



DANGER FORWARD



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Iraqi, U.S. Soldiers compete

By Sgt. Cody Harding
1st Inf. Div., USD-S PAO

COS ECHO – The 1st Infantry Division holds a Soldier of the Quarter Competition every three months to determine the best Soldier and noncommissioned officer in United States Division – South. The Soldiers compete in several events, both physical and technical, to prove themselves the best in their field.

The 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, based on Contingency Operating Site Echo, Iraq, decided to change the formula for the competition

this quarter by inviting Soldiers from the 8th Iraqi Army Division to compete with the U.S. forces.

Sgt 1st Class Ali Maji, a member of the Baghdad-based 8th I.A. Div. said that the competition brings a boost of morale to the troops.

“I found it very good, not just for me but for all the soldiers that took part throughout the 8th Division,” Ali said.

The competitors started the day at 4:30 a.m. with an inspection of their equipment before loading their rucksacks and heading towards the physical training area. For this event, the soldiers and NCOs faced an unconventional PT challenge, including

24-inch box jumps, pull ups, stair climbs with weights and a 180-pound litter drag.

Pfc. Xavier Guerrero, a Soldier with Security Company, Division Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 1st Inf. Div. and a Seguin, Texas, native, said that he had to train himself to prepare for the events.

“I’m not the biggest guy, so I had to train harder with weights, with whatever I could do,” Guerrero said. “I’m only 135 (pounds) and the rucksack was 140. I had to pick that up and get over it. I think that was my biggest challenge, but it feels great. I did it, and I’m here.”

Competitors then had to orient themselves with a map of the base, finding specific points around the COS. At each point was a station where Soldiers were tested on weapons familiarity, including the AK-47 and the M-2 .50 caliber machine gun. Iraqi soldiers were also required to know about the weapons, placing them on an even level with the U.S. Soldiers.

The last point led them to the range, where the competitors were tested on their marksmanship from standing and kneeling positions, off-handed shooting and pistol accuracy. The range was followed by a shoot house, where competitors breached a door using a shotgun before eliminating

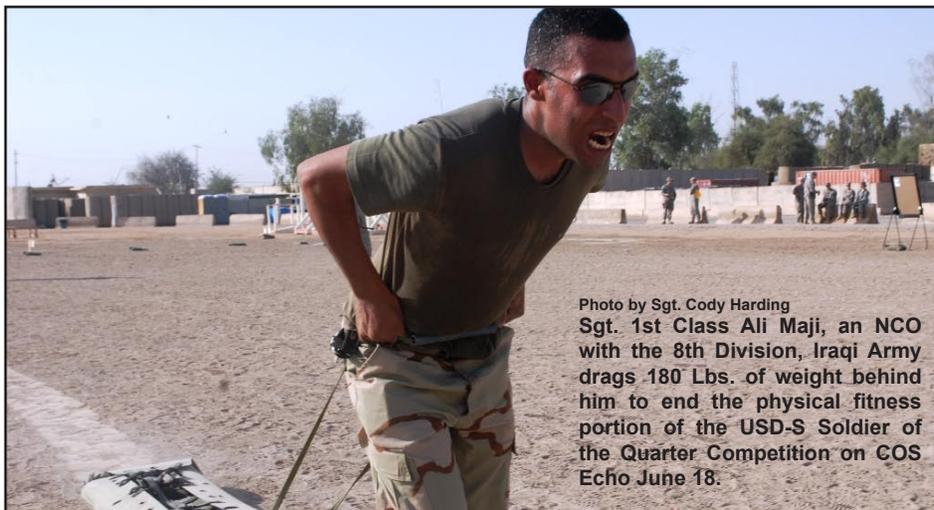


Photo by Sgt. Cody Harding
Sgt. 1st Class Ali Maji, an NCO with the 8th Division, Iraqi Army drags 180 Lbs. of weight behind him to end the physical fitness portion of the USD-S Soldier of the Quarter Competition on COS Echo June 18.

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Danger Seven sends

Soldiers view their leaders with a wide-open aperture. By doing so, they expect an officer or NCO to be committed, in control and to provide them with challenges every day. It is how our subordinates view our hardiness as leaders during stressful periods that allow them to build resilience and interpret their experiences as something they can control and see as challenging, which allows them to learn and grow.

In order to build commitment in our Soldiers a leader must first support their attempts to voice their own ideas. Allowing our subordinates to use the skills and abilities they have developed to solve problems in high-stress situations enable them to grow. If a leader provides meaningful tasks, whereas progress is tangible or visible, then the team will focus on a common goal to accomplish the stated intent. It is while communicating our intent that we leaders must provide specific information about what and why we are doing a specific task to our team to allow them to visualize the big picture. It is the point of direction where some leaders miss the boat. They will provide all the direction in the world, but fail to interact with their team during the planning phase. A proactive coach does not just give a team a game plan and then not follow up with a practice.



Change in any manner is the variable that causes many Soldiers and leaders to test their resiliency. Hardy leaders see change as a learning experience and a challenge. Resiliency is built by leader's who always empathize the value of change. Sometimes change will cause a team to move in a different direction from their original plan. We should see this not as an inconvenience, but as a new challenge that allows us to look through a new and exciting optic. It is inevitable that there will be times in which we will not meet the Commander's intent. Do not look at it as a failure, but seize it as chance to learn and build a whole new view on how the problem can be seen and solved.

Being in a high-stress occupation, such as the military, a leader's control can easily turn into "out of control in a hurry." "Hard" leaders are very different from "hardy," leaders, who may perceive themselves as task masters, although in reality the amount of tasks piled onto our subordinates may cause them to lose control. In order to restore control, ensure that tasks remain challenging, but within the capabilities and are achievable by the team. It may require a leader to use the old "crawl-walk-run" method when the team is exposed to a new challenge. Once the team is cooking with oil, build on their success by adding short-term wins instead of going for the homerun every time they are in the batter's box.

