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December 16, 2009



Spc. Jason Jackson, Sgt. Jeryll Delmar and Sgt. Jacob Horning, Joint Network Node Team 7791, save their equipment from flood waters at Contingency Operating Site Garryowen, Oct. 31.

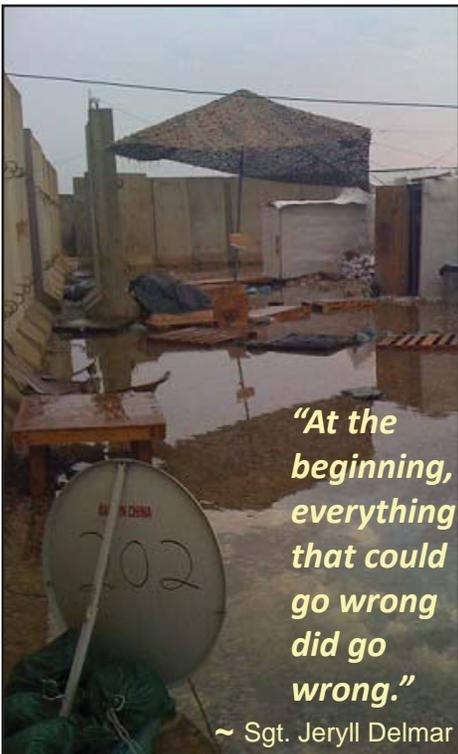


"It's amazing how important our mission is to the brigade."

— Sgt. Brandon Larson

Photos by Sgt. Charles Bagot

The seal of "B" Company, Special Troops Battalion, 4th Brigade, 1st Armored Division adorns the entrance to Joint Network Node 91 at Contingency Operating Site Garryowen.



"At the beginning, everything that could go wrong did go wrong."

~ Sgt. Jeryll Delmar

Winter rains flood the living area of Joint Network Node 91 on Contingency Operating Station Garryowen. Despite the storm, the Soldiers at COS Garryowen maintained communications with higher headquarters and the outside world.

Maintaining the network with the JNN Soldiers

1st Lt. Dannielle Needler
4th Special Troops Battalion, 4th Brigade, 1st Armored Division



COB ADDER – Communication, whether it's in-country or calling back home, the morale of troops and success of missions is inherently dependent upon it.

Keeping communications open for the 4th Brigade, 1st Armored Division is the responsibility of "signaleers." These technicians enable the commander to send key tactical messages and allow Soldiers to make morale calls home.

The newly-promoted team chief for the Joint Network Node, Sgt. Brandon Larson from Coon Rapids, Minn., along with his operators Sgt. Adrien Zavala, from Jal, N.M., Spc. Andrew Nelson, from Greenfield,

Ind., Spc. Aaron Stevens, from Fayetteville, N.C., and Spc. Victor Crum, from Montgomery, Ala., emplace the equipment, run cables, and provide the access point for the rest of the brigade's communications.

However, just like any Signal operation, nothing starts off smoothly.

"At the beginning, everything that could go wrong did go wrong," said Larson.

Despite the challenges and obstacles throughout the emplacement process, the Soldiers of "B" Company were able to remain focused on the mission.

3rd HBCT ministry team open Soldiers' pantry

By Sgt. Ben Hutto
3rd HBCT Public Affairs Office 

FOB KALSU – With all the groups and individuals who want to send packages to help deployed Soldiers, there can sometimes be a glut of items piled up with no clear way to get them to the Soldiers who need them most. At Forward Operating Base Kalsu, the ministry team solved this issue with a pantry.

The chaplains and chaplain assistants of the 203rd Brigade Support Battalion and the Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the opening of a supply pantry for the Soldiers of Forward Operating Base Kalsu, Dec. 8.

The pantry, which is stocked with contributions from organizations like Operation Soldier, church groups and independent businesses from across the country, offers free items to Soldiers three days a week: Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

The pantry offers a variety of items including food, drink mixes, paperback books, greeting cards, DVDs, T-shirts, hygiene products and playing cards.

