The Expeditionary Times

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Vol. 4 Issue 6 June 23, 2010 http://www.hood.army.mil/13sce/

Merit

RFS redeploys after successful mission completion

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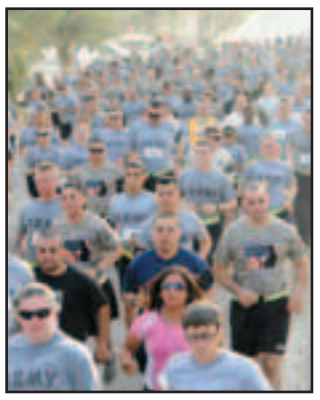
Impact



Shadow run benefits wounded Veterans

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Donations

Soldiers campaign to give children school supplies

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Dan Berman (second from right), head of fragile market economies for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Franklin Johnson (third from right), agriculture advisor with the provincial reconstruction team at Joint Base Balad, discuss new methods of agricultural production with local farmers at a hoop house — a greenhouse that helps regulate temperature and protect plants from dust storms, allowing farmers to grow crops year-round — during a USDA visit June 9 in Balad, Iraq.

USDA visits Balad for agricultural conference

Story and Photo by
Cpl. Rich Barkemeyer
Expeditionary Times Staff

BALAD, Iraq— Members of the U.S. Department of Agriculture met with local farmers and businessmen to discuss new methods and technologies that can help improve Iraq's agricultural system June 9 in Balad, Iraq.

"We've brought the first agricultural trade mission in many, many years to this country," said Dan Berman, head of fragile market economies for the USDA. "Eighteen American companies have come a long way to find Iraqi business partners and try to support the private sector in Iraq."

The USDA has been working with provincial reconstruction teams in Iraq to help increase agricultural production and help Iraqi farmers compete in markets with farmers from neighboring countries, Berman said.

The USDA members also made the trip to Iraq to see firsthand what was happening in the country.

"I came here to see what the needs are, and what we can do," said Gary Groves, assistant deputy administrator for the office of capacity building and development for the USDA. "When you're back in Washington, you have a hard time seeing what agencies are working, and what the needs are. If you don't come out and get a feel for what's really on the ground, and what the people are doing, it's very difficult to know what direction you should be taking in the programs."

The conference was the second to focus on agriculture in Iraq, and the first since 2007, said Franklin Johnson, agriculture advisor for the PRT.

"The first conference, back in 2007, was a lot smaller; about 20 people," Johnson said. "We were still trying to engage with the populace then, and figure out who we could work with. Today we maxed at a little over a hundred people. Everybody wanted to meet the Americans and hear what they had to say."

The local farmers who attended the conference were given the chance to ask Berman and Groves questions, and while some were unhappy, the meeting was positive overall, Johnson said.

"It was constructive, but you can see the farmers are upset — going from a command economy that was heavily subsidized by the government, to a capitalist economy where farmers have to compete, and purchase their own fertilizers and seeds," he said. "There's still some angry sentiment there, but they're pushing through these problems, and in the end they will be successful."

Berman said local farmers are becoming increasingly able to vocalize their needs regarding the state of Iraqi agriculture.

"It would be hard to imagine something like this happening just a few years ago," he said. "People are feeling more confident. They're asking their leadership for things that they need. I think it's important that we're not seen as the entity that's going to solve all their problems. The real solutions are going to have to come from the Iraqi people and government, but we're here to support them."

Following the conference, the

Agriculture cont. page 16

"The U.N. still has jobs it has to do and we are going to be here for them."

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Balad Blotter

PATROL RESPONSE/SEXUAL ASSAULT:
TIME/DATE/LOCATION: 0300/13 June 2010/Camp Syverson/JBB
COMPLAINANT: SFC/SARC
SUBJECT: Member assigned to the U.S. Army
VICTIM: Member assigned to the U.S. Army
SYNOPSIS: Complainant entered the Law Enforcement Desk (LED) and reported a sexual assault had occurred at the above time/date/location. Complainant further relater the victim was currently at the Air Force Theater Hospital Emergency Room being treated. Patrol notified SA/CID who related he would respond and take over the case. Preliminary investigation revealed victim alleged she had been sexually assaulted by subject.

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Choosing to live a life of joy is true freedom

CAPT. MARK JOHNSTON
13TH CSSB CHAPLAIN

I'm sure it has happened to you. Often when I travel home from Fort Benning, after work, I meet my wife at a restaurant for a late supper and, from time to time people see me in uniform and thank me for my service.

I am always touched and thankful when someone says, "thank you." Many times the person thanking me is a Veteran and he or she tells me "thank you for doing your part to keep us free."

That statement always makes me think. What does it mean to be free? A lot of people would give very different answers to that question. Some would say that freedom means being able to do whatever you want to do. I think that any number of drug addicts, alcoholics or people living with a man or woman they previously could not do without, but can't stand now, might disagree with that answer.

Many people spend much of the earlier years of their lives in rebellion against any authority in order to be free, only to find themselves enslaved to a bad habit, in jail or with a child they are raising alone. Many Soldiers spend their lives trying to gain some kind of authority over others in the mistaken belief that would then be free themselves.

I don't think the answer to true freedom lies in either doing whatever you please or in having the authority to make others do what you want them to do. True freedom lies not outside of us, but inside.

The author Victor Frankl spent many years in concentration camps in Nazi Germany both before and during World War II. In his book, "Man's Search for Meaning" he states: "We who lived in concentration camps can remember the (persons) who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number, but they offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken away from a person but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's way. The way in which a person accepts his or her fate and all the suffering it entails, the way in which he takes up his cross, gives ample opportunity—even in the most difficult circumstances—to add a deeper meaning to life."

Being deployed can be a very challenging experience. We are away from our Families and friends. We are away from many of the things that gave us comfort, joy, love and companionship. It is easy to spend a whole deployment saying "well, if I was just…"

"Just at home, just had a higher rank, just able to work in my military occupational specialty, just had the same job as the chaplain, if my children or spouse or those in charge of me would just do things my way, etc."

To choose to live in joy despite the circumstances in which you find yourself is true freedom. We choose our attitudes. They don't choose us. We cannot control a lot of things in life. The only person you really have control over is yourself. You can choose to live in misery or you can choose to find joy in your circumstances. It is really up to you. I will close with the words from the band Audioslave's song Exploder.Here are the words:

I met a man locked away
For things he hadn't done
Innocence on a ball and chain
He'll never feel the sun
Again on his face or roses
In his hands but when he smiled
At me I could understand
(chorus)
If you're free you'll never see the walls
If you're head is clear you'll never freefall
If you're right you'll never fear the wrong
If you're head is high you'll never fear at all

The motivational speaker Zig Ziglar says: "People often say that motivation doesn't last. Well, neither does bathing, that's why we recommend it daily."

Every day is a new day. Decide today that you are going to make a difference and you will. You just might surprise yourself. The key to true freedom is not in your circumstances but in your head and heart. Want to be free? Take charge of your own attitudes. Got it? Too easy.

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY

**TO MY HUSBAND SFC FERNANDO FLORES, HHC, 13TH ESC.
WE LOVE YOU, MISS YOU AND CAN NOT WAIT TO HAVE YOU HOME!**

**HUGS AND KISSES.
- AMPARO FLORES**

EXPEDITIONARY TIMES

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

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Mission Statement: *The Expeditionary Times Staff publishes a weekly newspaper with the primary mission of providing command information to all service members, partners, and Families of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) team and a secondary mission of providing a means for units on Joint Base Balad to disseminate command information to their audiences.*

The Weekly Standard: Evaluations and the Redress Program

SGT. 1ST CLASS SAM K. JOHNSON
13TH ESC INSPECTOR GENERAL

Inspectors general often receive complaints regarding evaluations. During the preliminary analysis of every complaint, the IG must determine if the matter is appropriate for action. Normally, complaints concerning evaluations are not appropriate for the IG to address. The governing regulation, Inspector General Activities, or Army Regulation 20-1, paragraph 8-3b (3) states: "Inspectors General will not normally investigate or conduct investigative inquiries into allegations when the Army has an established means of redress."

Soldiers must use the prescribed redress method before the IG can help. Once that occurs, the IG is limited to reviewing the redress process to ensure that the Soldier was afforded due process.

AR 623-3, Evaluation Reporting System, paragraph 6-3, requires a commander to look into alleged errors, injustices, and illegalities of evaluation reports. The issues can be brought to a commander's attention by the rated individual or by anyone authorized access to the report.

The regulation provides regulatory guidance on two specific avenues of redress. The first is the commander's inquiry which is normally done before the evaluation is filed into a rated Soldier's official military personnel file. The second avenue of redress is the evaluation appeal, which is done after the evaluation is filed, and is more difficult and time consuming.

Once the evaluation is filed in the OMPF it is considered to be administratively correct, prepared by the proper rating officials and an objective judgment of the rated individual by the rating chain.

Take interest in your evaluation. That includes the initial and follow-up counselings to ensure you and your rater knows what is expected. If you perform up to and exceed expectations, the evaluation will take care of itself.

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Preparing for redeployment, strengthening Family ties

CPT MICHAEL KNIGHT
1908TH MEDICAL DETACHMENT

We like to think that redeploying from a warzone is a stress-free time. Soldiers have calendars dedicated for the sole purpose of tracking how many days they have left in country. Ask any Soldier with a few weeks remaining and they can probably tell you exactly how many days they have left with the popular "and a wake-up" at the end. So with all of this excitement to leave Iraq and return to Family and friends, one would think that stress would be the furthest thing from anyone's mind. However, past experiences and statistics show us that the months before and after redeployment can be as mentally taxing as the actual deployment itself.

During the course of the deployment, many changes occur, both for the deployed Soldier and loved ones at home. For the Soldier, these changes could include becoming closer with battle buddies, finding new hobbies or being changed by the positive and negatives effects of mission requirements.

For the Family that stays behind, changes could be that the spouse becomes more independent, takes on a more active parenting role and that children adjust to the Soldier being away. As the date approaches when the Soldier and Family reunite, it is very common that there is some apprehension on both sides as to how to best handle the situation. With a little preparation and advanced planning however, the negative impacts of redeploying can be minimized and the Family ties can be strengthened.

The best advice to give any Soldier close to redeployment is to begin communicating with their spouse in the months and weeks prior to the actual date. Talk about changes that have occurred on both sides of the water so there are no surprises. Communication is the key to any difficult situation and this is no different.

The next advice is to anticipate some moments where things don't go exactly how you have envisioned them; complicated scenarios rarely do. We would all like to go home and pick up where we left off without missing a beat, but the fact of the matter is there will be some obstacles to overcome along the way. Having them on your radar ahead of time will help to lessen the disappointment when those life events happen.

Next, when it comes to children, don't be surprised if they have changed as well. Generally, younger children will be apprehensive and take longer to warm up to the return than older children. Be patient and take things at their pace. Finally, if you return home and things are not going as planned or problems arise, don't be afraid to seek out help. There are many resources available to deal with these issues. Ask your chain of command or chaplain for more information.

The 1908th Combat Stress Control Detachment is available to instruct classes for units concerning redeployment issues. Call the Patriot Clinic at 318-433-2402 to schedule a class or for more information.

13th ESC recognizes outstanding Soldiers

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
CPL. RICH BARKEMEYER
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq— The 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) honored the contributions of its Soldiers while deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom at an awards ceremony June 14 in the East Circuit Gym at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

"I couldn't be more pleased with this group," said Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz, commanding general of the 13th ESC and a Mansfield, Ohio, native. "Every section pulled its weight, and then some. We did some amazing things."

The actual awards that were presented were not as important as recognizing the hard work Soldiers with the command performed during their deployment, said Sgt. Maj. Gene Canada, senior enlisted advisor to the assistant chief of staff for logistics with the 13th ESC and an Austin, Texas, native.

"It's not about personal recognition, but of the ESC as a whole, including all the (subordinate) units," he said. "The 13th really did a great job supporting the Iraqi theater."

The 13th ESC assumed command and control of logistics operations in Iraq on Aug. 7, 2009. The awards ceremony marks the final stretch of their deployment, as the unit is scheduled to redeploy to Fort Hood, Texas next month.

"We understand the sacrifices that all the Soldiers of the 13th ESC have made during this rotation," Canada said. "We've accomplished some great things in helping the Iraqi nation rebuild."

During the course of the 13th ESC's deployment, the unit managed the retrograde of more than $1.4 billion worth of supplies and equipment out of the Iraq theater, said Warrant Officer Michael Atkins, a mobile redistribution team leader with the 13th ESC and a Wooster, Ohio, native.

"Really look inside yourself, and remember why we serve, and why we do the things we do," Wentz said. "No matter how small you think your part was, you made a difference here. My hat's off to each and every one of you. Thanks so much for what you've done."

Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz, commanding general of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Mansfield, Ohio, native, addresses Soldiers with the 13th ESC during an awards ceremony June 14 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq

A Soldier with A battery, Regimental Fires Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) walks the tarmac of the Mosul Airfield June 9 at Contingency Operating Base Diamondback, Iraq.

RFS concludes convoy security mission

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. CHAD MENEGAY
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE DIAMONDBACK, Iraq— The convoy security mission for Regimental Fires Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) is winding down in Mosul, Iraq.

The RFS safely ran supply convoys on some of the more dangerous routes in Iraq. Soldiers received small arms fire on many occasions and had multiple encounters with roadside bombs. Many of the Soldiers will return home with Combat Action Badges.

"They came here to do a job, and they've done it well," said 1st Lt. Orlando Canales, 3rd platoon leader for G Battery, RFS, 278th ACR. "We're (3rd platoon) leaving here, thank God, with no casualties."

Members of 2nd platoon, G Battery, RFS recently survived a improvised explosive device detonation on a mission traveling from Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq to COB Marez, Iraq.

"It was a big flash of light, and then everything went dark all of a sudden," said Spc. Terry Harris, a Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle driver with RFS, and a Lynchburg, Tenn., native.

Harris said the blast blew out the two passenger-side tires.

"Everyone was responding except for my gunner, because he couldn't hear," Harris said. "He had a perforated eardrum in his right ear. It turns out he was okay, no open flesh wounds."

Harris, who now temporarily wears a neck brace, said his unit immediately pulled 360-degree security while medics checked and recovered the injured.

"I feel more honorable to myself than I ever could imagine," he said. "I've earned my freedom, and I'm doing it for the people of my country."

Harris said his commanding officer taught him to keep his head on a swivel, which he cannot do right now with his neck brace.

He has been doing administrative work out of the headquarters since the roadside bomb encounter.