Paul Bartone explains it best in his article "To Build Resilience: Leader Influence on Mental Hardiness." "The leader who by example, discussion and established policies, communicates a positive construction of shared stressful experiences, exerts a positive influence on the entire group in the direction of his or her interpretation of experience- toward more resilient and hardy sensemaking. It is only by addressing the challenge at multiple levels, including the system level, that we can build a force with the needed psychological strength to withstand the varied stressors of current and future complex operations." Are you the hard or hardy leader? Think about it.

Now get after it!



Jim Champagne
Command Sergeant Major
U.S. Army



Commanding General



Major General
Vincent K. Brooks



Command Sergeant Major

Command Sergeant Major
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DANGER FORWARD

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Grilling safety a hot topic



Grilling season is here, and safety is very important when using gas or charcoal grills. Each year, an average of 6,500 grill fires result in nearly \$27 million in property loss.

Propane used in gas grills is highly flammable. Many fires and explosions occur when consumers first use a grill that has been left idle for a period of time or just after refilling and reattaching the grill's gas container. Before you set up a barbecue grill, ensure you contact the fire department to get your burn permit.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission suggests to reduce the risk of fire or explosion, consumers should routinely perform the following checks before and while grilling:

Before grilling

- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Check for gas leaks. If you detect a leak, immediately turn off the gas and don't attempt to light the grill until the leak is fixed.
- Check the tubes that lead into the burner for any blockage. Use a pipe cleaner or wire to clear blockages, and push it through to the main part of the burner.
- Check grill hoses for cracking, brittleness, holes and leaks. Make sure there are no sharp bends in the hose or tubing.
- Move gas hoses as far away as possible from hot surfaces and dripping hot grease. If you can't move the hoses, install a heat shield to protect them
- Replace damaged connectors, which can eventually leak gas.
- Keep lit cigarettes, matches or open flames away from a leaking grill.
- Do not attempt to repair the tank valve or the appliance yourself. See an LP gas dealer or a qualified appliance repair person.

While grilling

- Barbecue grills require an approved Burn Permit when used and will be kept at least 25 feet from structures. In no case will grills be used under eaves, or under any overhead combustible construction.
- Keep a fire extinguisher accessible.
- Use proper utensils that will allow you to be a safe distance from the grill while cooking.
- Do not wear loose clothing while cooking.
- Always shut off valve to propane tanks when not in use.

Grilling outdoors is a great American tradition, and doing it safely makes for a wonderful meal and a great time with your fellow service members or friends.

This week in Army history

This week in Big Red One history

July 4, 1917 – On Independence Day, the 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment paraded through the streets of Paris to bolster sagging French spirits. At Lafayette's tomb, one of General John J. Pershing's staff uttered the famous words, "Lafayette, we are here!"

This week in OIF history

June 28, 2004 – Two days ahead of schedule, control and sovereignty of Iraq is handed over from the United States to an interim Iraqi government. Allawi becomes the prime minister, and Paul Bremer leaves the country. A slightly modified form of the flag is used.

This week in 3rd Infantry Division history

July 4, 1951 – Leroy A. Mendonca was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions during the Korean War. Mendonca, Company B, 7th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division, stalled an assault, protected his platoon's withdrawal and enabled his unit to repel an enemy attack upon a vital hilltop position. Although under murderous enemy fire, he fired his weapon and hurled grenades at the onrushing enemy until he was out of ammunition. He fought on, clubbing with his rifle and using his bayonet until he was mortally wounded. It was estimated that Sgt. Mendonca had accounted for 37 enemy casualties.

Border conference opens lines of communication

Spc. Maurice Galloway
17th FiB PAO

COB BASRA – Lines of communication were opened and concerns addressed as U.S. and Iraqi military leaders met at the Basra Operations Center to discuss border security in Iraq.

Lt. Gen. Muhammad Jawad Hawaydi, Basra Operations Center commander, hosted the Southern Borders Conference June 14, designed to address concerns among the leaders of the Iraqi Security Forces.

Maj. Gen. Vincent Brooks, commanding general of the 1st Infantry Division and United States Division-South, and other commanders deployed throughout Iraq attended the conference to assess the vital development of border security across an increasingly sovereign Iraq.

“U.S. officers are here to listen to what you have to say in order to help in achieving security along the borders,” Brooks said.



Photo by Spc. Maurice Galloway
Lt. Gen. Muhammad Jawad Hawaydi (left), BaOC commander, and Maj. Gen. Vincent Brooks (right), 1st Inf. Div. and USD-S commanding general, discuss key points made during the Southern Borders Conference held at the BaOC June 14.



Photo by Spc. Maurice Galloway
Members of the Southern Borders Conference, held at the Basra Operations Center in southern Iraq, examine how joint patrols and searches at points-of-entry like Safwan (seen here) have greatly reduced the amount of infiltration of contraband across the borders.

Muhammad opened the discussion by applauding the Department of Border Enforcement’s success in significantly reducing the infiltration of illegal materials through the borders.

“Our battle space is very extensive, and despite the DBE’s best efforts, we’re going to require more force along the borders to thwart the continued infiltration attempts of these criminals living in safe havens along our borders,” Muhammad said.

Brig. Gen. Mohammad Habib Dhafar, 4th Region DBE commander, addressed issues in his operational environment such as the extensive damage of the Basra Dam and the number of small canals in the Shatt Al-Arab River that serve as smuggling routes.