“The opening of this building shows everyone here how much the people back home care about us, but it also shows what our chaplain assistants are capable of,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Spencer Gray, 203rd BSB. “From the beginning, they got out front on this and made it happen. This is a great example of what taking care of Soldiers is all about.”

For more of Sgt. Hutto's stories, visit:
www.TheRedBulls.org/Hutto



Photos by Ben Hutto

Command Sgt. Maj. Spencer Gray, 203rd BSB, and Command Sgt. Maj. Antonio Jones, BSTB, 3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div., cut the ribbon as part of the opening of the Soldiers' pantry at FOB Kalsu, Dec. 8. Stocked with contributions from a variety of organizations from the United States, the facility offers everything from snacks to DVDs.



Soldiers assigned to the 3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div., go through items offered at the Soldier's pantry at FOB Kalsu, Dec. 8. The pantry, which is stocked with donations ranging from snack foods to paperback books, offers a variety of quality-of-life items to Soldiers for free.

THE RED BULL REPORT

34th Red Bull Infantry Division
Public Affairs Office



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

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Iraq's first line of defense secures border crossing

By 1st Lt. Juan Torres, Jr.
2nd Squadron, 13th Cavalry Regiment



JSS AL WAHAB — Iraq's first line of defense, their border police, trained at the Al Sheeb Port of Entry, led by Port of Entry Transition Team "Juggernaut," made significant advances in improving border security in the southern Maysan province.

Because of the increasing importance of effective PoE operations to combat illegal trafficking, the Border Police of Al Sheeb, Iraq, train to provide border security while ensuring a steady flow of commercial and pedestrian traffic.

"At the PoETT level we are working with our counterparts to build a professional and independent unit, which strives to secure their operational environment in the most professional manner," said Maj. Jay Watkins, team chief, from Henderson, Ky.

The PoETT's partnership with Iraqi border police improves their ability to effectively manage security at the border crossing.

"The training we offer provides Iraqis a safer, more secure nation," said Watkins.

Past training for the border police includes personnel readiness, vehicle inspections, commercial cargo inspections, personnel inspections and detainee operations. In-depth instructions also focus on assessing border police reactions to threats of hostile force, both internal and external, to the port of entry.

"As the PoE forces continue to grow and progress, they will take their knowledge and professionalism they have learned with them and use these skills to mentor their future subordinates," Watkins added.

Sgt. 1st Class Antonio Jurilla, PoETT operations, from Mount Clemens, Mich., is one of the many trainers tasked with developing

and leading instructions in police tactics, techniques and procedures.

"The course increased the police force's operational readiness in that they are better-prepared to execute systematic and detailed searches on commercial vehicles and personnel entering the port," said Jurilla.

Daily operations for the border police include the inspection of vehicles and foot traffic, wherein police are trained to recognize signs of smuggling.

"As the training applies to everyday occurrences, the border police look and act more professionally, which makes them a harder target, and they are able to conduct searches more effectively and efficiently than previously," said Jurilla. "In the end, they are able to keep us, themselves and the citizens of Iraq safer."

"Since we also taught the course with the expectation that those receiving training should be able to teach their peers what they have learned, the course also increased their preparation to execute internal training according to their officers' guidance," he added.

To improve the operational efficiency, particularly during peak hours, the employment of the Mobile Vehicle and Cargo Inspection System, MVACIS, makes searching larger vehicles quicker and more thorough. Advanced equipment to include the MVACIS is becoming the technological standard for PoE police and aims to strengthen the security of Iraq.

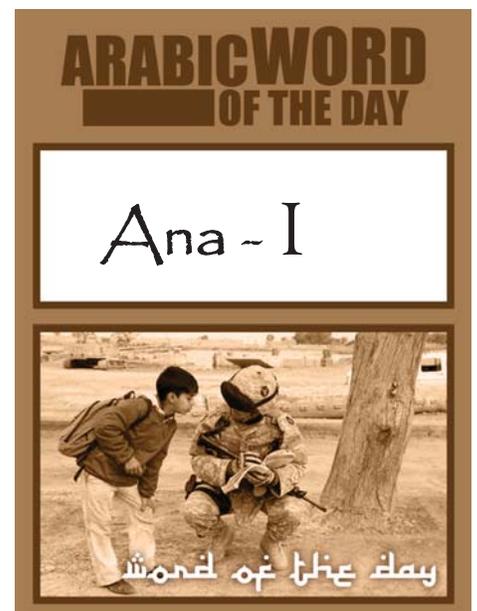
"The advise and assist mission allows U.S. forces to build a strong working relationship with their Iraqi counterparts, while, in the process, continuing to work towards an independent, efficient, and technically and tactically proficient Iraqi unit," said Watkins.

