our body. So what do you do when you crave the empty calorie foods you love so much? When it comes to empty calorie foods, it’s all about moderation. A little is fine. A lot can take you into calorie overload. Choose empty calorie foods instead of nutrient-rich ones as an occasional exception, rather than a habit. Give them the boot and make your calories worth something again. We are what we eat. Be kind to your body and choose wisely, and your body will thank you in return.



Capt. Sarah Baumgardner is a graduate of Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, where she majored in exercise physiology. She is certified by the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) as a Health Fitness Specialist (HFS). She has worked as a personal trainer and nutritional consultant, training a wide range of demographics. She brings enthusiasm and motivation to inspiring, coaching and increasing Soldiers’ fitness levels.

Sudoku

Level: Hard

The objective is to fill the 9x9 grid so each column, each row and each of the nine 3x3 boxes contains the digits from 1 to 9 only one time each.

Last week's answers

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

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

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

- Which cuddly toy was the title of an Elvis Presley hit from 1957?
- Who played the heavy metal guitar on Michael Jackson's Beat It?
- Which musical group was formed by Maurice White?
- What was on the other side of the No. 1 single Come Together?
- Which song was a huge hit for Nilsson and Mariah Carey?
- In 1991, Whitney Houston raised funds for which war with a recording of the Star Spangled Banner?

1. Teddy Bear 2. Eddie Van Halen 3. Earth, Wind, and Fire 4. Something (The Beatles) 5. Without You 6. Gulf War

JBB Worship Services

CONTEMPORARY

Sunday 10:30 a.m. Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)
7 p.m. Freedom Chapel (West side)

Wednesday 8 p.m. Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

GENERAL

Sunday 9 a.m. Freedom Chapel
9 a.m. Provider Chapel

GOSPEL

Sunday 11 a.m. MWR East Building
12 p.m. Freedom Chapel (West side)
12:30 p.m. Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)
7 p.m. Provider Chapel

LITURGICAL (Lutheran Setting)

Sunday 5 p.m. Provider Chapel

TRADITIONAL

Sunday 10:30 a.m. Freedom Chapel (West side)
2 p.m. Air Force Hospital Chapel

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

Sunday 10 a.m. Provider Chapel

LATTER DAY SAINTS

Sunday 1 p.m. Provider Chapel
3:30 p.m. Freedom Chapel (West side)
7 p.m. Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

*Current as of June 2, 2010

CHURCH OF CHRIST

Sunday 3:30 p.m. Castle Heights (Bldg 4155)

ROMAN CATHOLIC MASS

Sunday 8:30 a.m. Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)
11 a.m. Provider Chapel

12:30 pm. Air Force Provider Chapel

Thursday 11 a.m. Air Force Provider Chapel

Wednesday, Friday 5 p.m. Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

Saturday 8 p.m. Freedom Chapel (West side)

Confessions: **Saturday** 4-4:45 p.m. Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6) or by appointment

JEWISH SHABBAT SERVICES

Friday 6 p.m. Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

PAGAN/WICCAN FELLOWSHIP

Thursday 7 p.m. Provider Annex
Saturday 7 p.m. The Shack (Bldg 7556)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

PLEASE CALL:

Gilbert Chapel 443-7703

Provider Chapel 483-4107/4115

Freedom Chapel 443-6303

JB BALAD ACTIVITIES

INDOOR POOL Swim Lessons: Mon., Wed., 6 p.m. Tue., Thu., Sat., 6:30 p.m. Aqua Training: Tue., Thu., 7:30 p.m., 8:30 p.m.	Edge Weapons & Stick Fighting Combative Training: Tue., Thur., Sat., 8-10 p.m. EAST REC- REATION CENTER 4-ball tourney: Sunday 8 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Monday 8 p.m. Volleyball: Sunday 6 p.m. Aerobics: Mon., Wed., Fri., 5:30-6:30 a.m. Yoga Class: Mon., Friday, 6-7 a.m. Step Aerobics: Mon., Wed., Fri., 5:30 p.m. Conditioning Training Class: Mon., Wed., Fri., 7:15-8 p.m. Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu: Mon., Wed., Fri., 8-9 p.m. Abs-Aerobics: Tue., Thu., 6-7 a.m., 5-6 p.m.	Caribbean Night: Friday 8 p.m. Chess & Dominoes Tourney: Friday 8 p.m. Salsa Class: Saturday 8:30 p.m. Poker: Saturday 7:30 p.m. Spin: Sunday 9 a.m. Mon., Wed., Fri., 2 a.m., 8 a.m., 2 p.m., 7 p.m., 9 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Soccer: Tue., Thu., 5:45 a.m., 8 p.m. Yoga: Wednesday 8 p.m. Boxing: Sunday 4 p.m. Tue., Thu., 2 p.m. Saturday 8 p.m. Sunday 8:45 a.m. Tue., Thu., 7 p.m. Power Abs: Mon., Tue., Thu.,	8 p.m. Friday 9 p.m. CC Cross Fit: Mon, Saturday 10:30 p.m. Cross Fit: Mon., Wed., Fri., 5:45 a.m., 7 a.m., 3 p.m., 6 p.m. Tue., Thu., 7 a.m., 3 p.m. H6 FITNESS CENTER Spin: Sunday 9 a.m. Mon., Wed., Fri., 2 a.m., 8 a.m., 2 p.m., 7 p.m., 9 p.m. Tue., Thu., 5:45 a.m., 8 p.m. Wednesday 8 p.m. MACP Level 1: Friday 8 p.m. 5 on 5 Basketball: Saturday 8 p.m. H6 RECRE- ATION CENTER Bingo: Sunday 8 p.m. Texas	Hold'em: Mon., Fri., 2 p.m., 8:30 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Tuesday 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Ping-pong tourney: Tuesday 8:30 p.m. Spades: Wednesday 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Salsa: Wednesday 8:30 p.m. P90x: Mon., Sat., 4:30 a.m., 4 p.m., 10 p.m. 12 a.m. Soccer: Tue., Thu., 8 p.m. Yoga: Wednesday 8 p.m. Darts: Saturday 8:30 p.m. WEST REC- REATION CENTER Green Bean Karaoke: Sun., Wed., 7:30pm 9-ball tourney: Monday 8 p.m. Ping-pong 7 p.m.	tourney: Tuesday 8 p.m. Foosball 7 p.m. Body by Midgett Toning Class: Tue., Thu., 7 p.m. Dodge ball Game: Tuesday 7:30 p.m. Wednesday 8 p.m. Guitar Lessons: Thursday 7:30 p.m. Game tourney: Thursday 1 p.m., 8 p.m. Enlisted Poker: Friday 1 p.m., 8 p.m. Officer Poker: Saturday 1 p.m., 8 p.m. Squat Competition: Saturday 8 p.m. WEST FIT- NESS CENTER 3 on 3 basketball tourney: Saturday 7:30 p.m. 6 on 6 volleyball tourney: Friday 7 p.m.	Aerobics: Mon., Wed., Friday 7 p.m. Jam Session: Tue., Thu., 7 p.m. Dodge ball Game: Tuesday 7:30 p.m. Furman's Martial Arts: Mon., Wed., Sun., 1 p.m. Gaston's Self-Defense Class: Fri., Sat., 7 p.m. Open court basketball: Thursday 7 p.m. Open court soccer: Mon., Wed., 7 p.m. Zingano Brazilian Jiu Jitsu: Tue., Thu., 8:30 p.m. CIRCUIT GYM Floor hockey: Mon., Wed., Fri., 8-10 p.m.
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UPCOMING SPORTS ON AFN



Wednesday 06/16/10

SOCCER: 2010 FIFA World Cup, South Africa vs Uruguay, Live 11 p.m. AFN Sports
MLB: Seattle Mariners @ St. Louis Cardinals, Live 5 p.m. AFN Sports
Strikeforce: Robbie Lawler vs "Babalu" Sobral, Live 8 p.m. AFN Xtra

Thursday 06/17/10

SOCCER: 2010 FIFA World Cup, South Africa vs Uruguay, Live 4 a.m. AFN Sports
SOCCER: 2010 FIFA World Cup, France vs Mexico, Live 11 a.m. AFN Sports
NBA 2010 Finals-Game 7: Boston Celtics @ Los Angeles Lakers, Live 6 p.m. AFN Sports

