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December 10, 2009

IDENTIFYING NEEDS

Giving the Iraqis what we take for granted is no small task

By Capt. John Landry
TF 2-29 Pathfinder, 4th BCT, 1st Armd. Div. 

COB ADDER - I was standing outside in the middle of August with two Iraqi interpreters who were enjoying their cigarettes. It was 120-degrees Fahrenheit, without a cloud to provide us a moment of relief. Even though we were under a canopy, my breath was the coolest thing I had going for me.

To my surprise, one of the interpreters opened up a bottle of water and poured it all around us. I looked at him as if he were crazy and asked "What are you doing?"

He replied "Giving us air conditioning! Watch you'll see."

Sure enough, the small area around us felt cooler. I asked him how he learned that and he told me how his family would do it in their home during the summer months in northern Iraq before they had air conditioners. He went on to say that, at night, they would sleep on the roof because it was cooler. His family lived in a remote area and never had the luxury of air conditioning, nor electricity until the later part of the 20th century.

In contrast, most Americans have enjoyed the benefits of electricity for nearly a century. For almost all of us, going without it for any reason other than a blackout, is unacceptable. However, for most Iraqis, blackouts are a daily routine.

Of the many areas of infrastructure still needing attention in the southern corner of Iraq, access to electricity remains at the forefront for a multitude of reasons--120 degree summers for starters.

However, the most important reason is to aid each provincial government in maintaining self-sustainability in a post-Saddam era. During the Hussein regime, southern Iraqis were last-in-line for any of the central government-regulated electricity.

After the 2003 invasion, the black curtain held over the population was lifted and, for the first time, it became possible to watch satellite television, or carry a cell phone anywhere in the country. With this massive influx of technology came an increased demand for power in areas previously without a need for it.



Photo by Maj. Myles B. Caggins III

17th Fires Brigade Says Goodbye to Fellow Soldier



Story and Photos by Spc. Maurice A. Galloway 
17th Fires Brigade

Soldiers with the 17th Fires Brigade mourned the death of Pfc. Derrick D. Gwaltney, 606th Forward Support Company, during an afternoon memorial service held at Camp Wessam, Iraq. "Pfc. Gwaltney was a good Soldier and a loving father and husband," said Chaplain (Capt.) Mark Rendon, 1st Battalion (Air Assault), 377th Field Artillery Regiment. "He will be missed dearly by all of his friends and family members."

Derrick Daniel Gwaltney was born

Dec. 18, 1987 to Billy J. and Patricia F. Gwaltney of Fort Meyers, Fla. Derrick enlisted in the U.S. Army on July 22, 2008, choosing to serve his country as a cook. He was the husband of Heidi B. Gwaltney and the proud parent of Saphira F. Gwaltney and Kyrah E. Carvallo.

Derrick died a non-combat related death on November 28, 2009 at the age of 22. Derrick will be remembered by those who came in contact with him, missed by those who spent time with him and loved by all who called him battle buddy, friend and family member.



Pfc. Derrick D. Gwaltney

THE RED BULL REPORT

34th Red Bull Infantry Division
Public Affairs Office



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Maj. Gen. Rick Nash



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34th Inf. Div. PAO: Lt. Col. Kevin Olson
OIC, Command Information: 1st Lt. Shamika Hill
NCOIC, Command Information: 1st Sgt. David Bennett
NCOIC: Staff Sgt. Chris Carney
Managing Editor: Sgt. Ben Kibbey
Graphics Designer: Sgt. Francis Horton
Layout/Design: Spc. Francesca Stanchi
Staff Writers: Sgt. Francis Horton, Spc. Sam Soza,
Spc. Samantha Johnson, Pfc. J. Princeville Lawrence

Contributing Units

-  3rd BCT, 3rd Infantry Division
-  17th Fires Brigade
-  4th BCT, 1st Armored Division
-  28th Combat Aviation Brigade
-  367th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Media Queries please contact 34th Inf. Div. Public Affairs Office at MND-S_PAO@iraq.centcom.mil

Bucca Golf Course a Hit with Deployed Soldiers

By Master Sgt. David Bennett
367th MPAD

CAMP BUCCA – From the air, the basic outline of Camp Bucca appears as most military forward operating bases in Iraq, except for nine fluttering white flags affixed to poles jutting from the ground.

The flags aren't tokens of surrender but they often elicit cries of frustration



Photo by Master Sgt. David Bennett

Spc. Robert Schmude, D Co., 132 DSB, of Manawa, Wis. practices for the Thanksgiving golf tournament at Camp Bucca, Iraq.

from those Soldiers who have thrown their best at this opponent, only to be repelled.