"I would love to get back behind the wheel and back out on the road," Harris said. "This office work is just killing a field Soldier."

RFS Soldiers have been hit by roadside bombs, but they have also sighted some before they detonated, and thereby likely prevented tragedies.

Spc. Daniel Stringer, an MRAP gunner with 3rd platoon, G Company, RFS, and a Carrolton, Ga., native, spotted a roadside bomb May 8 while traveling on Main Supply Route Tampa to COB Speicher.

"It's a pretty nasty road; it's dangerous," he said.

He spotted a bush approximately 5-6 feet away from the road.

"It was growing the wrong way," Stringer said.

He said he gave the command to stop the convoy and confirmed it was a roadside bomb.

"I was doing my '5s and 25s' and found another one about 15 feet closer to us on the other side of the road," Stringer said.

He said that guys in his convoy were happy and proud of him.

"They said, 'hey, thanks for saving our lives'," Stringer said. "I'm the proudest person in the 278th, I believe."

RFS Soldiers also credit their MRAPs and advanced equipment for saving lives.

"These MRAPs are some tough machines," Canales said, "and actually doing a damn good job of protecting the Soldiers out there."

Canales believes the roadside bomb explosion that struck a vehicle early in his platoon's deployment forced the troops to "take the mission more seriously."

Canales said a 155-millimeter artillery round was hidden in the median; he was the convoy commander that evening.

"When I first received the call, I got chills," he said. "I asked 'can you repeat that last transmission,' and a real calm voice came over the radio and said 'we've been hit with an IED, we've been hit.' We rolled up on the site where the MRAP was down. We started to scan, started to establish 360-degree security, and while that was being done, we noticed there was another hot spot immediately to my three o'clock, maybe 10-20 meters, that was an immediate threat. So, we recovered the personnel in the downed vehicle and with all sensitive items accounted for, we then moved forward to provide security and waited for Explosive Ordnance Disposal."

There were no serious injuries.

> **"I asked 'can you repeat that last transmission,' and a real calm voice came over the radio and said 'we've been hit with an IED, we've been hit.' "**
>
> — 1st Lt. Orlando Canales

Canales said when he reflects on that night, he thinks of it as an eye opener.

"This group of guys came together," he said. "They mastered our (pre-combat checks) and (pre-combat inspections) with a very methodical approach."

Canales said his advice to Soldiers running convoys in Iraq is to not underestimate the enemy.

"The enemy has many faces," Canales said. "They have a lot of tricks out there. Once you start to think that you know the enemy, they change their TTPs."

Signal Co. enhances tower communication

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SPC. AMY L. BARBER
256TH INFANTRY BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM

CAMP VICTORY, Iraq— A Louisiana National Guard unit is making its mark in support of the upcoming responsible drawdown of U.S. troops and equipment from Iraq as they work to enhance tower communication around the perimeter of Victory Base Complex, Iraq.

As part of the Base Defense Operations Center, Soldiers with C Company, Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) have begun running a landline that will increase communication time and reduce the manpower needed to operate, update and maintain radios at towers on VBC.

Maj. Henry T. Capello, executive officer with the BSTB and a Baton Rouge, La., native, said there are many benefits to installing the landlines.

"The towers are equipped with TA-312s, better known as 'crank phones,' and (Single Channel Ground and Airborne Radio Systems)," he said. "The phones literally had to be wound to make a phone call, which can be time-consuming during an emergency. The problem with the radios was that they were sometimes affected by 'jammers' around entry control points."

Capello said the jammers are set up to scramble radio signals outside the installation so that enemies are unable to detonate explosive devices remotely, but have also been known to affect the radio signal on towers near the outer perimeter of VBC.

"With the landlines that we are installing, as soon as they pick up the phone, it will automatically call the BDOC's operations center, where they can take the appropriate action immediately," said 1st Lt. Obie E. Ward, officer-in-charge of the project, and a Pineville, La., native.

He continued by explaining that some of the towers are on the main routes in Baghdad, and that they needed a way to report incidents quickly.

With a mission of ensuring the security within the base, Capello said this was a priority for the BDOC.

"This is a project that has been discussed for several years now, but just hasn't been done yet," he said. "When we got here, we knew we had to do something, and found a way to do it. We gave our signal company the mission and they jumped on it."

"We are setting the installation up for our absence," Capello said. "We are making communication more practical for the Iraqis as we hand their country back to them."

Ward said though the project is a big one, the Lafayette, La., signal company's goal is to be done with their part of mission by July, and due to the hard work of the Soldiers in the company, they are ahead of schedule.

"We didn't think it would go as quickly as it has," Ward said. "It is hot and there is a lot of manual work involved, but these guys are on it."

Spc. Dusty J. Louviere, a cable systems installer with C Company, Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) **pulls cable alongside a perimeter wall June 1 at Victory Base Complex, Iraq. The company is improving communications systems in the towers as part of the**

"I am very proud of my Soldiers," said Capt. Harold D. Roberson Jr., commander of C Co. and a Baton Rouge, La., native. "They have a 'can do' attitude and really understand the significant impact we have on Iraq's future stability."

"As the drawdown gets closer, we are doing everything we can to ensure that the Iraqis are successful in maintaining their security force," he said.

The Brigade Special Troops Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. Stuart N. Burruss, a Carville, La., native, arrived at the Baghdad installation in March, and assumed the responsibility as the BDOC in April. The unit is expected to return home toward the end of the year.

Army wife shares officer's promotion through technology

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq— Soldiers with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) gathered at the command headquarters here June 1 to promote one of their own to lieutenant colonel and to promote Family involvement in Army activities as well.

At the ceremony promoting John G. Dean, chemical officer with the 13th ESC and an Issaquah, Wash., native, from major to lieutenant colonel, expected guests were present, including Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz, commanding general of the 13th ESC, but also in attendance, via video teleconference, was Dean's wife, Mary.

"I really wanted my wife to actually be the one to pin me to lieutenant colonel and share the entire experience with her," Dean said. "Since that was not possible, we had been talking about all sorts of options like photos and video."

After discussing various options with the 13th ESC communications section, Dean explored the possibility of using the VTC in the command conference room to link up with the conference room at the 13th ESC rear detachment headquarters in Fort Hood, Texas.

"The rear headquarters bent over backwards for me, even rescheduling regular meetings at Fort Hood to make the VTC conference room free for the time of the promotion," Dean said.

Dean said he credits Mary with helping him to achieve his most recent promotion and stresses the importance of the military Family in a service member's career.

"They are the unsung heroes," he said. "You hear Army senior leaders talk about the importance of the Family, and they are exactly right."

"A married couple shares the load of day-to-day life, but when you deploy, the spouse suddenly takes it all, while supporting the deployed Soldier at the same time," Dean said.

For Mary, a Bar Harbor, Maine, native, being able to share the milestone with her husband meant a great deal to her, she said.

"Words cannot express how wonderful it was to see my husband being promoted," Mary said. "I was so proud that it brought tears to my eyes to watch it."

Mary said having a deployed spouse brings on a mixture of feelings ranging from pride for her husband's service, to the difficulty of having her best friend gone for a year.

"Having to wear the mom hat and the dad hat, and all the other hats in between, by myself, is stressful," Mary said.

Mary said her advice for other military spouses is to "keep in touch with your spouse on a daily basis. Be strong for your spouse, no matter what you are going through, they need all the love and support you can give them."

U.S. Army photo by Cpl. Rich Barkemeyer

Newly promoted Lt. Col. John G. Dean, a chemical officer with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and an Issaquah, Wash., native, talks to his wife Mary, via a video teleconference June 1 at the 13th ESC command headquarters at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, after his promotion ceremony.

Dean acknowledged the importance of spousal support.

"I attribute my professional and personal success to her wisdom, support, encouragement and advice," he said. "She has been there to support me every day we have been together."

"We could not have the Army we have today without the spouses that support us," Dean said.

Keys to Strengthening Buy-in, Trust and Team Coordination in a Generationally-Culturally Diverse (Military) Workforce – Part I

I'm preparing for a major offsite event with the command teams of the 1st Cavalry Division and Fort Hood, Texas. I've been asked to explore new (for me) conceptual territory—generational diversity. More specifically, the Army wants me to provide some fresh ideas and exercises for "communicating with the younger Soldier."

To oversimplify matters: how can the predominant generations in authority—the "traditional" and "boomers"—connect with "Generation X'rs" and "Millennials." And in today's 24/7, always on world, rapidly cycling between constant upgrading and "doing more with less," creating communication and team coordination bridges among the military generations (and among all its culturally diverse components) is mission and morale critical.

As a Brigade Commander once sha red, "It's easy to get someone to follow orders; it's challenging to create real buy-in."

Here are "Top ten tools and strategies for strengthening buy-in, trust and team coordination among a generationally-culturally diverse workforce," military and otherwise:

1. Ask good questions and patiently listen to reduce status differences and foster respect. In organizations with large numbers and complex operations clearly there's a need for a chain of command and lines of authority. However, increasingly, in today's volunteer Army where many of the younger generation of Soldiers want, if not expect, to be seen and heard. Achieving "buy-in" requires some opportunity for genuine give and take among the differing ranks. One channel to help (all) Soldiers build upon the respect for the uniform is through open and meaningful "helmets off" exchanges with their leaders. Allowing Soldiers to genuinely dialogue with, share ideas, and even question, their respective officers or noncommissioned officers (as much as realistically feasible) allows the authority figure to become a head and heart, flesh and blood person. This is vital as, increasingly, the younger generation is loyal to an individual leader at least as much as to the institution.

While the younger generation often wants to be seen and heard as responsible, contributing adults, it's important to recognize the implications of their youth and levels of experience. As friend and colleague, Lawrence Phelps, commander 15th Sustainment Brigade out of Fort Hood, Texas, observed in response to my query: "Younger Soldiers are...well...young people. Regardless of their generation, X, Y, Z, or other, it's just fundamental to remember that they are, first and foremost, kids whose impressions of the world are flavored by their interaction with us, the older leadership. They are impressionable. What leaders do in moderation, young subordinates do in excess. You can't say one thing and do another with them. If you expect them to work hard and give it their all...you have to work hard and give it your all. The days of 'do as I say, not as I do' died long ago. They are astute members of the interconnected world community, but they are still kids. My No. 1 thought when dealing with a junior Soldier is that I owe them the same patience and explanations I owe my teenagers at home. And it all works out just fine when you do so!" (While his choice of the word "kids" may be provocative for some, the substance of the commander's generational interest, concern and respect is clear. And, of course, some Soldiers act like "kids" no matter what their age!)

So here's one powerful communication tool for facilitating a patient and palpable "give and take" connection: Ask a good question! There are two pillars to a "good question": a) humility—"I don't have all the answers," and b) interest and concern—"I really would like to better understand and learn from your perspective."

Engaging with people in this manner over time helps break down status differences that often impede open and honest sharing. (Of course, acknowledgement does not necessarily mean agreement. Most people don't expect you to immediately agree with their viewpoint. However, we all want to feel our perspective has been considered.) When a junior party feels a senior leader wants "to get real," to hear his or her ideas or points of view, it affirms the latter's sense of purpose, efficacy and self-esteem. Now the Soldier is truly part of the bigger team picture. Remember, when respect is defined as a real desire to understand another's lived (emotional) experience and world view (ARDictionary), it's clear that asking good questions paradoxically both takes down communication status barriers while building up the realms of relationship and respect.

In summary, along with leading by example, that is, the leader as role model, open and meaningful leader-Soldier exchange infused with patient listening and acknowledgement reinforces a sense of "R & R"—showing Respect and building Relationships. And it is this trust-building process that contributes to buy-in and, when required, a Soldier truly coordinating with and following one voice or one vision.

2. Group "shout outs." Each month, one brigade commander passes out index cards to his Soldiers, asking them to address and critique key operational issues. The inaugural "shout out" question: "What's one thing in the brigade you would change?" Collecting and studying the written and verbal data with his command team, in a timely fashion, he would publicize the changes made. The upshot is that Soldiers believe the commander not only "listens to me" but even acts on my concerns and suggestions. And remember, especially in a rapidly changing work world, oftentimes those in the trenches really have the most immediate and relevant problem-solving information and ideas. You often generate the most potent problem-solving possibilities when tradition and experience is field tested with an immediate, ground zero perspective.

3. Climate of communication without reprisal. The first two points help to create an open and safe communication climate or as one brigade commander called it: "the conditions for the free, uninhibited work, regardless of rank, that we needed…to see how the differing sections and commands worked together."

In addition to good questions and patient listening, consider these three keys for creating a safe communication climate:

a) When possible, view mistakes less as a sign of failure, incompetence or lack of commitment and more as a learning curve of experience; logically and psychologically engaging with errors provides an opportunity to expand one's knowledge and skill base and perhaps be less ego-driven or, at least, gain some humility. Knowingly laughing at our own flaws and foibles may not only reflect self-confidence but is often seen as being genuine, if not courageous, and strengthens the bridge between leaders and partners.

b) Leaders need to be role models and acknowledge mistakes quickly, or at least in a timely manner, and announce and follow through on corrective steps and uncover what would be an acceptable apology to the ignored, slighted or injured party, and;

c) When possible, discuss those issues which seemingly "can't be discussed." People will respect your courage and determination for tackling tough issues. This level of candor also helps build mutual trust as the relevant parties appreciate your belief in their ability to face and engage with the so-called "sacred cows" or "untouchables."

4. Leadership-Partnership tools. In small team meetings (approximately twelve people or less), consider these three steps for building that leadership-partnership connection:

a) Leader wears two hats: The leader is a participant-observer, first wearing a team member hat in addition to his or her authority hat. While some leaders are cautious, many are quite ready to encourage their supervisees to accept more individual and team responsibility with task and relationship issues. When it comes to running meetings, some folks prefer having the traditional leadership arrangement. Sometimes the challenge is convincing team members to accept a leader playing two roles, i.e., being a formal member and team peer,

b) Rotate peer facilitators: Soldiers facilitate the team meeting on a rotational basis, e.g., every two months there's a new peer facilitator. Peer facilitation enhances a sense of commitment and responsibility, and there's greater opportunity to practice leadership skills and discover natural leaders. Not having to run the show, there's now a venue for the formal leader to survey both verbal and nonverbal communication as well as to better read and work with group process dynamics, and

c) "Wavelength segment": build in a 10-15 minute "wavelength segment" at the end of regular team meetings for team coordination check-in, that is, to explore "how are we working as a team, what are the bumps, strengths, etc.?" You want to create a safe space for airing concerns, affirming accomplishments and, in general, for more intimate sharing as well as more open-ended and creative problem-solving.