Friday 06/18/10

SOCCER: 2010 FIFA World Cup, Slovenia vs USA, Live 6:30 a.m. AFN Sports
SOCCER: 2010 FIFA World Cup, England vs Algeria, Live 11 a.m. AFN Sports
MLB: Baltimore Orioles @ San Diego Padres, Live 7 p.m. AFN Xtra

Saturday 06/19/10

SOCCER: 2010 FIFA World Cup, Ghana vs Australia, Live 6:30 a.m. AFN Sports
MLB: New York Mets @ New York Yankees, Live 10 a.m. AFN Prime Atlantic
MLB: Los Angeles Dodgers @ Boston Red Sox, Live 1 p.m. AFN Prime Atlantic

Sunday 06/20/10

SOCCER: 2010 FIFA World Cup, Italy vs New Zealand, Live 6:30 a.m. AFN Sports
SOCCER: 2010 FIFA World Cup, Brazil vs Ivory Coast, Live 11 a.m. AFN Sports
MLB: Los Angeles Dodgers @ Boston Red Sox, Live 5 p.m. AFN Sports
MLB: Los Angeles Dodgers @ Chicago Cubs, Live 11 p.m. AFN Sports

Monday 06/21/10

SOCCER: 2010 FIFA World Cup, Spain vs Honduras, Live 11 a.m. AFN Sports
MLB: New York Yankees @ Arizona Diamondbacks, Live 7 p.m. AFN Sports

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

'Sex and the City 2' falls far from big apple

BY SGT. EUNICE ALICEA VALENTIN
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



Menopause, appalling wardrobes, glamour shots in the Abu Dhabi desert... "Sex and the City 2" may not merit a review filled with pleasurable sexual innuendoes and clever sarcasm. The film was dry and redundant.

The opening scene shows promise, with a gay-fabulous wedding and a Liza Minnelli cameo and rendition of "All the Single Ladies" (Beyonce's choreography included), that takes the audience back to the early days of the HBO television series and highlights the characters we loved prior to the anticipated premier of the "Sex and the City" 2008 film.

Carrie Bradshaw (Sarah Jessica Parker), now Carrie Preston and two-years post nuptials with Mr. Big (Chris Noth, is lost within herself and her marriage. She misses

the excitement of red carpets and being swept off her feet by Big's romance and courting. Big is portrayed more as a couch-potato than the debonair gentleman in this sequel. Charlotte Goldenblatt (Kristin Davis), now a mother of two beautiful little girls, locks herself in kitchen cupboards and weeps about the state of motherhood, while her braless Irish nanny, who Charlotte obsesses about, saves the day. Miranda Hobbes (Cynthia Nixon), although successful at her law firm, quits because of her male-chauvinist boss. Of course, she also wanted the opportunity to be a more present and attentive mother. Samantha Jones (Kim Cattrall), menopausal and more raunchy than ever, is fixated on supplemental drugs and rejuvenating creams.

Much like Carrie and the gang, the film is a big mess and lacks luster.

I wish I could say the target audience, middle-aged and formerly single women (I think) could connect with the characters. However, this is where the script fails. The

writer doesn't seem to capture one coherent demographic or theme throughout the film. Instead Michael Patrick King, screenwriter and director of "Sex and the City," decides to play on several ludicrous and out-dated ideas about women in Western society and shallowly compares them to Middle-Eastern traditions, while the main characters play self-absorbed American stereotypes, completely oblivious to the obvious juxtapositions in the film. On that note, when did "Sex and the City" turn into "Desperate Housewives"?

However, I am a loyal "Sex and the City" fan, so I'll conclude in a less feminist tone. I laughed at the French fry under the veil joke — the first time, and enjoyed the "anything he can do I can do better" attitude Samantha portrays, leading to her arrest. There's a lot more to the film than just sex in the city. In fact, there was hardly any sex and Manhattan was nothing more than a mirage under the Abu Dhabi sun. The film was not fully satisfying, but still "Sex and the City." My verdict: C

Rockstar's 'Red Dead Redemption' a Western Epic

BY STAFF SGT. JOEL F. GIBSON
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



The long awaited sequel to Rockstar's 2004 "Red Dead Revolver," "Red Dead Redemption," shares features and a kitschy spaghetti-western theme with its Playstation 2 predecessor, but no actual storyline connections.