For more of 1st Lt. Torres' stories, visit:
www.TheRedBulls.org/Torres



Contributed Photo

Sgt. 1st Class Antonio Jurilla, Port of Entry Transition Team operations, from Mount Clemens, Mich., instructs border police on basic rifle marksmanship at the Al Sheeb PoE in southern Maysan province. The PoETT, deployed from Ft. Riley, Kan., spearheads the "advise and assist" mission along the Iraq-Iran border. The PoETT is attached to 4th Brigade, 1st Armored Division.



Guard in Iraq to hear about help upon return

Story courtesy of St. Cloud Times

It's no secret that the Minnesota National Guard's Beyond the Yellow Ribbon program has redefined how this nation helps its active-duty military members reintegrate with their families and communities.

Well, if all goes according to plan, those pioneering efforts are about to be taken to a new level Thursday in Central Minnesota.

From 9 to 11 a.m. Thursday at St. Cloud City Hall there will be a live video teleconference between Central Minnesota Guard members serving in Iraq and several local veteran-service providers here who will help them reintegrate upon their scheduled return early next year.

Families of deployed soldiers and new veterans with questions about such services are welcome to attend the event, which will be in the council chambers.

The goal is to have the local service providers in education, employment, and health resources and support briefly explain the services available to the Soldiers in Iraq once they return to their Central Minnesota homes.

While Soldiers still will get similar presentations as they go through the post-deployment steps, that information tends to be very general and often comes at places other than St. Cloud. Not to mention Soldiers can be overwhelmed, even distracted, by everything from the bureaucracy to emotions that accompany reintegration.

The intent of Thursday's session is to introduce in advance the Soldiers with the people they will contact for services here in Central Minnesota.

For example, the educational presentation will feature people from St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud Technical College, the Minnesota School of Business and Rasmussen Business College. Employment support will be covered by staff from the Minnesota WorkForce Center in St. Cloud, just as St. Cloud VA Medical Center staff will cover health re-

sources and support.

Clearly they will not be able to cover all the bases in a couple of hours. But the conference at least will help soldiers and families learn a little about the programs and people here to help them upon return.

The idea originated with Capt. John Donovan, a St. Joseph resident with the Guard and serving in Iraq. He suggested it while helping arrange a similar video link at the Nov. 8 Veterans Day Parade and Social at Apollo High School.

The Central Minnesota Warrior to Citizen committee embraced the idea, along with the agencies involved, the city of St. Cloud and Times Media.

Who knows? If the event is as successful as other Minnesota Guard reintegration efforts, this early, localized connection to help reintegration could be commonplace nationwide before too long.

The most important aspect, though, is simply to put local Soldiers now in Iraq in touch with the local service providers who can help them upon their return home.

**St Cloud Times •
December 14, 2009**

Attention St. Cloud Area Soldiers

A video teleconference is being held for St. Cloud Area Soldiers

Information about services offered in and around St. Cloud for returning vets

Valuable and specific information for Soldiers who reside in that area

When 17:30 Dec. 17th
Where Town Hall (Interim Chapel)

GOSPEL CHOIR EXTRAVAGANZA

COME ONE DEC. 18 1900-2100 COME ALL

COB BASRAH CONSOLIDATED CHAPEL

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

From Page 1
NETWORK

Soldiers of JNN 92 have been working around-the-clock to provide tactical communications for the Headquarters, 4th Bde., 1st Armd. Div., and its subordinate battalions. JNN 92 provides services like Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) phones, Internet, and a secure data network so that commanders can have command-and-control over every operation.

Working just as hard at Contingency Operating Site Garryowen, the soldiers of JNN Team 7791 provide vital communication services to 4th Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment.