5. Sometimes buy-in begins in the rear. Wise commanders realize that the "down home" state of Family members affects the concentration and focus of the Soldiers "down range." The connection between leaders and spouses and Family members also affects how Soldiers view their leadership: Does the leadership see the individual Soldier as part of a Family unit? Does the leadership really walk the talk when it promotes Soldiers and Family members as comprising one military team? The key to a vital down range-down home partnership and coordinated system that strengthens the resilience of Soldiers and Families is through effective communication and building working relationships. Consider these steps:

a) Provide a regular flow of usable information to Families in the rear detachment through a command newsletter or unit Web site and appropriate text messages. (Clearly, a Soldier and spouse also must negotiate what information needs to be shared between the two and what information is better left unsaid; sometimes too much information can cause needless uncertainty and worry), and

b) Leaders need to work with the Family Readiness Group, especially for Family events, getting important messages out to all spouses, and, in general, providing individual, Family and community support, etc. An effective FRG helps build that military and Family life system and helps spouses adapt to significant and stressful transitions. For example, in the fall of 2006, the Iraq War was in a particularly difficult and dangerous phase, and anxiety on the home front was high. Spurred by an officer's wife (Laurie, see below) and then in conjunction with the FRG, I was brought to Fort Hood to lead a rear detachment "Stress, Humor and Community Building" Predeployment Program. One hundred-fifty spouses showed up, along with the rear detachment commander and a handful of Soldiers. As a once skeptical commander acknowledged:

Mark,

Great presentation this week; we needed that. Laurie was so right in bringing you down. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Col. Larry Phelps

Commander, 1st Cavalry Division Rear

And notice that the Commander's tagline reflects the one army- Family life team and systems concept:

Every Day...Better

"Managing Everything in the Rear, so that 1CD Can Focus Forward."

Laurie's comment: "Once again, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. The Stress Doc presentation was everything I had hoped it would be."

Mark Gorkin, MSW, LICSW, "The Stress Doc" ™, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, is a one-of-a-kind "Motivational Humorist & Team Communication Catalyst." The "Doc" is an acclaimed keynote and kickoff speaker known for his interactive, inspiring and FUN speaking and workshop programs. The "Stress Doc" is also a team building and organizational development consultant for a variety of govt. agencies, corporations and non-profits. And he is AOL's "Online Psychohumorist" ™. Mark is an Adjunct Professor at Northern VA (NOVA) Community College and currently he is leading "Stress, Team Building and Humor" programs for the 1st Cavalry and 4th Infantry Divisions and Brigades, at Ft. Hood, Texas and Ft. Leonard Wood, MO. A former Stress and Conflict Consultant for the US Postal Service, the Stress Doc is the author of Practice Safe Stress and of The Four Faces of Anger. See his award-winning, USA Today Online "HotSite" -- www.stressdoc.com -- called a "workplace resource" by National Public Radio (NPR). For more info on the Doc's "Practice Safe Stress" programs or to receive his free e-newsletter, email stressdoc@aol.com or call 301-875-2567.

This issue of the Expeditionary Times contains a reader submitted article written by Mark Gorkin, also known as "The Stress Doc." Gorkin's views are not necessarily those of the Department of Defense and the inclusion of his submission is not meant in any way as an endorsement of his services.

Pre-WLC graduates retain skills to get ahead

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

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq— The Staff Sgt. William J. Beardsley Pre-Warrior Leader Course, sponsored by the 373rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), graduated 18 future Army leaders June 6 at Camp Liberty, Iraq.

"Not only are we giving them leadership skills to take back to their companies, but we are giving them some civilian education," said Sgt. Joshua Taylor, a Pre-WLC instructor with the 169th Seaport Operations Company, 373rd CSSB, 3rd Sust. Bde. and a Greenfield, Ohio, native.

Stress management and leadership styles are college courses offered by Central Texas College. They are taught by certified instructors during Pre-WLC, effectively giving the students two college credits.

Pfc. Manessa Landwater, a mortuary affairs specialist with the 111th Quartermaster Company, 373rd CSSB and a Hampshire, Ill., native, said she was excited about the possibility of adding college credits to her records and to help her along when promotion opportunities arise.

"The college credits will really help me out," she said. "I want to become a great leader and a great (noncommissioned officer)."

The eight-day Pre-WLC program at Camp Liberty is offered to all Soldiers throughout Iraq, and is designed to teach them everything they need to know to be successful at WLC, Taylor said.

"We have Soldiers come down from (U.S.) Central Command to go through this course," he said. "We will give something to them that they can take back and teach their peers."

The program was established by Command Sgt. Maj. Dwight Williams, command sergeant major of the 260th Combat Sust. Support Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Bde., and a Baltimore native, and was named after Staff Sgt. William J. Beardsley, a 25-year-old Coon Rapids, Minn., native, who died Feb. 26, 2007, in Diwaniyah, Iraq, of wounds suffered when a roadside bomb detonated near his vehicle.

When the 260th CSSB redeployed, the program was picked up by the 373rd CSSB. This is the 12th course the 373rd CSSB has conducted since taking over. In that time, more than 130 Soldiers have completed the course, said Command Sgt. Maj. Donald Montgomery, command sergeant major with the 373rd CSSB and a Houston native.

"We tend to get a good return from our students," Montgomery said. "From the 300-400 students who have gone through the course … 112 have made honor (graduate) and even more distinguished (graduate)."

Taylor said he encourages everyone to get involved. It is a great opportunity; one almost too good to pass up.

"They are going to be taught well, and after the eight days, when they come back, they may be able to answer some questions that many NCOs cannot," he said.

The hours are long but at the end of the day, it's all worth it, Taylor said.

"At the end of the week," he said, "We are able to give something back to these students that they are able to take back to their companies and use for the betterment of the Army."

"We have Soldiers come down from (U.S.) Central Command to go through this course. We will give something to them that they can take back and teach their peers."

— Sgt. Joshua Taylor

Spc. Jose Ochoa, driver for the battalion command sergeant major with the 716th Quartermaster Company, 373rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 3rd Sustainment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and Paterson, N.J., native makes sure his equipment is properly organized June 6 at the Staff Sgt. William J. Beardsley Pre-Warrior Leader Course at Camp Liberty, Iraq.

Medical logistics conference held at Balad

STORY BY
SPC. NAVEED ALI SHAH
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq— Soldiers with the 118th Multifunctional Medical Battalion, Task Force 1st Medical Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), a unit out of Fort Hood, Texas, hosted a medical logistics conference June 7-8 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Medical logistics will play a role in the upcoming strategic reposturing of forces and equipment, said Capt. Brian Osowiecki, the officer-in-charge of medical logistics with the 118th MMB and a Suffield, Conn., native.

"The conference is a chance to get everybody together in the medical logistics community to talk about (future operations in Iraq) and the medical logistics footprint in the next phase of the drawdown," said Osowiecki, who coordinated the conference. "The Army hasn't done something like this (drawdown) since Vietnam."

As the drawdown begins, medical logistics units will run into many of the same difficulties seen by other units.

"The tough thing right now is that we still have to supply world-class health care while getting this equipment out of theater," Osowiecki said. "We're really writing doctrine here because nothing like this has been done before."

Medical logistics units are working to assist in the reduction of surplus materials.

Since the 118th MMB took over medical logistics operations here, the unit has retrograded more than $1.5 million worth of excess equipment and supplies out of theater, said Staff Sgt. Kimberly Robinson, medical logistics noncommissioned officer-in-charge with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and an Oklahoma City native.

"Overall, the process has gone smoothly for the task we have," Osowiecki said. "Still, we're trying to simplify things."

Attendees of the conference were provided the opportunity to gain assistance with any issues they are facing at the moment, particularly those with recently arrived sustainment brigades, and medical logistics personnel, Robinson said.

"(The conference) provides a forum where (medical logistics) issues can be heard and a platform where those issues can be worked out," Robinson said. "Our decisions affect the medic, Warfighter and our customers on the ground on being able to provide the best health care service support to our Soldiers. It is important that we be an advocate for those medical supply issues affecting our units. This aids us in improving medical logistics business practices, which results in a more satisfied customer."

Petroleum company deploys as truckers

Spc. Jonathan D.S. Braden, a petroleum supply specialist with the 108th Quartermaster Company, 110th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 224th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Phenix City, Ala., native, pumps fuel into a KBR, Inc. semi-truck June 5 at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq.

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. KIMBERLY JOHNSON
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE ADDER, Iraq— One petroleum company in Iraq has not been performing their typical duties—until now, not pumping one drop of fuel.

The 108th Quartermaster Company, 110th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 224th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) instead is hauling equipment and supplies throughout theater.

"The mission is for a medium truck company," said 1st Lt. Monica Patton-Neal, executive officer with the 108th Quartermaster Co. and an Edgefield, S.C., native. "Our whole company is a petroleum supply company."

Recently, the unit's mission changed. Not only are Soldiers running convoy missions, they are now responsible for refueling all civilian and military trucks entering Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq.

"Now we are doing our transportation mission and also our (intended) mission of fuel here on (COB) Adder," Patton-Neal said. "Four months into the deployment, the fuel mission came up. The Soldiers basically 'right-faced' and started executing (the mission)."

Since the beginning of May, Soldiers with the 108th Quartermaster Co., have pumped an average of 13,000 to 15,000 gallons of fuel per day. They operate 24 hours daily and fuel every convoy and KBR, Inc. semi-truck that enters COB Adder, Patton-Neal said.

Normally, those numbers would not be a challenge for the fueling company. The unit's stateside mission is to pump that amount of fuel from a bag system capable of storing 20,000 to 50,000 gallons of fuel. However, at COB Adder, Soldiers are pumping their daily average out of tankers that hold only 5,000 gallons, said Capt. Heath Weaver, commander of the 108th Quartermaster Co. and a Benton, Ark., native.

"That's unheard of to pump 15,000 gallons a day without a bag," Patton-Neal said.

As the upcoming responsible drawdown begins, the movement of troops and equipment will present many trucks to refuel. The 108th Quartermaster Co. is at the end of the line for the mission; no one will replace them.

"We are involved in the drawdown in several ways," Weaver said. "One, we are hauling a lot of equipment south. We haul retrograde equipment, life sustainment supplies and even mail. There are many different prongs to the whole thing. Also, my unit is curtailing so I'm turning in property trying to get ahead of the game and be proactive in supporting the drawdown."

"It's really amazing, the work and effort they (the unit's Soldiers) are putting in for this mission," he said. "It's a tough mission, but we'll accomplish it. They realize what it takes, so they're very motivated."

'Bayou Bandits' accept new mission in Iraq

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. NATHANIEL ORPHEY
256TH INFANTRY BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM

AL ASAD AIR BASE, Iraq— Soldiers with 3rd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment, 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) will accept a new mission during their deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The "Bayou Bandits," headquartered in Lake Charles, La., were originally tasked with providing security to convoys transporting equipment and supplies to assist in the upcoming responsible drawdown of U.S. troops and equipment from Iraq.

In their new mission with the 3rd Sustainment Brigade out of Ft. Stewart, Ga., the battalion will continue to provide convoy security teams and will also provide quick reaction forces and security for contracted vehicle recovery teams. In addition, B Company has been tasked with providing support for special operations units located throughout Iraq.

"Our mission hasn't really changed," said Master Sgt. Orise Cormier, operations sergeant with 3rd Bn., 156th Inf. Regt. and a Jennings, La., native. "It's grown. The main change is that we are going to be running a more missions to more places than we were while at Al Asad (Air Base)."

The new mission requires the battalion to take charge of what was formerly a brigade-size mission.

"This will be a challenging new task for us," said Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Hickman, command sergeant major of 3rd Bn., 156th Inf. Regt. and a DeQuincy, La., native. "But our Soldiers have trained hard and are more than capable of accomplishing the mission that has been given to us."

Soldiers with A Company, 3rd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment, 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team,13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) mount lights on a Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle April 7 at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq.

To help support its new missions, the "Bandits" have been assigned an additional company from the 256th.

G Company, 199th Brigade Support Battalion, permanently attached to 1st Bn., 141st Field Artillery Regiment, will relocate to provide additional convoy security forces. The companies of 3rd Bn., 156th Inf. Regt. will be conducting their new missions from different bases across Iraq.

"Having units work out of multiple locations is not a new experience for us," said Lt. Col. David Gooch, commander of 3rd Bn., 156th Inf. Regt. and a Katy, Texas, native. "Our battalion is made up of units located at nine different cities across western Louisiana, and we have quite a bit of experience operating out of separate communities in support of state missions."

Firefighters first of their kind at COS Garry Owen

LEFT: Spc. Chase Snodgrass, a firefighter with the 60th Ordnance Company, 110th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 224th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Spencer, Ind., native, pulls a weighted fire hose during training June 11 on Contingency Operating Station Garry Owen, Iraq.

BELOW: Spc. Joseph Holliway, a firefighter with the 60th Ordnance Company, 110th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 224th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Kansas City, Mo., native, runs with a fire hose on his back during physical fitness training June 11 on Contingency Operating Station Garry Owen, Iraq.

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. KIMBERLY JOHNSON
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CONTINGENCY OPERATING STATION GARRY OWEN, Iraq—

U.S. Army firefighters stand ready to answer the call of duty to ensure the safety of fellow service members 24 hours per day at Contingency Operating Station Garry Owen, Iraq.

Since COS Garry Owen opened, there has been a need for a professional firefighting team, safety enforcement team and fire marshal training. The 60th Ordnance Company, 110th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 224th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) now fills those voids after having moved from Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq, earlier this year.

"The original mission started out as airfield protection and developed into a multi-faceted inspection program," said Staff Sgt. Brandon Harris, fire chief with the 60th Ord. Co. and a Memphis, Tenn., native. "We provide structural protection, airfield protection and safety protection for COS Garry Owen and surrounding areas."

Because the Soldiers with the 60th Ord. Co. were the first firefighters on COS Garry Owen, they had to start from the ground up. They used more than 3,000 square feet of lumber and several hours of manpower to build their firehouse, which includes living quarters, overhead cover for the fire trucks and a gym.

When the men are not fighting fires, they are enhancing their skills with the Army Correspondence Course Program, physical fitness training and conducting different emergency response scenarios such as fire rescue in complete blindness—turning off all the lights inside the firehouse, masking trainees' eyes and sending them into the building, simulating low visibility in smoky conditions.