Master Sgt. Brian Franzen, platoon sergeant "D" Co., 132nd BSB, said it's just par for the course.

After a few minutes of speaking with him, it's easy to detect Franzen's passion for the Army, his Irish heritage and golf – not necessarily in that order. He said in his youth, he and his brothers created their own courses. Today, he rarely travels without his clubs, including his latest deployment to Iraq.

Franzen, an infantryman with the Wisconsin Army National Guard, can lay claim to designing what may be the only golf course in southern Iraq.

Until recently, Camp Bucca was home to the largest Theater Internment Facility in Iraq. The facility housed thousands of detainees before it closed this past September.

With guard towers providing a unique backdrop, Franzen recently explained how the golf course concept originated as he prepared for his second golf tournament for military members at Camp Bucca – this one commemorating Thanksgiving.

After two representatives from the

Professional Golfers' Association of America made a morale visit last summer, Franzen suggested they hit a few. A brief conversation prompted Franzen to pitch the idea for a driving range to Marine Col. Daniel Lund, Camp Bucca commander. The conversation turned to the feasibility of constructing a nine-hole course.

"It wasn't too hard," Franzen said. "It only took me two hours to lay it out on paper."

If the idea made sense on paper, finding the materials to begin work was another matter. Castaway parts were converted, such as old tent poles for flag sticks and carved-up, plastic, 55-gallon drums for the cups.

"One night I was digging the holes, and I was at hole number three and a soldier who worked for law and order was walking by and asked me what I was digging for," Franzen said. "I said 'Hey, I'm making a golf course. What are you doing?'"

Tent poles could not substitute for putters however. Due to a lack of necessary clubs and balls, Franzen contacted an acquaintance at Callaway Golf, who

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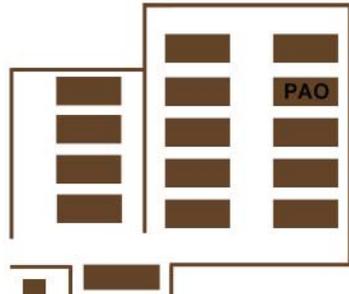


a CHANCE TO SHOW YOUR APPRECIATION TO THOSE WHO APPRECIATE YOU...

SWEET MARTHA'S COOKIE PACKERS & SKYPE

Dec. 19, 2100-0000, come to the PAO trailer behind Green Beans Coffee near D-Main to Skype with volunteers packing cookies for you!

Contact 1st Lt. Shamika Hill: shamika.hill@iraq.centcom.mil



Green Beans



34TH RED BULL INFANTRY DIVISION

MINNESOTA VIKINGS VIEWING PARTY

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2009

VIKINGS VS. BENGALS

21:00 hrs. @ THE RED BULL LSA, near the VOLLEYBALL COURTS



The Power Trip
weekdays
6 to 9am

Be in the audience as the Red Bulls Viewing Party is linked LIVE to the KFAN broadcast to the Metrodome.

Mike "The Superstar" Morris for this live RADIO broadcast.

Game coverage from 2100 to 0000. Stay after the game for the post-game show



COME JOIN THE EXCITEMENT!
REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE.



SKOL, VIKINGS
GO VIKES!



ARABIC WORD OF THE DAY

Mumkin-
Maybe



ممكن من الحظ

Red Bull Radio PODCAST

Border
Transistion
Team



www.TheRedBulls.org/podcast

S U D O K U

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TITO RITZ

Huntington
Beach Bad Boy

December 14

Meet & Greet
1900 to 2100
at the USO



Serving Our Troops is providing a St. Paul steak dinner to 6,500 U.S. Service members here in Iraq and Kuwait, as well as for 2,000 family members in St. Paul simultaneously.

Want to show your appreciation to the traveling party, volunteers, elected officials and community for their support?

Let them know how much we appreciate their generosity:

Log onto your Twitter account and tweet #servingourtroops to show your appreciation.



St. Paul to Iraq

Saturday, December 12th

For all Servicemembers on COB Basra:

Delicious Steak Meal with all the trimmings

What: Volunteers from *Serving Our Troops*, a Minnesota-based civic group, are traveling from St. Paul to Iraq to serve COB Basra service members a grilled steak dinner.

Special DFAC Dinner Menu: On Saturday, December 12, both DFACs will serve a 12-ounce grilled steak dinner meal during regularly-scheduled hours, courtesy of *Serving Our Troops*.