"Redemption" is built off of the "Grand Theft Auto" platform Rockstar has cultivated over the years and it really shows in graphics and gameplay. Given its later release, it's only fitting that "Red Dead Redemption" outshines the latest installment in the GTA franchise in both categories, and pretty much everything else, by leaps and bounds.

I haven't been amazed by graphics like this in a long time. The scenery is incredible, and the cheesy old west songs really add to the atmosphere. Playing "Red Dead Redemption" is pretty much like playing a 30-40-hour Western movie, well, a really good 30-40-hour Western movie.

The plot of the game, while utilizing hyperbolic Wild West clichés, is enormously engaging. While you can perform less than savory actions, the mentality of the protagonist, John Marston, encourages the player to perform honorable deeds.

In addition to Marston's obvious dislike of unnecessary killing and looting corpses, the game rewards players with lower prices for goods and higher bounties on targets, based on your proclivity to helping townspeople in distress and capturing criminals instead of killing them.

The team from Rockstar seemed to learn a lot of lessons from GTA IV, but in my opinion they may not have learned enough. While the graphics and gameplay in GTA IV were good for the time of its release, it lacked on major component...fun.

"Red Dead Redemption" is high on the fun factor, but a very annoying aspect of GTA IV maintained itself in this game. The dreaded mini-games reared their ugly heads and unnecessarily bogged down an otherwise excellent product.

Technically, you don't have to play poker, horseshoes, blackjack or five finger fillet (a ridiculous button timing exercise, during which you punch a knife blade between your fingers as fast as possible), but in order to unlock extra costumes, you must participate in, and win, these mini-games.

Poker and blackjack are fairly self explanatory, and the artificial intelligence of the computer players is pretty bad, so those games are very easy to get through, but horseshoes...ugh.

I've played horseshoes in real life, and it's not very diffi-

cult. I would imagine a gunslinger in the old west wouldn't have too difficult a time throwing a horseshoe into a sand pit in the general vicinity of the stake, but apparently the good people at Rockstar thought otherwise.

The game is unimaginably difficult. I played for two hours against an elderly woman who occasionally gets her shoes within a foot of the stake, to no avail. Imagine if you will, playing a "Tiger Woods Golf" style video game while blindfolded, inebriated and possibly suffering from a stroke and you can begin to understand the infuriating exasperation you will suffer at the hands of the horseshoes mini-game in "Red Dead Redemption."

Mini game issues aside, the game is great. There are plenty of side missions and random encounters to spice up an incredible storyline. You can rescue robbery victims, fall prey to ambushes, shoot hawks from a moving train, attack gang strongholds or even pick flowers, which sounds lame, but is something I find myself doing more and more often thanks to the game's odd tracking of flowers picked.

The gameplay mechanics, while less than intuitive, are fairly easy to grasp, and you'll immerse yourself quickly.

With incredible graphics and a great story, I rate "Red Dead Redemption" a solid 9 out of 10, with the only points deducted based on mini-games and a less than awesome control configuration.

PVT MURPHY'S LAW



Wednesday June 16
6 p.m. The Losers (PG-13)
9 p.m. Death at a Funeral (R)

Thursday June 17
6 p.m. Death at a Funeral (R)
9 p.m. Marmaduke (PG) (1st Run)

Friday June 18
6 p.m. Nightmare on Elm Street (R)
9 p.m. The Karate Kid (PG)

Saturday June 19
2 p.m. Furry Vengeance (PG)
5 p.m. The Karate Kid (PG)

8 p.m. Nightmare on Elm Street (R)
Midnight The Karate Kid (PG)

Sunday June 20
2 p.m. The Karate Kid (PG)
5 p.m. Nightmare on Elm Street (R)
8 p.m. Furry Vengeance (PG)

Monday June 21
6 p.m. Nightmare on Elm Street (R)
9 p.m. The Karate Kid (PG)

Tuesday June 22
6 p.m. Furry Vengeance (PG)
9 p.m. Nightmare on Elm Street (R)

Movie times are subject to change. Verify showings at <http://www.aafes.com/ems/euro/balad.htm>

PHOTOS AROUND IRAQ

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Nashaunda Tlghman



U.S. Army Capt. Kristen Brockman (left), 1411 Civil Affairs Company, inspects a beehive with an Iraqi beekeeper May 10 in Abu Jassim, Iraq. The civil affairs team was conducting a post project assessment for the widow bee keeping program.