When the firefighters conduct fitness training, they wear full fire-protection gear, which adds about sixty pounds, Harris said.

"Upon establishing (COS) Garry Owen, they (the firefighters) had a couple of fires here," Harris said. "They were able to mitigate the fires, but they quickly realized the need for trained professionals to do the job."

Because firefighters at COS Garry Owen are on call 24 hours per day, they use their firehouse as a training ground, so if an emergency call comes in, they are ready to take action at a moment's notice.

"Our (training and preparation) is going to be more on the fire-side, in making sure all our equipment is good to go so when we get on the scene, everything is in top shape to complete our mission," said Spc. Christopher Henderson, a firefighter with the 60th Ord. Co.

Not only are the firefighters at COS Garry Owen there to fight fires, they are called upon to help prevent fires as well. A fire-safety program to inspect the living areas was established by the fire crew. In addition to the safety program, they headed a fire marshal training program in order to train unit representatives how to prevent fires at COS Garry Owen.

"Fortunately for us, we've established a fire-prevention program to help mitigate some of the problems, because no fire is a good fire," Harris said. "With the different voltage and different currents we run here on COS Garry Owen, anything can cause a spark. Clothing around the outlets can cause a spark. One spark on a piece of dry clothing, with the heat, can set a tent up in a matter of seconds."

The fire crew conducts safety inspections prior to the tenants moving into the buildings or tents and gives another inspection a week later. They also do monthly inspections and record their findings of violations. When a violation is found, the safety inspectors give a two-week grace period to fix the problem, Harris said.

Harris said because of the inspections, Soldiers have begun to adapt to safer methods of organizing their living areas.

With fire-prevention and safety programs in place, the firefighters can focus on their main mission of fighting fires when they arise. It takes everyone to do their part for safety, Harris said.

The rewards can be few and far between or they can be plentiful. No one says "hey great job because there was no fire," Henderson said.

"We are the (unsung) heroes," Harris said. "A lot of time we train around the station. People think we just sit around the station waiting for a fire. They do not realize the importance of firefighting until there's a need for it. After there's a need for firefighting, we get a pat on the back and then go back to being the (unsung) heroes."

Soldiers and civilians run and walk June 6 in the first Impact A Hero Shadow Run/Walk 5K in theater at Camp Liberty, Iraq.

Impact a Hero supporters run for wounded Veterans

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

VICTORY BASE COMPLEX, Iraq— "Imagine waking up every day without one or more of your limbs, with severe burns or even being paralyzed. For hundreds of Global War on Terrorism wounded Veterans, these new physical realities will be with them for the rest of their lives."

These words are from the Web site of Impact A Hero, a non-partisan organization providing emotional and financial support to Veterans wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The town of Sugar Land, Texas, has hosted a 5-kilometer run/walk/wheel the past six years to raise money and awareness for Impact A Hero. People from across the country participate in the event, including some of the wounded Veterans they are trying to help, said Lt. Col. Giulia Giacoppe, commander of the 373rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Sugar Land, Texas native.

"It helps build awareness for our wounded Soldiers coming home who don't always get the support that they need," said Giacoppe, who has participated in the event for the last three years. "It helps them get back into the community, puts needed finances in their hands and also provides emotional support and mentorship for them to get back on their feet."

A shadow run at Camp Liberty, Iraq attracted a great turnout, almost 1,000 people, and more than what was anticipated, she said.

"When most people think of a hero, they think of a Soldier, and that's a good thing," said Spc. Joshua Tankersley, a chaplain's assistant with the 373rd CSSB and a Paradise, Texas, native. "But most people don't realize the ultimate sacrifice that many of these Soldiers make every day. We hope that this shadow run will raise money and awareness for these Soldiers. It's because of their sacrifices that we have the freedoms that we have today."

Soldiers and civilians participating in the shadow run at Camp Liberty were encouraged to go online and make donations to the Impact A Hero fund.

According to the organization's Web site, last year's 5-km run/walk/wheel in Sugar Land raised $165,000. This year it raised more than $200,000.

U.S. Army photo by Sgt. David A. Scott

Wounded Veterans engage JBB community

Chief Master Sgt. Paul D. Burgess (second from left), senior enlisted advisor to the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing and a Valdosta, Ga., native, talks with retired Sgt. Justin A. Pullin, at the conclusion of a town hall meeting during Operation Proper Exit June 12 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Operation Proper Exit gives service members the opportunity to return to the place where they were wounded to gain closure.

Full story on next page ▶

ABOVE: Retired Staff Sgt. Earl Majetich (center), surrounded by retired Staff Sgt. Earl Granville (left), and retired Sgt. Justin A. Pullin (right), shares his story of recovery with a joint military audience June 12 in the gymnasium of the recreation center on Joint Base Balad, Iraq during a town hall session in Operation Proper Exit VII. The program is for healing Service members who are in the process of moving on or who have already moved on with their lives after major, combat-related trauma.

RIGHT: Retired Cpl. Joseph C. Mixson, is assisted by an aircrew member June 12 in at the helipad of the Air Force Theater Hospital on Joint Base Balad, Iraq during Operation Proper Exit VII, which gives wounded Service members the opportunity to fly back to their former theater of operation where they sustained their injuries.

Wounded warriors step back to move forward

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

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq— The path to closure for those who have suffered physical or mental trauma in combat sometimes involves having the survivor return to the place where the wounds were received.

Operation Proper Exit VII brought 11 wounded U.S. service members back to Iraq June 12 to meet with medical personnel at Joint Base Balad, and speak to the military community here.

The 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing hosted the event. As the 13th ESC is scheduled to redeploy next month, this was likely their last opportunity to honor wounded Veterans participating in the program.

Operation Proper Exit was started by Richard Kell, executive director of the Troops First Foundation and a Silver Springs, Md., native.

Kell said he decided to establish the program when he realized there was a need for wounded Soldiers to receive closure by returning to Iraq.

"I spent a lot of time at Walter Reed Army Medical Center (in Washington, D.C.) with the foundation we've started and in speaking with the Soldiers over the last several years, the conversations always included, 'I want to go back'", Kell said.

Recovering service members who participate are carefully screened by the Army to ensure they are ready for their return to Iraq and all of its associated memories.

Some service members who participate in Operation Proper Exit have suffered several injuries—lost limbs, blunt force trauma, penetrating trauma, second-and third-degree burns and traumatic brain injuries—which are almost always caused by roadside bombs. Other service members have suffered, and continue to suffer, from the less visible wounds of post-traumatic stress disorder, in addition to their physical injuries.

"I'm doing this because I wanted to be able to come back and visit the site where I passed away for about 10 minutes," said retired Staff Sgt. Christopher Bain, a Williamsport, Pa., native who was wounded in an ambush in April 2004. "I want to get some closure."

Bain said his return allowed him to see the many changes taking place in Iraq. He believes the changes are for the better and mean his service here had purpose and meaning.

"Everywhere in Iraq we've been, we have seen a lot of changes," he said. "All these changes are for the better. This means we are doing our job, and we didn't do this thing (Operation Iraqi Freedom) in vain."

Operation Proper Exit follows a planned routine at JBB. Wounded service members participating in the program return to the Air Force Theater Hospital, 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group, 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing via helicopter.

The participants are greeted with a ceremonial salute by hospital staff lined up at the entrance to the air evacuation staging room—normally a point of departure from Iraq for wounded warriors. The final part of the event involves a town hall-style meeting.

After the initial greeting, Operation Proper Exit participants are taken on a tour of the hospital operating room, followed by radiology and the intensive care unit—the reverse order of how each wounded service member left Iraq.

During the introductory greeting by Col. Mark Koeniger, commander of the AFTH, 332nd EMG, 332nd AEW, all 11 service members were given the opportunity to tell the story of their traumatic event and talk about the emergency medical care they received at the hospital.

Koeniger then handed out CDs to four of the 11 participants, containing the X-rays taken in the hospital on the day they were wounded.

Koeniger said he is impressed with the program and is impressed by the resiliency of the wounded service members participating.

"I've been to all of them (OPE events at JBB) and I think Operation Proper Exit is phenomenal," he said. "The warriors who come through here, you see them open up and as the tour goes on, they open up more."

Koeniger said he is convinced Operation Proper Exit is also a healing moment for the medical staff of the hospital.

"A majority of the medical staff here has not deployed before," he said. "But for the ones who have, especially in the 2005 and 2006 period, they have seen some stuff and experienced a lot of wounded—a lot of blood, back then. For them to actually see these injured warriors here walking and talking, means a lot."

After a tour of the AFTH, the Operation Proper Exit participants boarded buses for the town hall meeting, attended by about 200 service members stationed at Joint Base Balad. During this open forum-style engagement, the wounded service members told their stories once again.

Command Sgt. Maj. Mark D. Joseph, command sergeant major of the 13th ESC and a Lake Charles, La., native, said he has been able to attend all but one Operation Proper Exit event.

The testimony of the wounded warriors often helps to put life at JBB in perspective, he said.

"For us here at JBB, it gives us the opportunity to see them come back, the humor they have coming back and their stories, telling us about the things they went through to recover to get back to this point," Joseph said. "When I look back, some of our days are not as bad as theirs. We don't have a bad day compared to some of them."

Retired Staff Sgt. Kenneth Butler, a Braintree, Mass., native who previously participated in the program, but served as a guide on this trip, said to return this second time around was easier than the first.

"I was (a participant) on the first Operation Proper Exit and I was asked to come back as a peer mentor for this group," he said.

Butler said one sign of moving on is that he didn't feel as stressed on this visit as he did during his first return to JBB.

"The first time it was very difficult, but this time I'm playing a different role so it's rewarding to be able to come here and watch a fresh group of guys experience what I experienced the first time around," he said.

Butler said he has moved on from the event that initially brought him to the AFTH, and is trying to create a new career in education.

"I retired a month after my trip and now I'm a freshman at Norwich University in Vermont," he said. "I'd like to be a high school teacher some day."

At the end of the town hall meeting, the Operation Proper Exit attendees returned to the flight line of the AFTH for one final picture before setting off via UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters to their next stop. The 11 wounded warriors grouped themselves together underneath a canopy on Hero's Highway, the area of the flight line where they were once carried wounded off medevac airacraft. On June 12, they walked.

Butler said Operation Proper Exit is not the end, but rather the end of the beginning of the healing process for wounded warriors.

"This is proof if you get injured and you get medically evacuated back to the states, you are going to get taken care of and it is not the final chapter," he said. "You are going to move on."

United Nat

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SGT. MICHAEL CARDEN
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

BAGHDAD— United Nations officials have been tasked with facilitating the transition of responsibility from U.S. to Iraqi forces. As U.N. inspectors travel across Iraq, U.S. Army Soldiers provide personal security for them and their envoys so they can safely effect the upcoming responsible drawdown of troops and equipment.

For U.N. inspectors operating out of the International Zone in Baghdad, also known as the Green Zone, that security is provided by Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, Regimental Troop Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

The cavalry Soldiers with HHT provide security and transportation for U.N. personnel as they travel to various points around the city. Once on the ground, the dismounted troops work as a personal security detachment, said Staff Sgt. William Little, a squad leader with HHT and an Ashland City, Tenn., native.

Though the inspectors have their own PSD, the Soldiers provide an outer perimeter to ensure the safety of all involved. In the event of an attack, the Soldiers' job would be to defend against the enemy and get all personnel in their vehicles and out of the area, Little said.

Soldiers assigned to the security detail are responsible not only for the safety of the U.N. personnel in their care, but for each other. At the same time, they try to keep from disrupting civilians as much as possible.

"Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Devices, suicide bombers, snipers, people doing surveillance on us; everything and everybody is a potential threat, and every car is a potential VBIED," said Staff Sgt. Charles Smith, a section sergeant with HHT and a Woodbury, Tenn., native. "You never know who has hidden agendas. You want to stay in an offensive mindset, but you still want to treat them (locals) with respect and let them know you are there to help them. It's a fine line to walk."

Though U.N. escort is HHT's sole mission, changes in venue keep Soldiers from getting complacent.

"We've been to several different ministries," Little said. "We've been to several different appellate courts, a couple of different embassies, refugee camps, a couple different U.N. warehouses."

Soldiers from HHT also escorted U.N. officials during the ballot recount for the recent parliamentary elections, as well as providing a security detail for the special representative to the secretary general, the senior ranking U.N. official in Iraq. They also provide a quick reaction force for the U.S. Embassy Baghdad.

The 278th ACR Soldiers work side-by-side with the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police to complete their missions. Careful coordination with Iraqi security forces keeps everyone safe as well as helps the Iraqis take charge of their own country, Smith said.

"They want to learn from us," he said. "They want to take possession of their own country again. Money is not their sole goal. Some of them have lost loved ones, friends and family. A lot of them do this as an honor."

Though the operational tempo remains high, morale remains strong through the unit.

"We are just as strong as we were on day one, if not stronger," said Spc. Anthony Hargrave, a signals systems specialist with HHT and a Kingsport, Tenn., native. "We're just going to keep on pushing on. The U.N. still has jobs it has to do and we are going to be here for them."

"You who agenda stay i mindse want t with r them there t a fine

LEFT: Staff Sgt William Little, a squad leader with Headquarters & Headquarters Troop, Regimental Troop Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and an Ashland City, Tenn. native, clears the aisles of a United Nations warehouse in Baghdad during a U.N. inspection June 15.

RIGHT: Soldiers with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, Regimental Troop Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) move vehicles into position to provide security for United Nations personnel June 15 during a U.N. inspection mission in Baghdad.

tions calls in cavalry

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TOP RIGHT: Sgt. Diana McClure, a medic with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, Regimental Troop Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) provides security June 16 during an United Nations inspection of a refugee assistance center in Baghdad.

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ABOVE: Staff Sgt William Little (far left), a squad leader with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, Regimental Troop Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and an Ashland City, Tenn. native, briefs Soldiers prior to heading out on an United Nations escort mission June 15 in Baghdad.

RIGHT: Soldiers with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, Regimental Troop Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) work alongside Iraqi Army and Police to provide security to United Nations officials June 15 during a warehouse inspection in Baghdad. ▶

Pencil Giver

Soldiers Campaign to give school supplies to Iraqi children

PAGE 14

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Michael Snook

Soldiers hand out supplies donated by the 969th Movement control Team, 14th Transportation Battalion (Movement Control), 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) to excited Iraqi school children in Mosul, Iraq, during Operation Pencil Giver.