“We’ve asked that the canals be closed on numerous occasions and have received no responses from the government,” said Dhafar.

Dhafar said the Basra Dam is more than 70 percent damaged and is vital to the protection of the oil fields. He requested the government renovate the dam, but no official allocation of funds to the project have been made thus far.

Other border enforcement officials who attended the conference reported improvements in security technology with the installation of new cameras and scanners at the Safwan and Shalamche points of entry. They also said joint border patrols have led to the confiscation of weapons and other munitions.

They also said they are losing a significant amount of intelligence due to the lack of resources available to pay informants for vital information which could lead to arrests.

Both, Brooks and Mohammad agreed the conference was beneficial in the development of the security of the Iraqi borders.

“It seems we need to shore up communication between our units in order to better secure our borders,” Mohammad said. “We will work hard to adhere to each of the concerns you have placed before us, but it’s only by a collective effort that we’ll be able to achieve our goal of a safer Iraq,” he said.

For more from 17th FiB, visit
<http://www.17thFiresBrigade.org>

Army medics train Iraqi Police

Story by Sgt. Ben Hutto
3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf Div PAO

COS KALSU – Ten policemen from Babil and Karbala Provinces graduated from the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division's tactical combat medical care course at Contingency Operating Site Kalsu June 15.

The five-day course was designed to teach students practical ways to treat combat injuries.

"It is an advanced first-responder course," said Staff Sgt. Timothy Mollett, a medic assigned to Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment. "Most of them know the basic things like clearing an airway or stopping bleeding. What we do is break everything down to the basics and build from there."

This was the eighth time that the course has been taught and instructors were happy with the policemen's progress.

"The entire processes went well," said Sgt. Deshon Bell, a medic assigned to Company C, 203rd Brigade Support Battalion. "From day one to graduation, ev-



Photo courtesy of Sgt. Deshon Bell
An Iraqi policeman practices treating a casualty on Cpl. Bruce Collier, a combat medic assigned to the 59th MP Co., currently attached to the 3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div., during a medical class at COS Kalsu June 14.

erything turned out well. Most of them have the skills; they just need to be fine-tuned. The entire idea behind the course was to teach them to be resourceful and use what they have."

Both medics said the course was more about demonstrations and exercises than formal classroom instruction.

"They are just like (U.S.) Soldiers," said Mollett, a native of Columbus, Ohio. "They don't like slide shows but love hands-on training. They learn better that way, too."

Both instructors were impressed with the way the policemen were eager to leave the comforts of their air-conditioned classrooms and train in 100-degree heat.

"They have a lot of pride in who they are," Mollett said. "They are eager to take this training back with them and share it with the guys at their stations."

While most of the graduates were knowledgeable about healthcare, many of them picked up valuable information.

"I have been a policeman for ten years," said Quasi Edan Hussein of Wasit Province. "Before, when I was working on casualties, I would just pull on them and try to get them out of danger. Now, I know how to work on the most severe injuries and how I need to do it."

The lack of basic medical knowledge has proved detrimental to the police officers in many cases.

"We were pulling people through the dust and poisoning their wounds, but we didn't know that then," said Rasheed Kanfar Qasim, a policeman in Babil Province. "I learned that taking a pulse with two fingers was easier than taking it with your thumb. There was so much I was not aware of."

Bell was impressed with how his students were able to think outside the box and come up with scenarios and questions they would likely encounter.

"They asked a lot of questions, actually," said Bell, a San Antonio native. "They wanted to find alternative ways of doing things when we taught something. For them, it was about having an 'A' and a 'B' plan."

Bell said most of his students were



Photo courtesy of Sgt. Deshon Bell
Iraqi police practice casualty carries during a medical class at COS Kalsu June 14.

knowledgeable about first aid, but many lacked the tactical understanding to fully employ their skills.

"They had to learn to protect themselves before treating their patients in a tactical situation," Bell said. "It took them a minute to understand that. They also didn't understand triage and order of precedent when it came to injuries. They prefer to work on one patient at a time and go in order. Now, I think they understand what injuries can wait and which ones need to be fixed right away."

The class also gave policemen the chance to interact with U.S. Soldiers on a more personal level.

"I had a bad view of the American Army before I came here," said Quasia Edan Hussein, a policeman from Wasit Province. "Here, I have found them different. Outside of the base, they never really spoke to us. On the base, they are very friendly."

Mollett said more classes are planned.

"We look forward to teaching people here," he said. "It is a good experience for everyone involved."

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<http://www.facebook.com/3hbct3id>

Sharing the knowledge of maintenance

By **Spc. David Dyer**
3rd Sqdn., 1st Cav. Regt.

COB DELTA – “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” is an old adage credited to Benjamin Franklin, one of the founding fathers of the United States.

The Soldiers from the maintenance section of Troop D, 3rd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division have made that old saying a motto they live by.

In the military, preventative maintenance checks and services are performed before, during and after any type of movement or use of military equipment. Checks are also done at weekly, monthly, semi-annual, annual and bi-annual intervals, depending on the specific vehicle or piece of equipment.

A PMCS helps to identify future issues and worn parts before they fail, and fix or replace the parts ahead of time. Traveling outside of the COB with new, working equipment means a lower failure rate and in turn fewer injuries, which improves effectiveness in combat.

Soldiers of Troop D’s maintenance section invited members of the 3rd Battalion, 32nd Iraqi Army Brigade, to COB Delta for joint training. The troopers seized the opportunity to share the importance of doing a proper PMCS.

Spc. Josue Lopez, a mechanic with Troop D from Acnaco, Puerto Rico, said a proper PMCS can help the Iraqis with the big picture.