Sgt. Jeryll Delmar from Grapevine, Texas and Spc. Paul Weigand of Manhattan, Kan., have successfully established and maintained a satellite link connecting the 4th Bn., 6th Inf. Regt.'s command to the rest of the brigade.

"It's amazing how important our mission is to the brigade," remarked Delmar.

"The Soldiers' hard work has given the battalion the ability to communicate with counterparts throughout Iraq and back to the United States," he said. "Without the hard work and dedication of these Soldiers, [4th Bn] would not be able to conduct operations as efficiently in the Iraq theater."

Soldiers are required to monitor the network and ensure the highest quality of services on a daily basis. Their responsibilities range from tracking traffic to sending reports, maintaining

the network and maintaining their equipment. The JNN Soldiers work hard to keep communication flowing.

For more of 4/1 stories, visit:
www.TheRedBulls.org/highlander



HOMETOWN HIGHLIGHT

The town was named Grapevine because of its location on the Grape Vine Prairie near Grape Vine Springs, both of which were named for the wild mustang grapes that blanketed the area. GrapeFest, which is the largest wine festival in the Southwest, is held in September.

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Around the world in 34 seconds



ISLAMABAD - The United States believes Pakistan's military has no intention of trying to seize power, U.S. Central Command chief General David Petraeus said during a visit to an ally that is struggling against Taliban militants. The movements of Pakistan's all-powerful military are closely watched both at home and in Western countries such as the United States and Britain, which are piling pressure on the government to help them fight a resurgent Taliban in Afghanistan. The military has ruled for more than half of Pakistan's turbulent 62-year history and no civilian government has ever served out a full term, earning the nuclear-armed country the reputation of being an unstable state. In a briefing with Pakistani journalists during a visit to Islamabad, Petraeus said Pakistan's military had told him it was not interested in destabilizing the elected civilian government.



WASHINGTON - Senate Democrats said on Monday they would probably drop a compromise to expand the Medicare health program for the elderly as they struggle to win the 60 votes needed to pass a broad healthcare overhaul. After a meeting to find agreement on President Barack Obama's top domestic priority, Democratic senators said they were determined to pass the bill by a self-imposed end-of-year deadline. That means dropping a compromise plan to allow those between the age of 55 and 64 to "buy-in" to Medicare, they said, after Senator Joe Lieberman threatened to join Republicans in blocking any bill with the proposal. "It is a matter of getting the support of 60 senators and that seems to be a condition to get to 60," Baucus told reporters about dropping the Medicare "buy-in" plan. The plan was announced a week ago as part of a compromise aimed at overcoming objections by moderates to a government-run "public" insurance plan. The other part of the compromise, which would replace the public option with a non-profit approach featuring private insurers and run by a federal agency, was expected to survive, senators said.



BOSTON - New England Patriots coach Bill Belichick and quarterback Tom Brady have rushed to the defense of wide-receiver Randy Moss after opponents accused him of easing off after physical challenges. Carolina Panthers cornerback Chris Gamble and safety Chris Harris both said on Sunday that Moss rarely performed well after coming in for some physical treatment. The Patriots beat the Panthers 20-10, but Moss made just one catch, a 16-yard reception that ended in a fumble, and the Panthers pair said that was because Moss was well-known as a player who "shut it down" after receiving some tough attention. "Randy Moss has been one of our most consistent players since he's been here. His production has been pretty good. I think you certainly see that in the way that teams defend him." Brady told Boston radio station WEEI that any failings in the Patriots' performance were collective.



ODD Twenty-two million missing e-mails from the Bush White House have been found, according to two groups that are settling lawsuits they filed over the issue. A former Bush spokesman, though, dismissed the claim as overblown. The announcement came from Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington and the National Security Archive, both of which were settling lawsuits they filed in 2007 over the failure of the Bush White House to install an electronic record-keeping system. The groups said computer technicians uncovered the missing e-mails. Meredith Fuchs, general counsel to the National Security Archive, said "Many poor choices were made during the Bush administration, and there was little concern about the availability of e-mail records, despite the fact that they were contending with regular subpoenas for records and had a legal obligation to preserve their records."