Operation Pencil Giver: Soldiers help Iraqis

STORY BY
SGT. 1ST CLASS STEVEN JOHNSON
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

MOSUL, Iraq— Soldiers with the 969th Transportation Detachment (Movement Control Team), 14th Transportation Battalion (Movement Control), 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), recently found the opportunity to conduct a movement of a different nature — providing school supplies for children near Mosul, Iraq.

Operation Pencil Giver was the brainchild of Capt. Christopher Pruitt, commander of the 969th Movement Control team and a Glendale, Mo., native, the unit's Family readiness group and Pruitt's sons, Jack and Sam. During a visit with Jack's school principal to discuss Pruitt's upcoming deployment, the discussion turned to the potential dangers of the mission; Jack overheard the conversation and decided he wanted to help, Pruitt said.

"This was his way of doing something to help keep his dad safe," Pruitt said.

The idea turned into a campaign involving Illinois' Kirkwood School District and various youth organizations. Supplies started arriving in early November 2009 and continued to arrive until February, he said.

The goal of collecting 50 boxes of supplies was exceeded, with a total of 126 boxes being donated as the community rallied in support of the unit and its mission.

Spc. Michael Snook, a Kansas City, Mo., native; Breanna Carder, a Wood River, Ill., native; and Miranda Mossberger, a St. Charles, Mo., native, all movement specialists with the 969th MCT, along with Soldiers from the 278th Armored Calvary Regiment, 13th ESC and local Iraqi police distributed the supplies to more than 100 children from two elementary schools.

Snook, said he helped coordinate the mission once the supplies arrived in Mosul. Normally, Snook processes ground transportation requests and tracks movements of private security convoys and cargo, reporting significant events to higher headquarters.

This was a unique opportunity to get out and experience the culture and meet some of the people that U.S. service members are here to help, Snook said.

"It was great just going out there and being able to see the people and doing something that benefits somebody and we actually have hands on and are involved," he said.

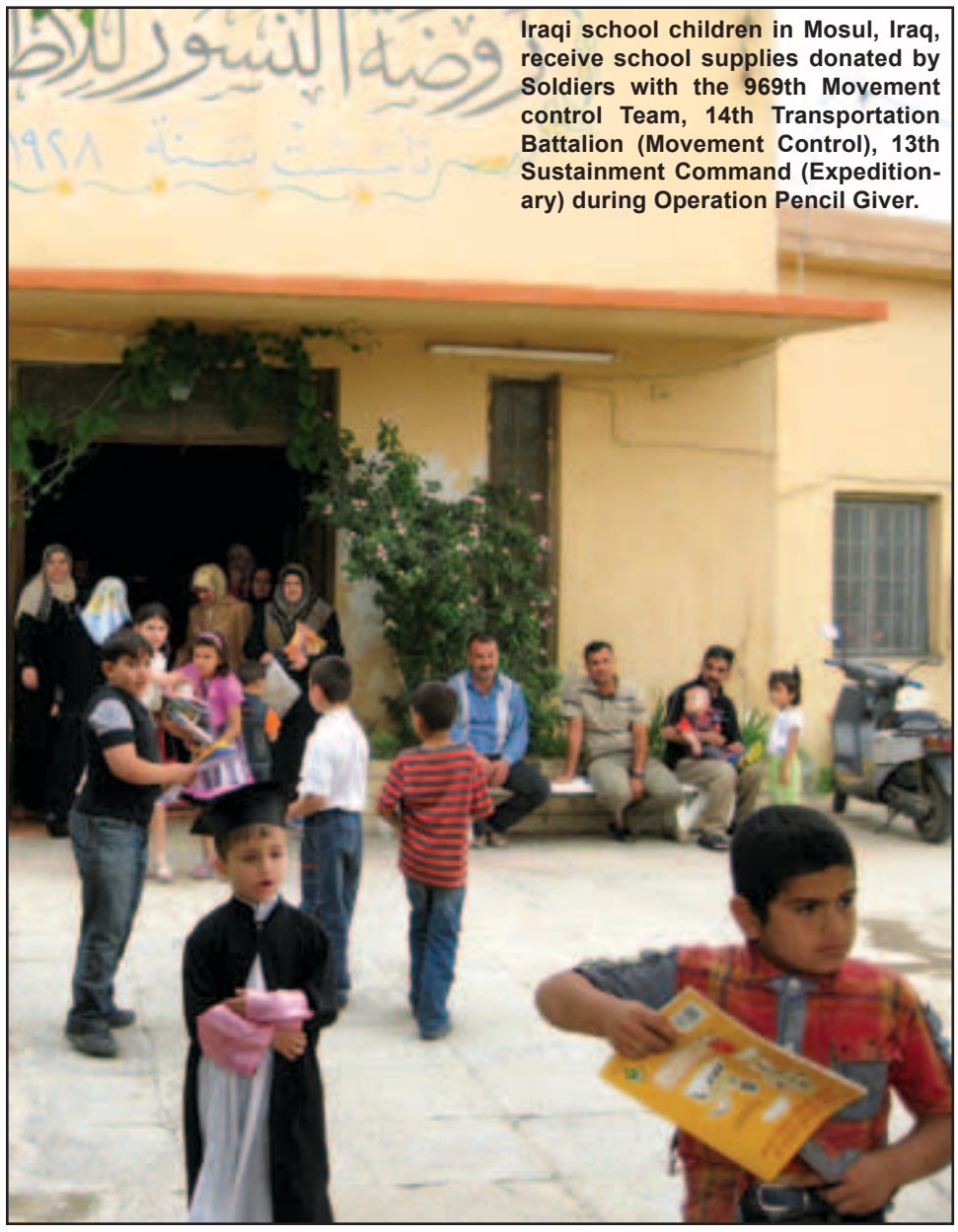
The mission itself was a humanitarian endeavor in nature as well as a joint operation between U.S. forces and the local police. As part of the upcoming responsible drawdown, Operation Pencil Giver was an effort to build confidence and trust between the police and community.

Lt. Col. Lee Porterfield, deputy commander of the Security Transition Team, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, and a Springfield, Mo., native, said he works closely with the Iraqi Police leadership to improve law enforcement functions such as investigative techniques, collection of physical evidence and processing crime scenes.

"Part of what we're doing today is helping to improve the public image of the local IP by helping them to get more involved in the community and assist in developing a more trusting relationship," he said. "Today was a step in the right direction."

Carder said this was a chance for her and Mossberger to see a different side of what goes on outside their world of tracking cargo shipments around Iraq.

"It felt really good to interact with the kids, just seeing their faces light up and knowing they were going to have stuff for the following school year," she said.



Iraqi school children in Mosul, Iraq, receive school supplies donated by Soldiers with the 969th Movement control Team, 14th Transportation Battalion (Movement Control), 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) during Operation Pencil Giver.

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Michael Snook

Mossberger said it was gratifying to be a part of the operation because, while she and Carder move equipment and vehicles all day, they never see the end result. This time they were able to see the impact of a contribution to the welfare and education of children.

Medic provides emergency care to child

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. MICHAEL CARDEN
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

Sgt. Diana McClure, a medic with Headquarters & Headquarters Troop, Regimental Troop Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Palmersville, Tenn., native, provides medical care to a child having a seizure June 16 during a United Nations mission in Baghdad.

BAGHDAD— Sgt. Diana McClure, a medic with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, Regimental Troop Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Palmersville, Tenn., native, provided emergency care to an Iraqi child suffering from a seizure June 16 at a returnee assistance center in Baghdad.

"My adrenalin levels just shot up as soon as I saw (him), especially with it being a child," she said. "I have two at home myself, and you just can't turn away from that."

After ensuring the child's airway was clear, McClure moved the boy to his side to help keep any fluid accumulations from blocking his throat. At one point, secretions built up to where she had to manually remove them, she said.

McClure directed other Soldiers to use cool water on the child's neck and face to bring the child's temperature down.

"He probably had a past experience of seizures, but there was a lot of excitement with us being there and everything going on," McClure said. "He was running around and getting extremely hot. I am sure that contributed to it."

McClure said she continued to monitor the child's vital signs while waiting for him to become lucid, making sure there wasn't any lack of oxygen, which could cause brain damage.

While McClure treated the child, other Soldiers continued to monitor the area with Iraqi Police to keep the scene safe.

"The IPs came over and started helping out," said Staff Sgt. Charles Smith, shift leader with HHT and a Woodbury, Tenn., native. "They were clearing out people, getting them away."

Even with attention on the medical emergency, the Soldiers kept to the mission of ensuring security to the U.N. inspectors.

"To see what we rehearsed, and what we have been trained on," Smith said. "To see that everyone reacted accordingly, it makes me feel good to know that when something does happen, that everyone is going to do the right thing."

After one of the local children brought the boy's father to the scene, Soldiers helped the boy to his feet and the child and his father walked away.

McClure said the father seemed confused by the crowd around his child at first, but after the interpreter explained what was going on he was relieved that the U.S. service members were helping.

PAT helps rest and recuperation process

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. CHAD MENEGAY
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq— A dozen Soldiers at Iraq's busiest flight hub have made rest and recuperation a priority. They spend much of their days sitting in front of a computer and talking on the phone. They track passengers with computer software and maintain communication over the phone with the Air Mobility Division in case, as it commonly happens, flight information changes.

When flights cancel, the personnel accountability team with the 18th Human Resources Company, 3rd Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) keeps service members on R&R orders updated and requests additional flights and space to get them from Joint Base Balad, Iraq to Ali Al Salem Air Base, Kuwait.

"We'll take the initiative and call AMD and give them an account of how many people are waiting," said Sgt. 1st Class William Macneil, noncommissioned officer-in-charge of the PAT, and a Fayetteville, N.C., native. "We'll request additional seats.

"Sometimes if there are flights available on a Sherpa, we'll coordinate to get them on that."

The PAT coordinates with a movement control team and four contracted companies to move an average of about 200 R&R service members daily.

Service members on R&R make up about 20 percent of the personnel flying to and from JBB.

Macneil said although the PAT keeps accountability of all military personnel (except for special operations forces), Department of Defense personnel and contractors arriving or departing the aerial port of debarkation, his team will go the extra step for service members on R&R.

"A lot of the R&R service members have plans," Macneil said. "They have an anniversary to go to, graduations. They have a cruise to go on with their Families. We don't want to see them frustrated or have to make any cancellations, so if we can get them down there, we'll make every attempt possible."

The PAT services six major locations in Iraq for service members going on R&R leave—,Mosul, Kirkuk, Tal Afar, Al Asad Air Base, and Contingency Operating Bases Speicher and Q-west.

"Most of the people who travel on R&R are not from Balad," Macneil said, "so we give them information on where to go for billeting, United Service Organizations, Internet, the local (post exchange), movie theater and the swimming pool."

The PAT directs service members to the Air Force's new All-American Square across the street from the JBB passenger terminal. It has billeting, a USO, a "grab n' go" eating lounge with flight information displayed on large television screens and a public address system from which flight information and roll call is announced.

"If the PAX terminal is crowded, there's a holding area across the street to accommodate (the overflow of passengers)," Macneil said.

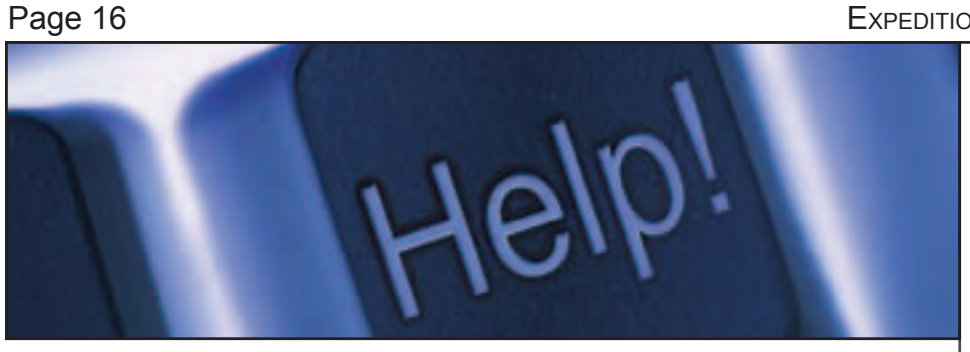
Spc. Michael Kitchens, an all-wheeled vehicle mechanic for the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Killeen, Texas, native, checks a roster June 8 at the Joint Base Balad, Iraq, to see who is on rest and recuperation orders at the passenger terminal.

The PAX terminal was crowded June 6-8 as a dust storm swept through JBB, causing flight cancellations and delays.

We kept passengers informed," said Spc. Gretchen Rofkar, a personnel accountability specialist for the PAT and a Port Clinton, Ohio, native.

Rofkar said the PAT contacted AMD and higher headquarters, reporting on how many personnel were waiting for flights in Balad.

It usually takes two days to catch up from the cancelations a sand storm can cause, Rofkar said.



Techno-babble:

what to look for when buying a computer

SGT. MICHAEL CARDEN
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

One of the biggest complaints about shopping for a new computer is wading through all the "technobabble" and "new" features to find the system that is right for the individual. No one size fits all and finding the perfect fit is necessary for a happy computing experience.

The first thing to decide is if you are looking for a laptop or a desktop system. Desktops are usually more powerful, easier to upgrade and less expensive. The downside is that they are confined to, well, your desktop. Laptops on the other hand offer portability at the cost of being traditionally slower and more expensive.

After you settle on what type of system, there are a couple of key features to look at. First is the processor speed—how fast the computer can "think." Processors normally cannot be upgraded after they are part of the machine, so getting a processor suitable for your needs is a priority. Modern processors usually come as either dual-core or quad-core. Think of how processors work as a traffic on a road—information traveling down lanes. For simple web surfing and basic applications, a dual-core processor is just fine, but the computer will run faster if the same amount of information is traveling down four lanes—a quad-core processor. If you plan to use the system for gaming or video and photo editing, I would advise that you consider a quad-core if it's not out of your price range.

Hard drives now come in two types, hard disk drives and solid state drives. HDDs are the standard for computing, coming in a variety of sizes. Internal HDDs now usually range from 160-500 gigabytes. Speed is also important. Drives that work at 5,200 revolutions per minute will read and write data much slower than drives working 7,200 rpm. SSDs are hard drives with no moving parts; think of them as giant memory cards, like the ones used in a digital camera. They are known for being extremely durable. However, the drawbacks to SSDs are they are very expensive and storage sizes are very limited in comparison to HHDs. With the large file sizes for high definition video and photos, making sure you have enough hard drive space is very important, particularly for laptops which can be very difficult to upgrade. External hard drives can mitigate the need for large internal storage space, but can also be problematic if a needed file is elsewhere on a separate drive.