“We want to share with them what right



Photo by Spc. David Dyer
Spc. Ronald Depalma, a mechanic with Troop D, 3rd Sqdn., 1st Cav. Regt., 3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div., reviews how to properly check fluid levels on a vehicle with Iraqi soldiers from the 3rd Bn., 32nd Bde., 8th IA Div.

looks like when it comes to vehicle maintenance,” Lopez said. “That way they will have fewer problems and will be able to focus more on the mission instead of repair issues.”

Capt. William Gillespie, the executive officer for Troop C, 3-1 Cav. Regt. and a native of Decatur, Ga., who attended the training, said maintenance can make or break a mission.

“Logistics is the lifeline to any operation,” Gillespie said. “The (3rd Battalion) can go out and perform a wide array of missions, yet if their vehicles are not serviced properly, they don’t have the proper repair parts, if they don’t have the proper weapons parts, if they lack the proper logistics infrastructure in general, they will not be able to execute those missions. We are trying to improve upon the logistical

side of things so that (Iraqi Army Soldiers) can better help with stability operations.”

Gillespie said prior to the advise and assist mission, the Soldiers were focused on what they could give the Iraqis. They realized they were putting themselves in a cycle of giving rather than one of mentoring. By having the Iraqi soldiers come to the maintenance training, they have the chance to mitigate future issues, creating more independence in the Iraqi Security Forces.

“For most of our Iraqi counterparts, this was their first exposure to a proper PMCS,” Gillespie said. “Rather than just giving them parts, as has been done in the past, we choose to focus on teaching them how to maintain and repair their vehicles.”

Sgt. Gabriel Hernandez Garcia of San Antonio, who also works with Troop D’s maintenance section, said it was all about helping others be able to help themselves. He stressed the importance of correcting minor issues before they became major ones.

“Our mission today was to develop our relationship with the Iraqi Army in order to help them to improve upon their vehicle maintenance skills,” Garcia said. “They are much more tactically and technically proficient now.



Photo by Spc. David Dyer
Spc. Ronald Depalma, a mechanic with Troop D, 3rd Sqdn., 1st Cav. Regt., 3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div., and a soldier with the 3rd Bn., 32nd Bde., 8th IA Div. inspect a vehicle during the preventative maintenance checks and services training held at COB Delta June 15.

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CIVIL CAPACITY

Muthanna takes steps toward brighter future

By Pfc. Khorl Johnson
3rd BCT, 4th Inf Div PAO

MUTHANNA PROVINCE — The Muthanna Province has seen much progress thanks to construction projects that are result of the partnership between the Provincial Reconstruction Team and the Government of Iraq.

The PRT's civil liaison team works with the U.S. State Department as a mediator between the civilian and military elements in Iraq. The liaison team also oversees a variety of projects throughout Muthanna, said Maj. Joseph Hauw, the civil liaison team officer-in-charge with the 358th Civil Affairs Brigade and a native of Riverside, Calif.

Some of the projects currently in the works include the construction of two schools and the rehabilitation of an existing water treatment facility.

The first school, that will serve 400 children, is being constructed in the Bani Samala area. The school currently being used has a student body of 120. Many classes are held outside.

The larger school will be beneficial to the community and the area, said Sgt. 1st Class Duane Mowrer, the civil liaison team noncommissioned officer-in-charge with the 358th Civil Affairs Brigade and a native of Riverside, Calif.

Some children attending school now travel as far as five kilometers on foot. The new school is expected to encourage more Iraqi parents to allow their children to make the trip.

Once complete, the school is another indicator of the progress made in the Muthanna Province.

"One of the residents, who was also a construction worker for one of the schools, told me that he hadn't seen this much progress in over 30 years," said Spc. Ricardo Mireles, a psychological operations specialist, with 341st Tactical Psychological Operations Company, 17th Psychological Operations Group and native of San Antonio.



Photo by Pfc. Khorl Johnson

Spc. Ricardo Mireles, a psychological operations specialist with the 341st Tactical Psychological Operations Company, 17th Psychological Operations Group and native of San Antonio, poses for a photo with some local children in front of a school construction site in the Bani Samala area June 14.

Spc. Mireles said, "So, for them to just have a school in that area is a big deal for them."

The other school, being built in the Samowa area, will be the first of its kind, serving as a hostel for children.

When a student misses a year of school in Iraq, they are not allowed to go back and pick up where they left off; instead, they are considered to be finished with school altogether.

This facility will allow students who have missed any part of their education to return and finish where they left off.

The third facility is a water treatment center which is being upgraded in Samowa.

The plant currently has a filter system that strains out all major foreign elements within the water, such as silt, rocks and other solid pollutants. The PRT plans to incorporate reverse osmosis units into the filtration process to achieve a more pota-

ble water source.

Reverse osmosis is a filtration process that uses pressure to separate smaller, foreign materials from water, making it potable. Once these upgrades are complete, the water treatment plant will provide water for about 1,000 residents.

The PRT and Iraqi government have a variety of projects in the works within the Muthanna Province to assist in creating a brighter future for Iraqi citizens, gaining the trust of the populace.

"This is a very slow process," said Mireles. "Building a new government is not going to happen overnight. Even if it doesn't happen in our lifetime, our children will be able to see the progress that we are working today."

For more from 3rd BCT, visit <http://www.facebook.com/3bct4id>

Building a bridge to a better future

By Spc. David Dyer
3-1 Cav. Public Affairs

COLZULU—Soldiers currently deployed with Troop B, 3rd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, find themselves performing missions that might not be typical to a cavalryman. Their current deployment, they find themselves working to improve the quality of life in their operational environment.