U.S. Army Photo by Spc. Advin Illa-Medina

U.S. Army Maj. Eric Aguila (right), a surgeon assigned to 2-1st Cavalry Squadron, checks a 3-month-old child's leg deformity at an Abu Ghraib hospital May 25 in Baghdad, Iraq. The squadron assisted in giving a class on amputation to Iraqi medical personnel as part of Operation Medical Alliance.

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Venessa Hernandez



Iraqi women feed their sheep May 21 in Taji, Iraq.

NEWS AROUND

ISF arrests 3 suspected AQI terrorists in Baghdad Operation

BAGHDAD— Iraqi Security Forces arrested three suspected al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) criminal associates during a joint security operation conducted in Baghdad.

ISF and U.S. advisors searched several buildings for a suspected AQI member who is allegedly involved in construction of vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIED) and IEDs used in attacks against Iraqi civilians, ISF and coalition forces.

The warranted individual also facilitates the movement of AQI fighters from other regions to support AQI efforts.

Information and evidence gathered at the scene led Iraqi forces to identify and arrest three criminal associates.

Iraqi and U.S. forces conduct joint operations in accordance with the Security Agreement and in coordination with the Iraqi government to target terrorists seeking to disrupt the security and stability of Iraq.

Operation kills 4 suspected AQI terrorists, 3 arrested

BAGHDAD— Iraqi Security Forces killed four suspected al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) members and arrested three criminal associates during a joint security operation in northern Iraq.

In an area approximately 40 kilometers south of Mosul, ISF and U.S. advisors searched multiple buildings for a suspected senior AQI leader allegedly involved in vehicle-borne improvised explosive device and IED attacks on Iraqi civilians, ISF and coalition forces.

As the security team approached the building in which the suspect was believed to be located, individuals inside the target compound lobbed grenades and fired automatic weapons at the security forces. The security forces, acting in self-defense, returned fire killing four individuals.

Information and evidence gathered at the scene led Iraqi forces to identify and arrest three suspected AQI criminal associates.

Iraqi and U.S. forces conduct joint operations in accordance with the Security Agreement and in coordination with the Iraqi government to target terrorists seeking to disrupt the security and stability of Iraq.

ISF kill suspected AQI leader, 2 associates in northern Iraq

BAGHDAD— Iraqi Security Forces killed a suspected al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) senior leader and two criminal associates during a joint security operation in east Mosul.

ISF and U.S. advisors conducted a vehicle interdiction to arrest a suspected senior AQI leader, who is allegedly responsible for incorporating foreigners into AQI and facilitating terrorist operations in southern Mosul.

As the security team approached the vehicle in which the warranted individual was believed to be occupying, the warranted individual and associates presented a threat to the security forces. The security forces acting in self-defense fired and killed three individuals, including the wanted AQI leader.

Iraqi and U.S. forces conduct joint operations in accordance with the Security Agreement and in coordination with the Iraqi government to target terrorists seeking to disrupt the security and stability of Iraq.

Iraq lawmakers to set mid-June date for return of parliament

BAGHDAD— Newly elected Iraqi lawmakers planned to meet for the first time, a presidential spokesman said recently, even as rival political factions remained deadlocked over who will lead the country's next government.

President Jalal Talabani scheduled the first session of the new parliament on June 14, said his spokesman, Nasser al-Ani. Talabani's official order, to be issued on his website and in letters to winning parties, was expected as early as Tuesday.

"It has been decided by the president that the first session will be held June 14," al-Ani told The Associated Press previously.

Under Iraq's constitution, Talabani had faced a deadline to seat parliament by June 15.

But it's far from likely that political alliances that are vying to control the 325-seat legislature will have resolved roadblocks for selecting a new prime minister and top Cabinet officials.