Another type of memory you need to be aware of is random-access memory, commonly known as RAM. While hard drives handle the memory taken up by stored data and files on your computer—documents, photos, video, MP3s, etc.—RAM handles the programs that are actually running at a given time. Ever wonder why your computer (not the Internet) is running slow? Commonly, it is because your RAM is maxed out. The required amount of RAM for a program will usually be stated on the box it comes in or page it is downloaded from. You should look for at least 1GB of RAM and 2GB or more if you can afford it.

While most computers come with a DVD/CD drive, many of the newer netbooks do not come with any optical drives. Many computer companies now offer Blue-ray disc drives as an add-on you can purchase. For computers that don't come with drives, external DVD drives can be bought for relatively cheap. What kind of optical drive do you want? It depends on what you plan on using the computer for. If you're attracted to a netbook and plan on using it for mobile computing only, it's probably fine to go that route and use an external disc drive when you need it. If you want the same portability and would like to forego the mess and potential problems with peripherals (external hardware), think about a smaller laptop with a drive built in. Do you actually need a Blu-ray drive? If you plan to watch a lot of movies, you might want to consider it. But if you watch most of your movies on another platform, save yourself some money.

For those eyeing laptops, one last thing to consider is the size of the screen. Most traditional laptops come with 13-15- or 17-inch screens. Larger screens obviously mean easier viewing; however they also mean more cumbersome and more expensive systems. Bigger screens also usually mean a shorter battery life as it takes more power to light the larger display.

While there are a lot of different options to consider when buying a computer, it is worth the time and effort to search through the sea of choices and find the system that fits your needs best. Do your research, compare different systems, and don't feel rushed into making a snap decision. The right computer can provide entertainment and improve job performance for years to come. Knowing what you are looking for is important. Hopefully I've been of some assistance.

Word on the street

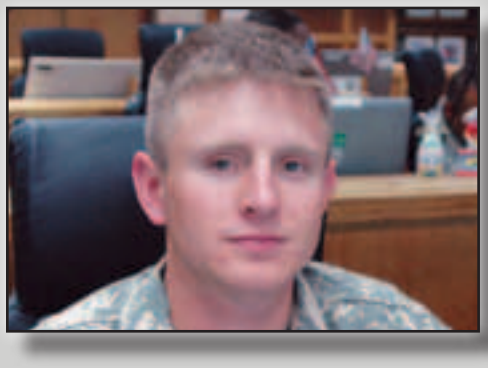
Who is going to win the World Cup tournament?

"Argentina looks really good. They've got a great coach, and they're fast and strong."

Master Sgt. Tony Vasquez, operations noncommissioned officer, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a native of Missoula, Mont.

"Slovenia will win. But they should really consider making the fields smaller and the goals bigger."

Sgt. 1st Class Mark Coovert battle noncommissioned officer, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Barboursville, W. Va., native.



"Brazil. They're a solid team with a lot of World Cup wins."

1st. Lt. Ben Pusztai, battle captain, 14th Transportation Battalion, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a native of Claremont, Calif..

Agriculture cont. from page 1

USDA team traveled to a local farm to tour a hoop house — a greenhouse with a plastic roof wrapped over flexible piping.

"The plastic greenhouse is a new technology in Iraq," Johnson said. "What it does is protect crops from Iraq's harsh environment. It protects from the sand storms, and direct sunlight, and it also extends the growing season. Now, they can grow vegetables year-round. Before the hoop houses, farmers couldn't do that, so they had only their market share during the summer months, and when the summer ended, they would lose that market share to the surrounding countries' product."

The introduction of hoop houses has changed the way farmers grow their crops, and will be a key to helping set up Iraq's agricultural economy for future success. Before, farmers relied on flood irrigation methods, which would excessively saturate the ground with water. Hoop houses feature a timed drip irrigation system, which protects the land while saving water, he said.

"The hoop houses also improve the quality of the products," Johnson said. "Before, produce was grown on the ground, with flood irrigation. So you're talking about a cucumber or tomato sitting on the ground in still water for a long period of time, degrading the quality of the product."

With hoop houses, farmers are able to use a string system that suspends vegetables off the ground, which also improves yield, Johnson said.

The representatives from the USDA are optimistic about the future of agriculture in Iraq, but know that there is still a lot of work to be done, Groves said. Helping stabilize the agricultural industry is one part of the process of building a stronger Iraq overall.

"As the (U.S.) troops withdraw, we still have to provide support, and let them know that we're still there to support them," Groves said. "I think Iraqis are going to have the means to get the support, so what they're really looking for is our expertise, whether it's technology or just education, and we can provide that."

Added Berman: "When you plant a tree, it takes a long time for that tree to mature, but it gives fruit for many years."

THEATER PERSPECTIVES

"We will disrupt and dismantle and ultimately defeat al-Qaeda and its terrorist affiliates, and we will support the aspirations of people around the world as they seek progress and opportunity and prosperity, because that is what we do as Americans."

President Obama to service members during a speech at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla., on U.S. efforts to defeat al-Qaeda

"The country is passing through a crucial stage which requires political blocs to show more flexibility and put the national interests of the country above their own partisan interests."

Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki on the formation of Iraq's new government

"As the situation in Iraq continues to improve, we will adapt our security accordingly … as the military begins its drawdown, we will still have many of those same security requirements as we maintain our civilian presence in Iraq."

Assistant Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy Philip Crowley on the department's internal security efforts through the upcoming responsible drawdown of U.S. forces from Iraq

"I see the new Iraq as a cornerstone of stability in the wider Gulf region. We would like to support Iraq as it develops its capacity to provide security and stability within its own borders and more widely. We will be partners with Iraq in promoting global prosperity."

U.K. Prime Minister David Cameron on U.K.-Iraqi relations

"Oil exports will start after the formation of the government. Everything is ready for us."

Iraqi Kurdistan President Massoud Barzani on the ability of Iraq to contribute as a legitimate oil exporting country

COSTS OF CONCEALMENT

A U.S. Government Accountability Office report issued May 28 cited uniform costs as having risen by $200 million since 2005. Many service members are calling for a wider issue of uniforms featuring the new Multicam® pattern being fielded to some service members deploying to Afghanistan. While the effectiveness of the new pattern is subjective, the objective data finds that the highly-touted new uniforms would add to already inflated budget requirements.

FITNESS CORNER

Exercise Ball Week

Double switch

Start by laying on your back with your legs six inches off the ground, with the exercise ball between your ankles and your arms extended overhead, slightly off the ground. Slowly raise your legs (keeping them straight) toward the center of your body, while simultaneously raising your arms toward the center of your body. Grab the exercise ball with your hands and slowly lower your arms and legs down until they are a couple inches off the ground. Raise your arms and legs back to center switching the ball back to your legs. This counts as one repetition. Keep switching the ball back and forth between your hands and feet. Perform three sets of 15 repetitions.

Advanced: Perform this exercise with a medicine ball instead of an exercise ball.

Plank roll in

Start with your body in a plank position, with your feet on the exercise ball. Keep your body in a straight line, with your abdominals tight, don't let your back sag down. Bend your knees into your chest, rolling the ball inward. Then extend your legs back out to a plank position. Perform three sets of 15 repetitions.

Advanced: When you bend your knees and roll the exercise ball into your chest, raise your hips in the air to form a pike position. Then lower back down and roll the ball outward.

One-legged wall squat

Stand near a wall with your back toward the wall. Place the exercise ball against the wall and between the lower, natural curve in your back. Lift your left leg up and extend it out in front of you, perpendicular to the floor. Slowly squat down, until your right knee is at a 90-degree angle from the floor and extend back up. Perform three sets of 20 repetitions then repeat on the opposite leg.

Advanced: When you leg is lowered in the squat position, hold for five seconds, then extend your leg back up.

Gain Control of Emotional Eating

Sometimes the strongest cravings for food happen when you're at your weakest point emotionally. Do you turn to food for comfort when you're facing a difficult problem, stressed or just bored? How about when you're happy? Is your first choice a greasy, meat-filled cheesy pizza or a fresh salad filled with colorful vegetables? Food does more than fill our stomachs, it also satisfies feelings. When you satisfy your feelings with food, you are eating to satisfy emotions.

Instead of the physical symptom of hunger initiating your eating, an emotion triggers your eating. But emotional eating can sabotage your weight-loss efforts. Emotional eating often leads to eating too much, especially too much of high-calorie, sweet and fatty foods.

Emotional eating is consuming large quantities of food—usually comfort or junk foods—in response to feelings instead of physical hunger. Most over-eating is caused by emotions and can result in overeating and in turn unwanted weight gain.

Many of us learn that food can bring comfort, at least in the short-term. As a result, we often turn to food to heal emotional problems. Eating becomes more of a habit preventing us from learning various skills that can effectively resolve our emotional distress.

By identifying what triggers our emotional eating, we can substitute more appropriate techniques to manage our emotional problems. Here are some suggestions to understand and regain control of your emotional eating:

- Keep a diary: Write everything down. Over time you will notice patterns emerge that reveal a connection between food and moods.
- Learn to recognize true hunger: A craving for a Baskin-Robbins ice cream milkshake immediately following your dinner is likely from emotional hunger, not physical hunger. Emotional hunger arises instantly and feels it must be satisfied immediately. Whereas physical hunger develops gradually and can wait to be satisfied.
- Manage stress in a healthy way: Stress is one of the main contributors to emotional eating. Learn different techniques that work for you, such as yoga and meditation.
- Get enough sleep: If you are constantly exhausted, you may choose food to keep your eyelids open. Instead, take a 15-30 minute nap to rejuvenate or try performing a couple exercises, such as push-ups or jumping jacks to elevate your heart rate.
- Give yourself time: Try waiting at least 30 minutes after your first signs of your perceived hunger appear. You are putting a buffer between you and the food. In that time, the temptation often disappears, saving you from a spontaneous binge you'll regret later.
- When you can't wait: When all hell breaks loose and you must have something, reach for a handful of almonds. They are rich in vitamin E, which is an antioxidant that bolsters your immune system. But remember, a quarter cup is all you need.

If you can identify the underlying emotional problems which are causing you to splurge, you can teach yourself to cope in more effective and healthier ways. These strategies won't work every time, but having a few barriers in place will minimize your frequency of overindulgence. As you learn to incorporate more appropriate coping strategies and to curb excessive eating, remember to reward yourself for a job well done. We tend to repeat behaviors that have been reinforced, so reward yourself when you meet your goals.

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

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

Level: Hard

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

Last week's answers

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

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. What team has won the World Cup most with five victories?
2. The overall top goal scorer in the Wolrd Cup is Brazilian Ronaldo with how many goals?
3. In 1998 Ricky Martin was chosen to sing this song as an anthem for the FIFA World Cup.
4. South Africa is the host of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. When was the first World Cup played?
5. On May 15, 2004, this South African political figure raised the World Cup Trophy in Zurich, Switzerland?

1. Brazil 2. 15 3. "The Cup of Life" 4. 1930 5. Nelson Mandela

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
Wedsnesday, Friday 5 p.m. Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)
Saturday 8 p.m. Freedom Chapel (West side)
Confessons: 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.*
AquaTraining: *Tue.,Thu., 7:30 p.m., 8:30 p.m.*

EAST FITNESS CENTER
Open Court 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 Jui-Jitsu: *Mon., Wed., Fri., 8-9 p.m.*
Abs-Aerobics: *Tue., Thu., 6-7 a.m., 5-6 p.m*
Edge Weapons & Stick Fighting Combative Training: *Tue., Thur., Sat., 8-10 p.m.*

EAST RECREATION CENTER
4-ball tourney: *Sunday 8 p.m*
8-ball tourney: *Monday 8 p.m*
Karaoke: Monday 8 p.m.
Swing Class: *Tuesday 8 p.m.*
Table Tennis: *Tuesday 8 p.m.*
Plastic Models Club: Wednesday 7 p.m.
9-ball tourney: *Wednesday 8 p.m.*
Dungeons & Dragons: *Thursday 7:30 p.m.*
Poetry Night: *Thursday 8 p.m.*
6-ball tourney: *Thursday 8 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.*

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., 9 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Saturday 9 a.m., 7 p.m.*
Boxing: *Sunday 4 p.m. Tue., Thu., 2 p.m.*
Boot Camp: *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, Satuday 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. Sunday 5:45 a.m., 7 a.m., 3 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.*
MACP Level 1: *Friday 8 p.m.*
5 on 5 Basketball: *Saturday 8 p.m.*

H6 RECREATION 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.*
9-ball: *Thursday 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m.*
Karaoke: *Thursday 8:30 p.m.*
Dominos: *Saturday 8:30 p.m.*
Darts: *Saturday 8:30 p.m.*

WEST RECREATION CENTER
Green Bean Karaoke: *Sun., Wed., 7:30pm*
9-ball tourney: *Monday 8 p.m.*
Ping-pong tourney: *Tuesday 8 p.m.*
Foosball tourney: *Tuesday 8 p.m.*
Jam Session: *Tuesday 7:30 p.m*
8-ball tourney: *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 FITNESS 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.*
Body by Midgett Toning Class: *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 Jui Jitsu: *Tue., Thu., 8:30 p.m.*

CIRCUIT GYM
Floor hockey: Mon., Wed., Fri., 8-10 p.m

UPCOMING SPORTS ON AFN

Wednesday 06/23/10

SOCCER: 2010 FIFA World Cup, Slovenia vs England, Live 7 p.m. AFN Xtra

Thursday 06/24/10

SOCCER: 2010 FIFA World Cup, USA vs Algeria, Delayed 12 a.m. AFN Sports
SOCCER: 2010 FIFA World Cup, Slovakia vs Italy, Live 6:30 a.m. AFN Sports
SOCCER: 2010 FIFA World Cup, Denmark vs Japan, Live 11 a.m. AFN Sports
TENNIS: 2010 Wimbledon, The Championships: Day 4, Live 1:30 a.m. AFN Sports

Friday 06/25/10

SOCCER: 2010 FIFA World Cup, Portugal vs Brazil, Live 6:30 a.m. AFN Sports
TENNIS: 2010 Wimbledon, The Championships: Day 5, Live 9 a.m. AFN Sports
SOCCER: 2010 FIFA World Cup, Chile vs Spain, Live 11 a.m. AFN Sports
MLB: Minnesota Twins @ New York Mets, Live 4 p.m. AFN Sports
MLB: New York Yankees @ Los Angeles Dodgers, Live 7 p.m. AFN Sports

Saturday 06/26/10

TENNIS: 2010 Wimbledon, The Championships: Day 6, Live 9 a.m. AFN Xtra
MLB: Seattle Mariners @ Milwaukee Brewers, Live 1 p.m. AFN Sports

Sunday 06/27/10

MLB: Colorado Rockies @ Los Angeles Angels, Live 12:30 p.m. AFN Prime Atlantic
MLB: New York Yankees @ Los Angeles Dodgers, Live 5 p.m. AFN Sports
NHRA Full Throttle Drag Racing Series, Norwalk Finals, Live 4 p.m. AFN Xtra

Monday 06/28/10

TENNIS: 2010 Wimbledon, The Championships: Round of 16, Live 10 a.m. AFN Xtra
SOCCER: 2010 FIFA World Cup, Round of 16, Teams TBD, Live 11 a.m. AFN Sports

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

'Persia,' Gyllenhaal survive, but barely

BY STAFF SGT. RANDALL P. CAREY
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

Epic fantasies are growing a little long in the tooth this year and we're only in June. I must say though, "Prince of Persia: Sands of Time" wasn't that bad. It was entertaining enough, but it definitely had some flaws that held it back from being a worthy blockbuster.