The ancient city of Salman Pak is approximately 15 miles south of Baghdad near a peninsula formed by a broad eastward bend of the Tigris River. It is named after Salman the Persian, a companion of Muhammad who is buried there. Salman Pak houses the remains of the, once majestic, Persian Sassanid capitol, Ctesiphon, and the Arch of Ctesiphon which is one of the oldest freestanding arches in the world.

An old U.S. Army ribbon bridge, built in 2004, had joined the farming commu-



Photo by Spc. David Dyer
Soldiers from the 250th Engineer Company, assemble a section of Salman Pak's new Mabey-Johnson Bridge in Iraq June 5.

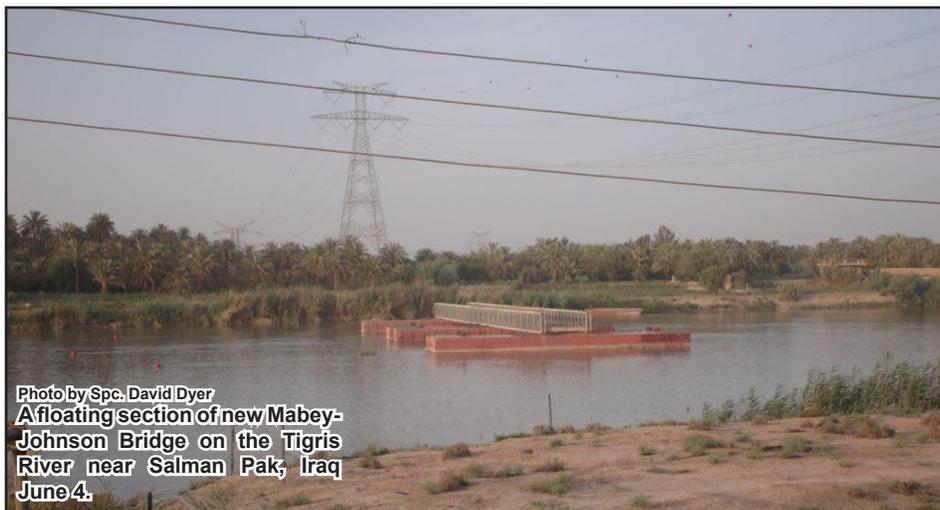


Photo by Spc. David Dyer
A floating section of new Mabey-Johnson Bridge on the Tigris River near Salman Pak, Iraq June 4.

nity on one side of the Tigris River with the urban center of Salman Pak on the opposite bank. Before that time, locals had to travel for several hours in order to cross the river. The ribbon bridge at Salmon Pak was never intended to be a permanent fixture.

In June, a new Mabey-Johnson floating bridge was constructed by Soldiers from the 250th Engineer Company, while the Soldiers from Troop B, 3-1 Cav. Regt. provided security on the southern bank of the Tigris River.

A Mabey-Johnson bridge is a portable pre-fabricated truss bridge, designed for use by military engineers to upgrade routes for heavier traffic. According to the manufactures, the bridge can be used as a rescue bridge for relief in natural disasters or as a semi-permanent bridge to open up roads in some of the most remote regions of the world.

The new bridge was installed in three phases beginning May 19 when the old bridge was removed. The new bridge was then positioned using engineers standing on shore coordinating with others on boats to assemble the multiple pieces. Finally ramps and access roads were constructed making the mission complete June 16.

The cavalry scouts from Bonecrusher Troop secured the southern bridgehead. Under the merciless blaze of the summer sun, in temperatures upwards of 120 degrees, troopers maintained a close watch on their surroundings. They engaged in

friendly banter amongst themselves in order to remain alert, leaving the Engineers to focus on their project at hand

“Our mission is to provide security in order to allow for engineer assets to construct a new bridge in the Salman Pak region,” said 1st Lt. Andrew Spanjers, a Nebraskan from Troop B. “This (bridge) will increase commerce and education in the area.”

Spc. Brandon Smith, a member of Troop B from Ligonier, Ind., was protectively standing watch over the sleeping engineers on the moonlit southern bank of the Tigris River.

“This bridge is really important because you have to travel several miles in either direction to seek another crossing,” he said. “The farmers who live on the southern bank are hard working people with very little income. This bridge will make their lives a lot easier and help them to get crops to the market.”

Smith said the bridge provides locals with an easier way to do the everyday tasks that many Americans might take for granted. Children can go to school on the opposite side of the river.

“I know this may not seem like much,” Smith said, “but being a first time deployer, I feel like I am getting the chance to do my part in making this a better place.”

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TROOPS IN FOCUS

Danger Forward

June 28, Issue 22

SMA visits United States Division-South

By Staff Sgt. Nathaniel Smith
1st Inf. Div., USD-S PAO

COB BASRA – The Army’s top non-commissioned officer visited Soldiers in southern Iraq to see how they are living in a deployed environment and to answer questions about the way ahead as the drawdown in Iraq approaches.

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth Preston, the Army’s senior enlisted member, visited Soldiers of United States Division-South at Contingency Operating Base Basra, Patrol Base Minden, and the Shalamcha Point of Entry along the Iraq-Iran border.

At PB Minden, which is occupied by Soldiers from one of his former units, the 10th Cavalry Regiment, Preston had a chance to see fitness, recreation, dining and living facilities for the troopers, which he said play a role in the readiness of a unit.

“What goes on in the dining facility is a big part of the morale, part of the esprit de corps; it’s where units and organizations come together,” Preston said.

Down the road from Minden, Pres-



Photo by Staff Sgt. Nathaniel Smith

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth Preston, senior enlisted member of the U.S. Army, talks to a Soldier with the 4th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division at Patrol Base Minden in southern Iraq June 25. Preston is a former member of the 10th Cav. Regt.

ton saw border operations first hand at Shalamcha POE along the Iranian border, where Soldiers of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division prevent smugglers from bringing contraband into Iraq.