None of Iraq's major political coalitions captured an outright majority in the March 7 elections, leaving the country without a clear winner.

That has set off scrambling by Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and Iraq's other politicians to join forces with rival alliances and secure enough seats to control parliament and, in turn, the future government.

This means it still could take weeks, if not months, for parliament to choose new leaders. The lack of clear leadership in the already fragile democracy has fostered fears that extremist groups may incite major violence by exploiting security gaps as tens of thousands of U.S. military forces head home.

The secular Sunni-dominated Iraqiya alliance won 91 parliamentary seats in the election — two more than any other group. But the State of Law coalition that al-Maliki leads, which won 89 seats, has since teamed up with others to build a so-called super-Shiite alliance with 159 parliament seats

altogether.

That's still four seats shy of winning an outright majority of seats needed to have undisputed control of parliament and its selection of leaders.

Parliament faces the process of electing a speaker and a new president at its first session.

In turn, the new president will task the legislature's largest political bloc with forming the new government. But the definition of what makes up the largest bloc is hotly debated, and likely will be the next battle between Iraqiya and al-Maliki faction.

Iraqiya leaders have claimed they should have the first crack at forming the government because they won the most seats on balloting day. But a March court opinion opened the door to the possibility that the largest bloc could be one created after the election through negotiations — meaning that if the super-Shiite coalition holds together, it could have the right to form the government.

Meeting Tuesday morning with some of his alliance's lawmakers, Iraqiya leader and former prime minister Ayad Allawi called on parliament to make what he called "correct decisions" in creating the new government.

"The battle will be hard between powers who believe in democracy and powers who believe in oppression," Allawi said.

He predicted "it will not be over in day or two."

US soldier arrested over Iraq video

BAGHDAD— A U.S. Soldier serving in Iraq has been arrested for allegedly leaking a classified combat video to a whistleblower website, Wikileaks, last year.

The video footage from a helicopter cockpit shows a deadly 2007 aerial strike in the Iraqi capital that killed 12 civilians including two journalists from the Reuters news agency.

U.S. Army Spc. Bradley Manning, 22, was arrested last month after he reportedly bragged online about having leaked the information, including the video and U.S. diplomatic cables.

The U.S. military in a statement said Manning, who was deployed at a base near Baghdad, is in "pre-trial confinement for allegedly releasing classified information and is currently confined in Kuwait."

Manning's alleged action of supplying classified video and diplomatic communications to Wikileaks was first reported by Wired.com, the web site of technology magazine Wired.

Pentagon Probe

Bryan Whitman, a Pentagon spokesman, said investigators were probing allegations that Manning supplied classified video and 260,000 secret diplomatic cables to Wikileaks.

"I think that's why the Criminal Investigative Division is taking a very scrupulous look at this,"

IRAQ

Whitman said in Washington.

Al Jazeera is not responsible for the content of external web sites Wired.com said. Manning a Maryland, native, was arrested nearly two weeks ago by the U.S. Army's Criminal Investigation Division at Forward Operating Base Hammer, 64 kilometers east of Baghdad.

Philip Crowley, a U.S. state department spokesman, said the department would take the leak of classified documents "seriously."

"It has particular impact in terms of revealing what we call sources and methods, compromising our ability to provide government leaders with the kind of analysis that they need to make informed decisions," Crowley said.

Wikileaks, a website that publishes anonymously sourced documents, released what it called previously unseen footage of the Apache helicopter attack in Baghdad in April.

'Military whistleblowers'

At the time Wikileaks said only that it had obtained the video "from a number of military whistleblowers" but did not provide any further information on how it got hold of it.

"I wouldn't have done this if lives weren't in danger. He [Manning] was in a war zone and basically trying to vacuum up as much classified information as he could, and just throwing it up into the air" said former hacker, Adrian Lamo.

In a Twitter feed Wikileaks said "allegations in Wired that we have been sent 260,000 classified US embassy cables are, as far as we can tell, incorrect."

It said that "if" Manning was the "whistleblower then, without doubt, he's a national hero."

Manning reportedly said he had leaked other material to Wikileaks, including a separate video of a 2009 air strike in Afghanistan, a classified army document evaluating Wikileaks as a security threat and classified U.S. diplomatic cables, according to Wired.