You're first introduced to the child Dastan (later to be played by Jake Gyllenhaal, "Donnie Darko") in a Persian market. After saving his friend from the brutal arm of the law, and a Looney Tunes-style chase through the city (think "Benny Hill" theme "Yakety Sax"), the king decides the orphaned Dastan is royal in character and brings him into his family. Jump 15-20 years into the future.

The Persian horde sits on the city of Alamut while the half-breed Dastan hones his fighting skills in an exhibition brawl (think UFC). After being called by his heir-prince brother, Tus (Richard Coyle), to discuss what actions to take against the city, which appears to be supplying the enemies of Persia with weapons. Dastan's rebellious attitude gains momentum after he is told by Tus he is not ready to lead the assault on the city. Disagreeing with his brother's wisdom, he leads his platoon of peasant militiamen on a raid, obtaining the praise of the Persian people, the eye of the Princess Tamina of Alamut (Gemma Arteron, "Clash of the Titans") and the mystical dagger that changes his life.

After the battle of Alamut, the king is killed by a sabotaged gift. Dastan is immediately framed for the king's death and must fight his way out of the city with Tamina.

The remainder of the movie is a chase for the dagger. Backstabbing, double-crossing and trickery push the dagger from one hand to another as Dastan tries to clear his name and decipher the true culprit of his father's murder.

As it is realized that the king's murder is directly tied to the pursuit of Dastan's new dagger, he and Tamina find themselves deeper in a bloody struggle for power and fight their way back to Alamut to save the world from destruction as a result of a grave villainous mistake.

The plot is a little cliché, but it's actually not bad. The movie is cast well also. Where it fails is in acting and special effects.

While the roles are filled by actors and actresses that should fit them perfectly—and have the ability to—the performance is poorly executed. Gyllenhaal bulked up quite a bit to play the skilled Persian warrior, but he speaks and acts like a British teenager. Even some of the fighting, in which too much choreography can ruin, seemed unrehearsed and resembled a toddler flailing a cardboard tube around for fun. Take a lesson from Gerard Butler next time Jake.

It was also somewhat disappointing, with a majority great visual experience, to see an inexplicable abundance of overdone acrobatics and some incredibly terrible green screens.

"Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time" won't win any awards (although I may be wrong, "The Hurt Locker" fared well), but if you're suffering from a boring afternoon in your CHU it might provide some entertainment. My verdict: C

Pelton gives solid tour of 'World's Most Dangeous Places'

BY CPL. RICH BARKEMEYER
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

Have you ever wanted to take a trip through the jungles of Columbia, or maybe see the skyline of downtown Mogadishu? No? Me neither. Luckily, those of us who value our life, liberty and property can live vicariously through Robert Young Pelton and his book, "The World's Most Dangerous Places."

Pelton has been in what he calls the "adventure travel" game for nearly 20 years, roaming the globe in search of war, insurrection and coups; you know, a little excitement. He survived an assassination attempt in Uganda, was kidnapped by rebels in Columbia, and interviewed American Taliban member John Walker Lindh in Afghanistan shortly before the Qala-I-Jangi battle. There are probably few people in the world as qualified as Pelton to write a travel guide to the places most of us don't ever want to venture.

That's exactly what he brings us in the fifth edition of "The World's Most Dangerous Places." Pelton begins the book with a lengthy section on general travel tips, like the best way to bribe police in South America, and even how to survive an anaconda attack ("Step 6: The snake will begin to swallow you feet first"). He also gives tips on guarding your valuables and varying your daily routine that will come in handy to those of us who like to travel, but don't plan on visiting Grozny any time soon.

From there, Pelton takes the reader on a tour around the world, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe. In all, 24 countries are profiled, and receive a star-rating for danger level (one star being "Bad-Rep Lands" and five being "Apocalypse Wow"). For each, Pelton gives a brief history and tells us exactly why they're included in a list of dangerous places. He describes the key players, tells what you need to do to get in the country, what to do if you get sick there, and most importantly, how to get out alive. This is pretty heavy stuff, but Pelton writes in a breezy, nonchalant style. He consistently makes light of the danger he's faced in his career, and lets the reader know he doesn't take himself too seriously, which makes the book a better read.

The book isn't without its faults. Pelton includes a chapter on the United States (not entirely without reason). Unfortunately, Pelton uses nearly the entire space to launch a diatribe on the Bush administration, and to attack American culture in general. While the US of A does get a one-star rating, I feel like the space could have been better used on another country.

And a lot of space there is. Topping the 1,000 page mark, "The World's Most Dangerous Places" is definitely not a quick read, at least cover to cover. I found myself skipping around quite a bit from continent to continent, but for the most part the book doesn't need to be read in order.

Pelton says throughout the book that the most dangerous thing in the world is ignorance. This book helps to shed some light on the struggles going on in other countries. For people interested in politics or world events, or those just interested in tourism and adventure travel, this book is essential. I give it a solid 8 out of 10.

PVT MURPHY'S LAW

Reel Movie Times

Wednesday June 23
6 p.m. The Karate Kid (PG)
9 p.m. Furry Vengeance (PG)

Thursday June 24
6 p.m. Nightmare on Elm Street (R)
9 p.m. The Karate Kid (PG)

Friday June 25
6 p.m. Iron Man 2 (PG-13)
9 p.m. Toy story 3 (G) (1st run)

Saturday June 26
2 p.m. Robin Hood (PG-13)
5 p.m. Toy story 3 (G)
8 p.m. Iron Man 2 (PG-13)
Midnight Toy story 3 (G) (1st run)

Sunday June 27
2 p.m. Toy story 3 (G
5 p.m. Iron Man 2 (PG-13)
8 p.m. Robin Hood (PG-13)

Monday June 28
6 p.m. Robin Hood (PG-13)
9 p.m. Iron Man 2 (PG-13

Tuesday June 29
6 p.m. Iron Man 2 (PG-13
9 p.m. Toy story 3 (G

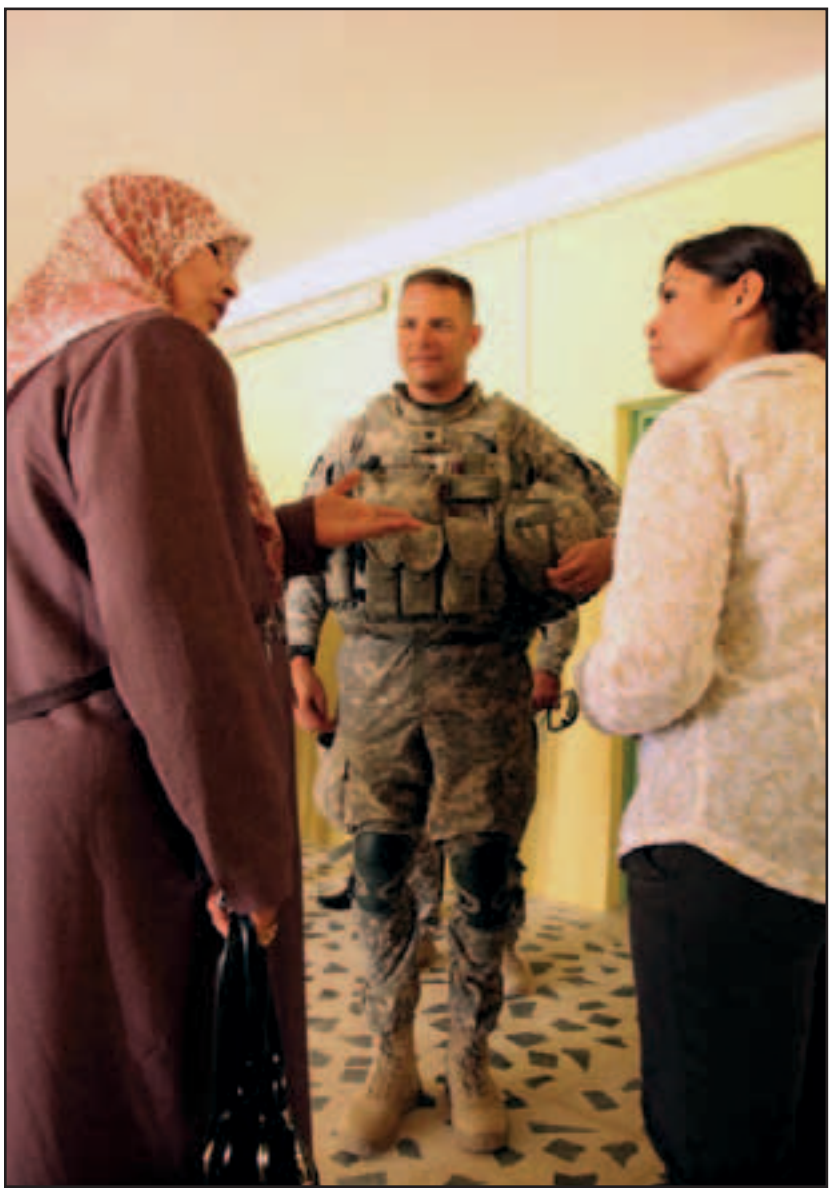
Movie times are subject to change. Verify showings at http://www.aafes.com/ems/euro/balad.htm

PHOTOS AROUND IRAQ

U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. Jason Stewart

A local farmer in the Salah-ad-Din province works in his "Fish Farming" field May 31 in attempts to improve the quality of the water. Provincial Reconstruction Teams oversee many local projects for the improvement of Iraq's local agriculture.

U.S. Army photo bySpc. Anderson Savoy



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jillian Munyon

ABOVE: U.S. Army Spc. Torin Nailor and Pvt. Jennifer Barnes with the 114th Military Police Company, 3-17th Military Police Battalion, 49th Military Brigade, attach chains to a T-wall June 3 at Mosul Police Security Association in Mosul, Iraq. The Military Police Company is assisting Alpha 2-6th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Battle Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, improve physical security of the compound.

LEFT: U.S. Army Lt. Col. Adam Rocke (center) has a conversation with a teacher at the newly remodeled Al Kindi Elementary School May 24 in Muqdadyah, Diyala, Iraq. U.S. Soldiers from B Battery, 1-37th Field Artillery, 2nd Infantry Division conducted security measures for the Diyala Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) and other local officials.

NEWS AROUND

Iraqi Security Forces kill 2, wound 2, arrest 7 AQI in central Iraq

BAGHDAD— Iraqi Security Forces killed two, wounded two and arrested seven suspected Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) criminal associates during two joint security operations conducted June 12 in the vicinity of Baghdad.

One local national was wounded during the course of operations.

ISF and U.S. advisors searched multiple buildings in two locations for a suspected AQI leader who is allegedly involved in facilitating a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device and IED attacks against ISF and U.S. forces.

During an operation conducted approximately 60 kilometers south of Baghdad, ISF received fire after instructing the occupants to exit the building in which they were located. Security forces returned fire in self-defense, killing two and wounding two criminal associates and one local national.

Information and evidence gathered at the scene led Iraqi forces to identify and arrest five criminal associates of the warranted AQI leader.

The two wounded AQI suspects and one local national, were taken to a nearby military hospital and are listed in stable condition.

ISF and U.S. advisors also searched a building during a second operation conducted about 15 km west of Baghdad.

Information and evidence gathered at the scene led Iraqi forces to identify and arrest two additional criminal associates of the warranted 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.

East Mosul ISF operation nets AQI member, 3 associates

BAGHDAD— Iraqi Security Forces arrested a suspected al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) member and three criminal associates June 13 during a joint security operation in east Mosul.

ISF and U.S. advisors searched multiple buildings for the suspected AQI member who is allegedly involved in facilitation of foreign fighters.

Information and evidence gathered at the scene led Iraqi forces to identify and arrest the warranted individual and three suspected 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.

Iraqi Army graduates first field artillery officers

BAGHDAD— The first class of Iraqi Army field artillery officers graduated June 6 from a 152-day course at Forward Operating Base Constitution, Iraq.

The course, which started in January, gave 120 Iraqi Army lieutenants the fundamentals of field artillery doctrine, tactics, skills and institutional knowledge needed to increase the capability of the Iraqi Army.

According to Lt. Col. Patrick Martin, senior U.S. Army advisor at the Field Artillery School and Directorate, the Iraqi Army will be receiving seven battalions worth of U.S. artillery.

"The addition of these officers into the fold of the field artillery is very significant," Martin said.

For Martin, the graduation was significant not only because these were the first Iraqi field artillery officers to be trained since March 2003, but also because the course was run almost entirely by Iraqis. With U.S. Army advisors providing a minimum amount of assistance.

"This shows the Iraqis are doing this on their own," said Martin. "We're advising and observing and this is what we want to see—the Iraqis continue to take the lead and instruct on their own."

Iraqi Staff Gen. Aboud Ganbar, the graduation keynote speaker, said he was thankful for the field artillery school.

"I feel that we have a fully capable teaching facility and school," Ganbar said. "To graduate the officers and fill the assigned staff for the Iraqi artillery branch, this first graduation means very much to us."

Newly graduated Iraqi Army 2nd Lt. Omar Hamid Ajeel, agreed.

"I will serve my country honorably," Ajeel said. "We will decrease the amount of terrorism with our new capabilities and build a great Iraq."

Iraqi civilians, ISF deaths down significantly in last year

BAGHDAD— Deaths of Iraqi Security Forces members and Iraqi civilians from attacks have decreased in the last year as the Iraqi Security Forces continue to build their capabilities and professionalism and provide better security for the people of Iraq.