After Shalamcha, Preston flew to Contingency Operating Base Basra, home of the United States Division-South headquarters, where he held a town hall meeting to address issues and answer any questions.

Preston, a native of Mount Savage, Md., said such meetings help him gauge where his priorities should lie.

“I can tell by the questions you ask, what’s on your mind, things we need to do a better job at getting information out, and things we need to fix in the future,” he said.

Spc. Joshua Mitchell, an air traffic controller with the 1st Infantry Division headquarters, said as the son of a retired sergeant major, he has a unique appreciation for the sergeant major of the Army taking

time out of his schedule to talk to troops.

“It allows me to remember the things my father did and went through,” said Mitchell, a Fort Riley, Kan., native. “That’s a lot of long nights and no weekends so the significance of the time and determination it takes to reach that rank is something I look up to.”

Preston fielded questions on a variety of topics, from future uniforms and uniform policies to how the drawdown in Iraq impacts dwell time.

After the question and answer session, Preston left the troops with praise for the job they are doing in Iraq.

“We’re very proud of the mission you’re doing over here right now. We’re very proud of all the things you’ve accomplished,” he said. “We want you to finish up your mission over here and get back to your families.”



Photo by Staff Sgt. Nathaniel Smith

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth Preston, senior enlisted member of the U.S. Army, addresses United States Division-South Soldiers at the Contingency Operating Base Basra Town Hall June 25. Preston fielded questions on a variety of topics, from uniforms and uniform policies to dwell time.

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

Logistician finds place in Army

By Sgt. Ben Hutto

3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf Div PAO

COS KALSU – Staff Sgt. Happiness Aghedo never dreamed about joining the U.S. Army as a child.

Growing up in Lagos, Nigeria, Aghedo, a logistician with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 203rd Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, said she had all she ever wanted in her birth country. One of 12 children, she grew up in a loving family that valued education.

Aghedo was pursuing her degree in International Studies at Ambrose Ally University, Ekpomo, Nigeria, when she received jarring news: she had the chance to go to America.

“Every year, Nigeria has a lottery for visas to the U.S.,” she said. “My uncle always played for me. When my number came up, my family was very excited, but I didn’t want to go.”

Aghedo had planned to finish her degree and work in her brother’s law firm. She never wanted to leave for America, but her family was insistent.

“They wanted me to go to America,” she said. “They said I would go to America to go to school and come back home.”

Aghedo moved to New York to live with her aunt, who immediately told her to get a job, and for six months, she worked at a fast food establishment.

“My aunt thought it would be good for me,” Aghedo said. “It gave me a chance to learn the currency and the culture. In two to three months, I had become a shift manager and made lots of friends.”

Working at the restaurant, she met an Army recruiter and her life changed. As she was about to enroll in college, he convinced her to take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery.

“I tried to fail it,” she said. “He told me I had to join the Army; that it was too good an opportunity for me.”

She prepared to enter the Army, but kept it from her family until after she signed the papers.

“My aunt was not happy,” Aghedo said. “She didn’t speak to me for a month. All



Photo by Sgt. Ben Hutto

Outside the warehouse of COS Kalsu, Staff Sgt. Happiness Aghedo, a logistician assigned to HHC, 203rd BSB, moves a tarp as she looks for vehicle parts.

hell broke loose when I told my parents. They kept telling me that they did not send me to America to join the Army. They sent me to America to go to school.”

Nevertheless, Aghedo joined the Army in March 2003 and headed to Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., for basic training.

“I was the first one to get called for everything,” she said. “It was crazy. I had to wear glasses, and I didn’t talk much. A lot of the people thought because I was African that I was dumb. I understood everything; I was just scared.”

Aghedo left Advanced Individual Training as an honor graduate and has accumulated rank rapidly. She is scheduled to be promoted to sergeant first class after only seven years in the Army. One of her proudest moments, however, was earning her U.S. citizenship in 2005.

“It felt really good to do it,” she said. “It felt like I had accomplished something.”

As an Army logistician, Aghedo keeps other Soldiers supplied.

“I love my job,” she said. “It involves a lot of headaches and a lot of stress, but I love it. I enjoy finding parts for the unit. I like getting into the system and locating what we need.”

“At the end of the day, it makes you feel like you really accomplished some-

thing and helped people,” she said.

During the 3rd HBCT’s current deployment, Aghedo was asked to leave her comfort zone and work as a section sergeant in the 203rd BSB’s support operations.

“The products she is producing are being used at Fort Lee, Va., to train Soldiers,” said 1st Sgt. Demetrius Brown, HHC, 203rd BSB. “She is doing that well working outside of her job.”

Aghedo has worked so hard at learning her new role that she often needs to be forced by Brown to get meals.

“It has been very challenging, but it has been good,” Aghedo said about her current job. “I had to learn about vehicles and vehicle maintenance. I feel the experience has made me a lot more well-rounded.”

Brown never doubted that Aghedo would be successful with her new post.

“She is the best staff sergeant I have seen in 21 years,” he said. “Her work ethic is what sets her apart. She is totally committed to the mission. I give her multiple things to do, and she gets results. I hate to do it, but she is my go-to person.”

Spc. Tiffany Thompson, a logistician with HHC, likes working under Aghedo.

“She taught me about being a professional,” said Thompson, a native of Buena Park, Calif. “She has taught me to exceed the standards and the importance of trying to learn as much as you can professionally. She can be very tough on me, but she is also very caring.”

Brown said many Soldiers in his unit feel that way about Aghedo.

“She is very humble and that is part of what draws leaders’ attention to her,” he said. “You couldn’t tell the level of her professionalism just looking at her; she isn’t someone that likes to draw attention to herself, but when you look at what she does, she stands out.”