Wired said Manning had been in touch with Lamo, who contacted Army investigators and FBI agents after being told of the leaks.

River Police graduates rise above sectarian barriers

BAGHDAD— Officers from both the Waterborne Operations and the Dive Search and Recovery courses graduated here June 6 after three months of intensive training at the Baghdad River Police Training Center. The students, both Arabs and Kurds from various locations in Iraq, will return to their provincial police units to help combat insurgent and other criminal activities.

"There is no difference between Arabs, Kurds,

Shi'a, Sunni -- we are all Iraqis. We all want to protect our country," said Luaman, of Duhuk, Kurdistan, before the graduation Sunday. He hopes the Kurdistan regional government will continue to support this type of training by sending more students to future courses.

Students enrolled in the 12-week Dive SAR course learned advanced diving skills and performed search and recovery operations in the black water conditions presented by the Tigris River. Nearly half of those students are from Kurdistan.

"The most important part about this center is that it is the only center in the whole of Iraq that receives people from all over Iraq," said Iraqi 2nd Lt. Baha Mahmud Salim. "We don't recognize this is Arab; this is Kurd—we are all Iraqis," said Salim, who like Luaman was in the Fire Rescue Police before becoming a diver. "The most important part is now I have brothers from Kurdistan, from Anbar, from all over Iraq."

In the eight-week waterborne operations class for inexperienced boaters, students learn the basic concepts of waterborne operations and perform practical exercises on boat operations and conduct hands-on training such as operating a boat, performing maneuvers and conducting insertions and extractions.

U.S. Coast Guard Adm. Charles Ray, the Iraq Training Assistance Mission Ministry of Interior commander, congratulated students as Brig. Gen. Sabah, the BRPC commander, handed them their diplomas.

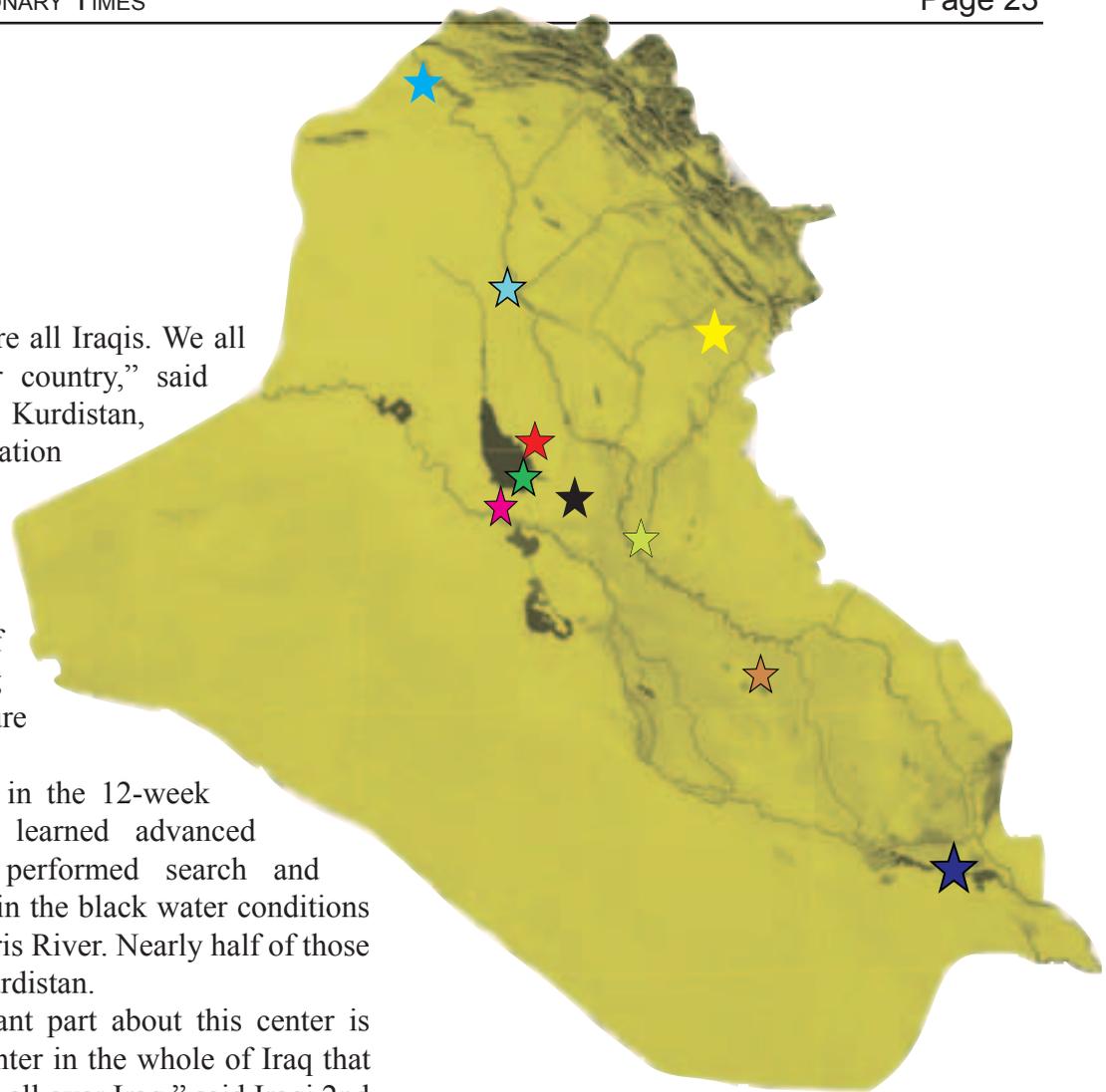
Ray told Sabah that USF-I was happy to support the BRPC. "It's important for the safety and security of the Iraqi people," Ray said. "The key is the leadership you are providing for the officers who will return to their provincial governments and continue to train the next generation of Iraqi police officers."