A Special Invitation for Minnesota Soldiers:

Dinner with your family

In St. Paul: *Serving Our Troops* is hosting a unique, free event for families at the Roy Wilkins Auditorium from 9:30am to 3:00pm CST. Your families will enjoy free steak meals, ice cold beverages, live music, special kids activities, and free tickets to the Science Museum and Children's Museum. **Tell your family to RSVP to www.servingourtroops.com.**

The St. Paul family event will be linked via two-way video to the COB Basra Red Bull LSA.

At COB Basra: Join *Serving Our Troops* volunteers for a special event in the Red Bull LSA from 1700 to 2200. Live music from the 34th Red Bull Division Band and special guest GB Leighton. Freshly-grilled steaks, a special program, and a live video link back to St. Paul, with opportunities to speak to loved ones.

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in turn sent out the word to other organizations that there was a fledging golf course in Iraq in need of equipment.

Soon, Franzen, who is from Dane, Wis., near Madison, began receiving donations of balls, drivers, and irons from The PGA, Callaway, Nike Golf and even Arnold Palmer. However, it was when a representative of Legends Reno Tahoe Open Inc. set up a donations drive that sets of used clubs began arriving on pallets.

Carriers, including DHL, offered to ship the gear for free.

"The generosity of people has really blown me away," Franzen said.

For good players, the perpetual presence of hazards keeps it interesting, but it can be difficult anytime when the weather turns abruptly, as when a recent wind storm blew in across the sandy soil, Franzen said. Though there are no bunkers or water hazards, the course sports its own challenges.

A foursome can navigate the nine-hole course in about two-and-a-half hours – barring any unforeseen obstacles. Actually, many can be heard from a distance, as trucks rumble down gravel roads that traverse part of the course, as well as Blackhawk helicopters that routinely land in the vicinity.

The 2,400-yard course was designed around the daily activities of the FOB, Franzen said, and sometimes golfers have to halt play for assorted vehicles.

Explaining that he needed a par 5 as he walked toward the fifth hole, Franzen devised an approach challenging enough for most. Dubbed the "Bucca Monster," the 570-yard hole is framed by concertina wire on one side and is a straight shot from the tee.

The closing of the detainee complex has shifted work priorities, including erecting the completion of a new water treatment plant capable of producing millions of gallons of drinking water monthly for local residents.

Still, when the time allows, the flags beckon.

"The nice part is that because everyone has different schedules, it affords people to come out here at different times," Franzen said.

Lund said missions still go on daily and the grind of a year-long deployment, though winding down, goes on.

"It's been such a huge boost to morale," he said.

The commander is one of 52 people who tried their luck in the Nov. 20 tournament. In the inaugural event a month before, 40 participated. The winning team recorded a final score of four under – a

total that, given the characteristics of the course, left Franzen understandably skeptical.

"In real life, if you're not lying, you're not playing really good golf," he said laughing.

Spc. Robert Schmude, a truck driver with "D" Co., 132nd and Manawa, Wis. native, said, while the idea of a golf course seemed odd to him at first, he realized the value of the venture.

"It's not a bad idea, and it enables us to relax on our day off," Schmude said.

As a reminder, the unassuming 124-yard hole nine bears a placard that says "Back to Work."

In two months, Franzen's unit will begin to redeploy back home. The golf course will stay and the equipment will be handed over to another unit. For now, the infantryman and amateur golf course architect practices whenever he can find a couple of hours.

"When I get home I'm going to be really good," Franzen said, referring to his sand game.

For more of Master Sgt. Bennett's stories, visit: www.TheRedBulls.org/highlander

HOMETOWN HIGHLIGHT

Dane County was formed in 1836 as a territorial county. It was named after Nathan Dane, a Massachusetts delegate to the Congress of the Confederation who helped carve Wisconsin out of the Northwest Territory

Chipping Contest!



December 12, 1500 to 1600
Open field next to the PX
PRIZES for 1st, 2nd and 3rd

Twenty-five openings, on a first contact basis
Contact Spc. Belland, RBVB at james.belland@iraq.centcom.mil

TEE TIME

Tee it up for the Troops is traveling with Serving our Troops. J. B. Ball will be in attendance. Ball started Tee It Up For The Troops to honor his son stationed in Iraq and to help veterans and their families.

Tee it up for the Troops, Inc. is a non-profit organization created to help support the fallen and disabled members of our Armed Forces, and their families.

This event is sponsored by **Tee It Up For The Troops.**

Join Mike Morris
Weight Lifting
Challenge



All Are Invited To A
Bench Press Contest
December 12, Main Gym
1300 to 1400

**From Page 1
NEEDS**

an increased demand for power in areas previously without such a need.