Aghedo is looking forward to working as a recruiter after this deployment.

“For the last eight years I have been pushing myself,” she said. “You get rewards from effort. I always ask, ‘What makes you think you can’t do it?’ You have to always try, no matter what.”

For more from 3rd BCT, visit <http://www.facebook.com/3bct3id>

COMPETE, from page 1

targets inside.

After a short rest, the next event tested the Soldiers and NCOs in responding to a medical emergency, immediately followed by a combatives tournament broken down in Soldier, NCO and Iraqi Army brackets.

Staff Sgt. Joe Vasquez, a senior combatives instructor with the 1st Bn, 15th Inf. Regt., has experience hosting events such as this one, as it was a part of his combatives training. He said that working with the Iraqi and U.S. soldiers is always a good experience.

“At first there was a lot of doubt as to whether they’d be able to learn and comprehend it, then teach it,” said Vasquez, a Los Angeles native. “The language barrier was huge. But we were all proved different. They learned it just as well and just as fast as the American Soldiers.”

The Soldiers and NCOs ended the day with a knowledge board in front of the different sergeants major from around USD-S, where they answered questions about all topics of military life, from Soldier care to weapons knowledge.

Sgt. Patrick Baray, a San Antonio resident, with Signal Co., DHHB, 1st Inf. Div., is using the competition to prepare for his future in the Army.

“This shows me everything I need to know with all the different weapons and combatives.” Baray said. “I can get with people that have more levels, get more techniques down.”

At the end of the day, the two competitors from the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Spc. Kyle Ouimet and Staff Sgt. Timothy Briggs took home the title of Soldier and NCO of the Quarter. The winners received a four-day pass to Qatar among other perks.

Before they left, the competitors and Soldiers from COS Echo were invited to a barbecue hosted by the 1st Bn, 15th Inf. Regt., and a performance by Controlled Detonation, the 1st Inf. Div. rock band.

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



Photo by Sgt. Cody Harding
Spc. John Young, a Soldier with the 3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div. aims in during the USD-S Soldier of the Quarter Competition conducted June 18 on COS Echo.

Traffic jams a thing of the past

By Collin Binkley

THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Columbus, Ohio—Drivers stuck in traffic won't be seeing red for long.

That's the goal of a proposed \$36.8 million project that would connect Columbus' 1,000 traffic lights to a central command station. Then, traffic engineers could adjust the timing of lights throughout the city whenever they see crashes or other problems that could snarl traffic.

Controllers at the Traffic Management Center already can monitor Downtown streets and adjust signals to keep vehicles moving.

The City Council is to vote Monday on spending almost \$6.1 million for the first phase of the project. If the plan is approved, engineers will be able to adjust traffic patterns in more areas outside the central city by 2012. The rest of the city would be under their supervision in 2018.

Construction would begin this summer, probably in August, said Doug Roberts, a design and construction manager for the Public Service Department. The initial phase of the project will require work along the city's highways, but "we don't



Photo by KYLE ROBERTSON

Columbus traffic engineer Alan Hankins is monitoring nearly 100 cameras along I-71 and I-270.

anticipate a lot of lane closures," Roberts said.

The update also could help keep police and firefighters safe by installing technology that turns traffic lights green as emergency vehicles approach, letting them safely whiz through.

He said the city has installed that technology at a couple of traffic signals on N. High Street between 5th and Lane avenues, but firefighters are instructed to slow down at other intersections.

Tilton said officials will decide how

many signals would get that technology as they review the city's lights to connect them with the fiber-optic wiring.

Of the project's \$36.8 million budget, \$26.9 million would come from a federal grant obtained for the city by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission. The city would pay \$9.9 million in design costs using taxpayer money.

Columbus is the hometown of Staff Sgt. Timothy Mollett, who appears in the story on page 5.

Seguin FD trains for actual emergencies

By Ron Maloney

The Gazette-Enterprise

Seguin, Texas — The radio call late Thursday morning was a surprising one for anybody who listens to Seguin's public safety radio network.

"Medic 3, AirCare 1."

"Medic 3, AirCare 1."

"AirCare 1, Medic 3, go ahead."

"Medic 3, do you want us to come in 'hot?'"

"Affirmative, AirCare 1."

Coming in "hot" is anathema to a helicopter pilot except in wartime or in case of the most dire of emergencies because what it means is a steep, fast touchdown with

little margin for safety or time to correct a problem or an error. It requires focus, concentration and a tremendous amount of experience on the part of the aircrew to ensure nothing goes wrong.

For a fire department's paramedics it means they will rush a patient into the "bird" while its rotors are still turning under power a scant few feet overhead, a less-than-optimal and sometimes dangerous situation in its own right, but this time, on a parking lot at the Seguin Events Complex, it wasn't an emergency.

"We were doing what's called 'hot load' training," said Seguin Fire Department Battalion Chief Rusty Krueger. "You basically come in, land as if you were

loading a patient quickly onto a helicopter and then take off."

The patients in this case were firefighters who were then treated to a free ride over the city — albeit strapped to a Gurney that didn't allow them to do any rubbernecking to enjoy the view.

But this training wasn't so much about the ride as it was about safely loading the helicopter.

"That particular helicopter's exhaust is out the back," Krueger said. "It's basically for practice loading the patient and avoiding the hot exhaust."

Seguin is the hometown of Pfc. Xavier Guerrero, who appears in the lead story this week.

Morale Call



Dear Basra Betty,

There is a Soldier here working in the Main who has a wife back on Fort Riley and she is 7 months pregnant, and they have a 1-year-old child already. This spouse has been offered a new house in Forsyth over by the new PX and accepted the house.