Economy page 1 cont.

the U.S. government to send electronic payments to our vendors rather than disburse cash," said Capt. Shaun Miller, banking officer for Iraq with U.S. Central Command, and a Washington D.C. native.

"We have already seen a domino-like effect at other bases, where vendors and contractors are turning around and paying their employees electronically as well," Miller said. "We are promoting financial cultural change toward the banking system, and away from cash."

Singer said as local nationals see the benefits of



using their banking system, they will gain confidence and will begin establishing checking and savings accounts, as well as be able to obtain loans.

"This bank will not only create jobs, but will also increase the confidence in the Iraqi Dinar and the Iraqi banking system," she said. "Iraqis are still learning to place faith in their banking system because when Saddam (Hussein) was in power, it was not uncommon for him to seize bank assets."

To date, the U.S. financial management community and the Iraqi-based Industrial Zone, known as I-BIZ, with assistance from Miller, have been responsible for opening Iraqi banks on two of the U.S. enduring bases. Eight additional "Banks on Bases," facilities have been solicited throughout Iraq, and are expected to be operational within the year.

"This is a great example of the partnership we've created," said Maj. Jerry England, I-BIZ project coordinator, and a Fort Leavenworth, Kan., native. "Together we are working to build the economy."

**Do you have
a story
idea?**

Contact us at:

escpao@iraq.centcom.mil



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Naveed Ali Shah

Lt. Gen. Kenneth W. Hunzeker (left), deputy commanding general for support with United States Forces-Iraq, and Lt. Gen. Robert Cone (third from left), the deputy commanding general for operations with USF-I and the commanding general for III Corps, are briefed on sustainment support operations by Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz, commanding general of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), May 28 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Kimberly Johnson



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Michael Carden

ABOVE: Spc. Miguel Marrero, a tech support specialist with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), poses for a picture with a New Orleans Saints cheerleaders during a meet and greet June 10 at the 13th ESC joint operations center in Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

LEFT: Col. Lisa Costanza (second from left), commander of the 224th Sustainment Brigade and a Long Beach, Calif., native, and Command Sgt. Maj. Vickie Dunlap-Jones (fourth from left), command sergeant major of the brigade, and a Sacramento, Calif., native, uncase the brigade colors June 9 during the transfer of authority ceremony from the 36th Sust. Bde. to the 224th Sust. Bde., 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) at Contingency Operating Base, Adder, Iraq.