Task Force Pathfinder, 4th Brigade, 1st Armored Division, the main effort of the Army's first advise and assist brigade, has been tasked with building provincial civil capacity in Al Muthanna, Dhi Qar and Maysan provinces in southern Iraq for a little over five months.

Although each province's needs differ, the necessity for a more capable electrical network exists everywhere. As a result, the taskforce is currently undertaking 31 electrical projects ranging from transformer repair and network expansion to training local Department of Electricity employees how to maintain their network.

However, this is only a small portion of the taskforce's 140 total projects covering categories such as water, trash, transportation, health, governance, education and agriculture.

Each project is a direct result of constant coordination between provincial governments, each assigned a U.S. State Department run Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), and Task Force Pathfinder.

This is a complex dance of identifying needs, locating funding, opening it up for bidding to local contractors, reviewing all contracts and finally pro-

viding oversight to ensure the project stays on schedule and on budget. When performed correctly, this massive, inter-agency operation yields the potential for the majority of Iraqis, instead of a select few, to perform the simple act of turning on an air conditioner in 120 degree heat.

For more of Capt. Landry's stories, visit: www.TheRedBulls.org/Landry

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34th Red Bull Infantry Division

Leave messages for friends and family, post and share your photos, share Red Bull news and video links, and INVITE YOUR FAMILY & FRIENDS TO JOIN!



THE POWER TRIP

BE IN
THE
STUDIO
AUDIENCE!

MIKE "THE SUPERSTAR" MORRIS

LIVE FROM COB BASRA, FRI., DEC. 11

1500-1800 TOWN HALL (MAIN CHAPEL)
NEAR D-MAIN AND GREEN BEANS COFFEE





Around the world in 34 seconds



COPENHAGEN – Developing nations who face huge climate change burdens are demanding that wealthy nations shoulder more of the costs, as a leaked Danish document and fresh evidence of a hotter planet raised temperatures at the U.N. climate conference. Negotiators on Wednesday were trying to bridge the difficult gaps among 192 nations and stem a growing chasm between rich and poor on the third day of the U.N. climate conference. A key speaker will be U.S. Environmental Protection Agency head Lisa Jackson, whose agency just gave President Barack Obama a new way to cut back on greenhouse gas emissions. Obama will join more than 100 national leaders converging on Copenhagen for the final days of bargaining late next week.



WOODBIDGE, Va. – In a scene reminiscent of other school shootings, a Northern Virginia Community College teacher spotted a weapon and ducked to avoid gunfire. Students ran from the classroom building while others barricaded themselves inside, piling desks in front of doors. This time, though, no one was hurt. Police said Jason Michael Hamilton, 20, opened fire in a classroom Tuesday with a high-powered rifle, but did not hit anyone and surrendered peacefully in a hallway. He was later charged with attempted murder and discharging a firearm in a school zone and was being held without bond. A neighbor described Hamilton as a loner who lived in his family’s basement in an affluent new subdivision near the school in Woodbridge, about 25 miles south of Washington, D.C. Two police cars were outside his home and wouldn’t let reporters close. Whether Hamilton had hired an attorney was not immediately clear; neither was a motive for the shooting.



PHOENIX – Danica Patrick received all kinds of advice during her lengthy flirtation with NASCAR. Some encouraged her to give it a try, while others openly wondered why IndyCar’s biggest star would open herself up to such scrutiny. Now that she’s officially a part-time NASCAR driver — she announced a two-year deal Tuesday to drive for the second-tier Nationwide Series team owned by Rick Hendrick and Dale Earnhardt Jr. — how will she be received? “I expect her to be eaten up by the wolves,” said Kelley Earnhardt, general manager of JR Motorsports. Earnhardt quickly said she was only joking, and clarified that she expects Patrick to be respected immediately. But there’s no doubt Patrick will face an enormous spotlight as she tries to become the only female driver currently competing in one of NASCAR’s top two series.



STERLING, Conn. – A holy cow in Connecticut, perhaps? Or maybe a divine bovine? A calf with a white marking on its forehead in the approximate shape of a cross was born last week at a dairy farm in Sterling, a small rustic town on the Rhode Island border. Owner Brad Davis tells WFSB-TV he thinks the marking may be a message from above, though he’s still trying to figure out what that message might be. The mostly brown calf is half Jersey, half Holstein. Neighborhood children have named it Moses. The chairman of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Dairy Science tells the Norwich Bulletin newspaper it’s not unusual for a Holstein cow to have a white marking on its head. But department chairman Ric Grummer says the cross shape is unique.