Comparing the first five-and-a-half months of 2010 to the same period in 2009, deaths from terrorist attacks have dropped by nearly half. Deaths dropped from nearly 450 in April 2009 to just more than 200 in April of 2010, and from nearly 350 in May of 2009 to about 250 in May. June deaths so far in 2010 are well below June 2009 levels.

The overall number of security incidents nationwide has decreased as the Iraqi Security forces have taken the lead in the security of their country.

U.S. Forces-Iraq will continue its mission to train and advise the Iraqi Security Forces and provide the strategic depth that is allowing Iraq to move forward in a number of areas, including seating a new government, increasing investment, building diplomatic ties, and a growing a stronger, diversified economy.

As the United States Forces-Iraq moves toward Operation New Dawn and transitions to stability operations, we will continue to partner with the ISF to keep pressure on the terrorist networks that are operating in Iraq. Due to the hard work and sacrifices of the Iraqi Security Forces and U.S. Forces, today Iraq is on a path toward becoming a stable, self-reliant nation with just, representative, and accountable government that contributes to peace and stability in the region.

Ministry of Defense delegation extends support to Kurdish region

ERBIL, Iraq— Key government and military leaders from the Government of Iraq, the Kurdish region and the U.S. gathered June 10 at the Kurdistan Regional Government Ministry of Interior to discuss solutions for securing the northern Iraqi border against Iranian attacks here.

Prime Minister Nuri Al Malaki directed Gen. Babakir Zeibari, Iraqi Army chief of staff, Staff Gen. Abud Gunbar, deputy chief of staff for operations, and Iraqi Air Force Commander Staff Lt. Gen Anwar Ameen to meet with Karim Sinjari, KRG Minister of Interior and Sheikh Jaafer Mustafa, Minister of Peshmerga, and offer whatever help the KRG needs to ensure the safety of the Iraqi people in the region.

Although this meeting was entirely Iraqi-led, Babakir invited U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Michael D. Barbero, deputy commanding general of United States Forces – Iraq (Advising and Training) and U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Scott Hanson, Director of Iraq Training and Advisory Mission–Air Force, who offered operational advice.

Anwar offered to provide IqAF King Air flights to provide intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance support in areas near the border and suggested adding a mobile ground station as a joint effort between the ministry of Peshmerga and border guards.

"Iraq has shown their ability to do this," Hanson said. "Lt. Gen. Anwar's plan is good and we are ready to support however we can."

The KRG and MoD leaders agreed to make active use of their liaison teams to enhance the exchange of information to improve cohesion between the different headquarters.

"We are ready to receive all support," said Karim. "We are one Iraq and we will solve this diplomatically."

US forces transfer Joint Security Station Carver to Iraqi Army

BAGHDAD— Soldiers of 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, transferred Joint Security Station Carver June 11 to members of the 45th Brigade, 11th Iraqi Army Division assigned to the 9th Iraqi Mechanized Army Division.

JSS Carver is the eighth JSS to be transferred to the ISF in 2nd BCT's operational environment. The Soldiers of 4-31st have worked with 45/11 IA over the past eight months, conducting partnered training, patrols and humanitarian assistance missions in the Mada'in district.

In accordance with the Security Agreement the bases or facilities will be returned to the control of the appropriate Government of Iraq entity or demilitarized and closed. These facilities are able to be closed or transferred to Iraqi control because the Iraqi Security Forces have assumed full responsibility for security in their respective areas.

Son kills father who translated for United States in Iraq

BAGHDAD— An al-Qaida-linked insurgent shot and killed his own father as he slept in his bed Friday for refusing to quit his job as an Iraqi interpreter for the U.S. military, police said, a rare deadly attack on a close family member over allegations of collaborating with the enemy.

The attack happened on a particularly bloody day in Iraq, with at least 27 people killed nationwide in bombings and ambushes largely targeting the houses of government officials, Iraqi security forces and those seen as allied with them.

Hameed al-Daraji, 50, worked as a contractor and translator for the U.S. military for seven years since shortly after the U.S.-led invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein in 2003.

He was shot in the chest about 3 a.m. while sleeping in his house in Samarra, a former insurgent stronghold 60 miles (95 kilometers) north of Baghdad, police Lt. Emad Muhsin said.

Authorities arrested the son and his cousin, saying the young men apparently were trying to prove their loyalty after rejoining the insurgency. Police were also looking for another son who allegedly took part in the attack.

Citing confessions, police said the son whom they arrested, Abdul-Halim Hameed, 30, was a former member of al-Qaida in Iraq who quit the terror network in mid-2007 under pressure from U.S.-Iraqi security operations that have led to a sharp drop in violence in the area.

Col. Hazim Ali, a senior security official in Samarra, said Hameed, his 19-year-old cousin and 24-year-old brother remained committed to extremist causes.

IRAQ

With U.S. troops withdrawing from the country, Ansar al-Sunnah, an insurgent group with ties to al-Qaida, recently lured the men into their ranks with offers of hard cash, Ali said.

The U.S. military said it was looking into the report.

The Samarra assault brought into focus the fears of Iraqis who have worked with the Americans and are worried they'll face renewed violence as their employers prepare to leave the country by the end of next year.

Already, many have been targeted by extremist groups who view them as traitors. But Iraqis could not think of another case in which a family member killed an immediate relative because of his or her employment with the Americans in this country.

Such attacks have happened elsewhere, though.

Several suspected collaborators have been killed by relatives in recent years in the Gaza Strip in an attempt to clear the family name. Most recently, three alleged informers for Israel were killed by family members after busting out of Gaza's central prison during Israel's military offensive against Gaza in the winter of 2008-2009.

Samarra, in the Sunni heartland north of Baghdad, has been one of the hardest areas to control since the U.S.-led invasion. It was the site of the February 2006 bombing that destroyed a revered golden-domed Shiite mosque, sparking a wave of retaliatory sectarian violence that pushed the country to the brink of civil war.

The area has been relatively peaceful since local tribal leaders revolted against al-Qaida in Iraq, but Ali said sleeper cells were waiting for the chance to regroup.

"Al-Qaida and other terrorist groups are trying to recruit some young people in order to carry out attacks in an apparent attempt to show that they are still active," Ali said.

In other violence Friday, gunmen ambushed a checkpoint near the Anbar province town of Qaim, a former insurgent stronghold near the Syrian border, killing seven Iraqi soldiers, according to police, hospital and provincial officials.

They said the gunmen shot an eighth soldier several times but left him alive "to convey a message to the Iraqi army."

Provincial council member Sheik Efan Saadoun blamed the attack on a decision to replace police with Iraqi soldiers who are less familiar with the local surroundings.

Meanwhile, car bombs targeting a police captain and a provincial council member tore through two restive cities north of Baghdad.

One blew up in the city of Tuz Khormato about 50 yards from the house of Niazi Mohammed, an ethnic Turkomen member of the Salahuddin provincial council, according to police.

City police chief Col. Hussein Ali blamed al-Qaida for the attack, which killed at least eight people and wounded 69. A second car bomb was discovered about 100 yards (meters) from the blast site, but it did not explode, Ali said.

Another blast targeted the house of police Capt. Mustafa Mohammed in the city of Baqouba, killing two neighbors and wounding 27 other people, including some of the officer's relatives, police said.

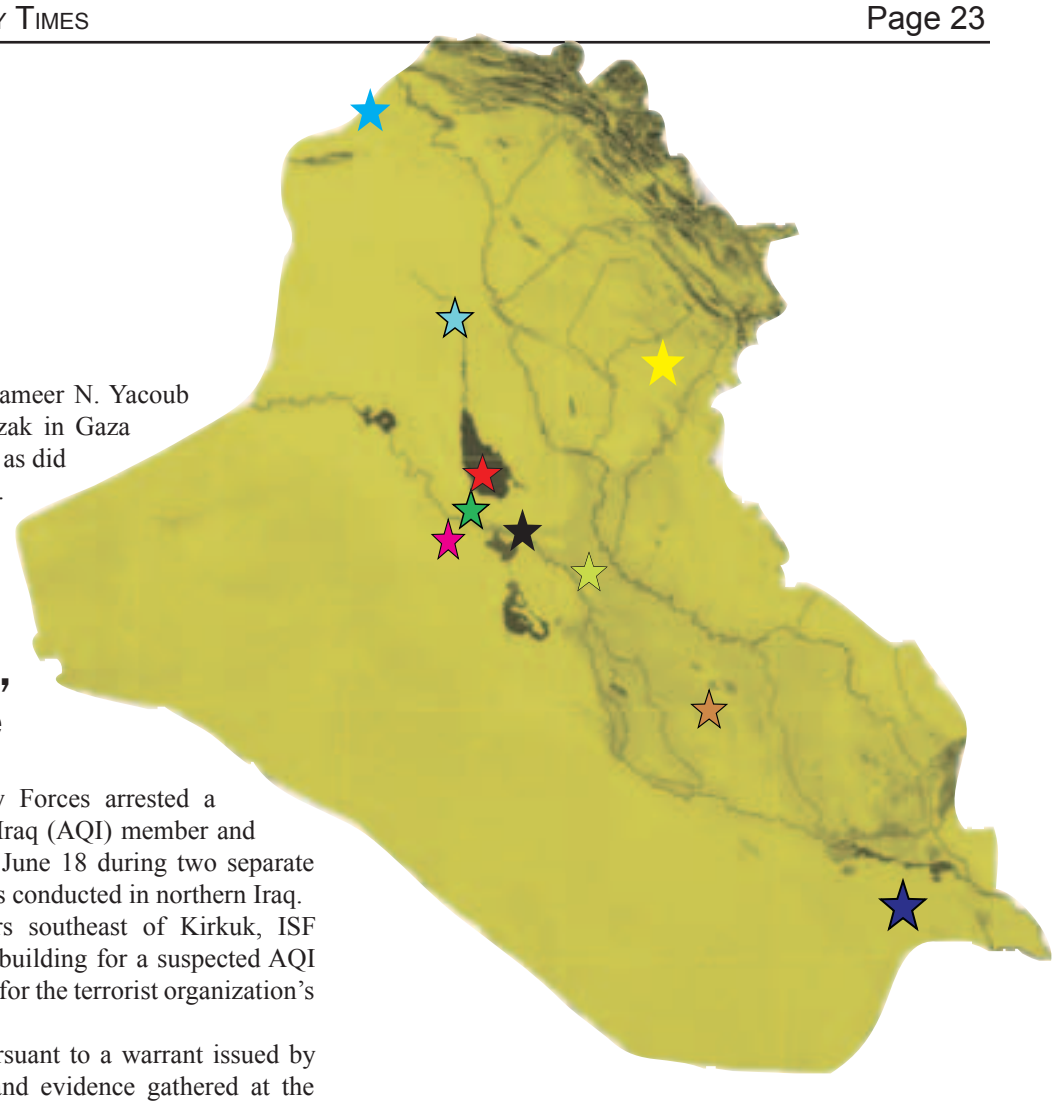
Hours later in the Sunni district of Abu Ghraib, west of Baghdad, a bomb exploded at the gate of a house, killing a man and two women who sold tea and water to soldiers at a nearby Iraqi army checkpoint, according to police and hospital officials.

Police said the residents had ignored insurgent warnings to cut off relations with the soldiers.

In a separate attack in Abu Ghraib, gunmen killed an employee of a local irrigation department, 40-year-old Faisal Hassan, his wife and two children as part of an apparent tribal dispute over water distribution, officials said.

Also Friday, two rockets slammed into a group of houses near the Baghdad International Airport, killing two people and wounding eight, police said.

Associated Press Writers Sameer N. Yacoub in Baghdad and Ibrahim Barzak in Gaza City contributed to this report, as did an AP employee in Tikrit, Iraq.



Securtity Forces arrest suspected AQI terrorist, criminal associate

BAGHDAD— Iraqi Security Forces arrested a suspected al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) member and one criminal associate June 18 during two separate joint security operations conducted in northern Iraq.

About 68 kilometers southeast of Kirkuk, ISF and U.S. advisors searched a building for a suspected AQI member allegedly responsible for the terrorist organization's security.

All joint operations are pursuant to a warrant issued by an Iraqi judge. Information and evidence gathered at the scene led Iraqi forces to identify and arrest the warranted individual.

During another operation in Tikrit, ISF and U.S. advisors searched several buildings for a suspected AQI member allegedly responsible for vehicle-borne improvised explosive attacks.

Information and evidence gathered at the scene led Iraqi forces to identify and arrest one criminal associate.

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.

Operations net a suspected AQI terrorist, 3 associates

BAGHDAD— Iraqi Security Forces arrested a suspected al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) member and three criminal associates June 17 during two separate joint security operations conducted in Iraq.

In west Mosul, ISF and U.S. advisors searched a building for a suspected AQI member allegedly linked to acquiring vehicles and weapons used to carry out assassinations in the northern-Iraqi city. It is believe he also has close ties to senior AQI leadership.

Information and evidence gathered at the scene led Iraqi forces to identify and arrest one criminal associate of the warranted individual.

During another operation in west Baghdad, ISF and U.S. advisors searched two buildings for a suspected AQI member allegedly responsible for vehicle-borne improvised explosive attacks against Iraqi civilians, ISF, the Government of Iraq and coalition forces.

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

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Phantom Support

U.S. Army photo by Cpl. Rich Barkemeyer

ABOVE: Col. Knowles Atchison, deputy commanding officer of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a resident of Fort Hood, Texas, addresses Soldiers with the 196th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, 13th ESC, during a patching ceremony held June 18 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. The shoulder-sleeve insignia, or combat patch, dates back to the 81st Infantry Division "Wildcats" of World War I, and was officially adopted by the Army on Oct. 19, 1918.

U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Herbert Karg

U.S. Army photo by Sgt. David A. Scott

ABOVE: Command Sgt. Maj. Clifton H. Johnson (left), command sergeant major of the 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Florence, Ala., native, talks with retired Staff Sgt. Kenneth Butler, a Braintree, Mass., native, at the conclusion of a town hall meeting June 12 during Operation Proper Exit at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Operation Proper Exit gives service members the opportunity to return to the place where they were wounded to gain closure.

LEFT: Sgt. Jonathan Rosenzweig (left), information management noncommissioned officer with the 716th Quartermaster Company, 13th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and an Eatontown, N.J., native, raises the American flag while Spc. Dartanyun Harvey, an amnesty yard container team member with the 716th Quartermaster Co. and a Jersey City, N.J., native, salutes.