Now my question is: does she get her stuff moved? Her husband is deployed. It is an optional move, so the Army will not pay for it, rear detachment said they don't help people moveare there any options left besides paying to move her stuff?

—Concerned boss

Dear Concerned,

Thanks for writing in. Bear with me as I'm going to have to make a few assumptions here, but I'll do my best... Since you are stating this is an "optional move" that the Army will not pay for, I'm going to assume that it is from one on-post house to another simply because of personal preference. If that is the case, you are correct.

According to Joint Federal Travel Regulation, Volume 1, "a short distance HHG move is not authorized in order to accommodate a member's personal problems, convenience, or morale."

So let's get to the question at hand. Are there any other options besides paying random guys to move your Soldiers stuff? In my opinion, there are several, and they all start with the Army community.

One of the main reasons I've continued to serve in the military for so many years is due to the strong sense of community and extended family. When we deploy away from our families, our Army community has a responsibility to step in and open their arms to our loved ones. They do that in the form of Family Readiness

Groups, chaplains, neighbors and other support groups.

Now as you said the Rear-D does not have the responsibility to move our families' household goods, but there are agencies that our families can reach out to as I've stated above. I'd be hard pressed to believe that if this Soldier's wife was to call and say she was pregnant, had a small child and at the very least would like someone to come and sit with her while the movers pack her stuff she would be told no.

We believe in the battle buddy system over here, so I see no reason why if a woman feels uncomfortable, she should sit in a house alone with strangers while they pack her stuff in the states either. That being said, I wholeheartedly believe the chaplains at Fort Riley would be happy to coordinate someone to assist her. Now that doesn't mean that this family's choice to move will negate this Soldier's financial obligation to pay the movers, it is a choice after all.

Basra Betty

ROCK AND ROLL TRIVIA WORLD CUP OF ROCK N' ROLL

ROUND 1. See if you can match the performers with the World Cup nation they're from. (Easy level)

Santana



Wolfmother



Scorpions



Beatles



Chicago



ROUND 2. Rock stars are usually stereotyped as skinny un-athletic guys who spend their time practicing their chops instead of playing sports. See if you can answer these questions about musicians who also play sports.

1) After a short career as a minor league soccer player in the 1960s, what singer traded early morning practices for late night rave ups and went on to superstardom with hits such as "Maggie May" and "Every Picture Tells a Story"?

2) Heavy metal legends Iron Maiden are one of the most athletic bands on and off stage. All of the members are avid soccer players, guitarists Adrian Peterson and Dave Murray are frequent tennis partners, and singer Bruce Dickinson has competed internationally in what martial art?

3) Which member of Metallica is the son of a tennis pro?

4) What rap star was derided as a "punk track star" by a rival at the beginning of his career, but has since parlayed his athleticism into acting roles in the movies Wildcats, On Any Given Sunday, and Rollerball.

5) What shock rocker was known for his heavy drinking in the 1970s, but now is known for his golf rounds in the mid-70s. (Hint - although he sang "No More Mr. Nice Guy" he's always cordial on the links in numerous Pro-Am Celebrity tournaments)

Answer to this week's trivia:
ROUND 1: Santana (Mexico) Wolfmother (Austria) Scorpions (Germany) Beatles (England) Chicago (USA)
ROUND 2: (1) Rod Stewart is generally considered one of the best soccer players in rock n' roll history (2) Lars Ulrich (4) LL Cool J (5) Vincent Furnier aka Alice Cooper

Important Yearbook Notice:
PA photographers will be circulating throughout D-Main, taking pictures of BRO Soldiers at work for the yearbook. Please give them your full cooperation.

HAPPY 4TH OF JULY!

"They who can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety."

Benjamin Franklin

"I prefer the tumult of liberty to the quiet of servitude. Even this evil is productive of good. It prevents the degeneracy of government, and nourishes a general attention to the public affairs."

Thomas Jefferson

"If national pride is ever justifiable or excusable it is when it springs, not from power or riches, grandeur or glory, but from conviction of national innocence, information and benevolence."

John Adams

Big Red One Puzzle of the Week



Hint for this week: Bon Jovi's favorite

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

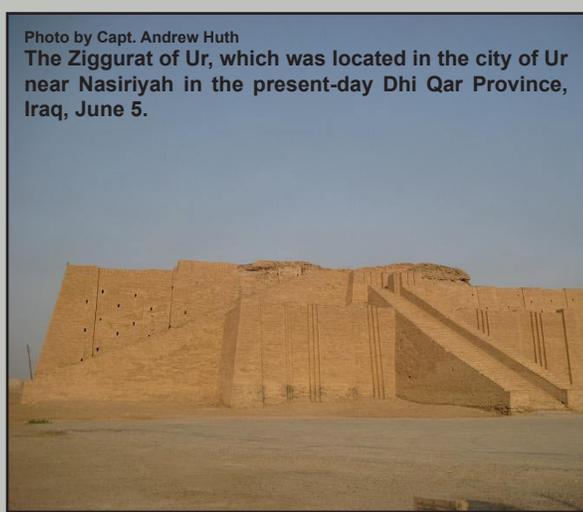
Solution for last week: Complimentary Angles

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

A look around USD-S

Photo by Capt. Andrew Huth

The Ziggurat of Ur, which was located in the city of Ur near Nasiriyah in the present-day Dhi Qar Province, Iraq, June 5.



Have a photo from around USD-S? Email it, along with the photographer's name, rank and unit, the date and place it was taken, and a short description, to nathaniel.smith5@iraq.centcom.mil, and you could have it featured here and receive a coin from DCSM Jim Champagne.

Sudoku

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

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