

The North Star

Serving Task Force Marne
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Photo by Sgt. Johnathon Jobson, TF Marne PAO

Sergeant Major of the Army Kenneth O. Preston sits with a group of Soldiers after a town hall meeting at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, near Tikrit, Iraq. Sergeant Major of the Army Preston spoke about various topics, to include upcoming changes to the junior enlisted promotions system, as well as answered a series of questions from Soldiers in the group.

SMA talks promotions, striving for excellence

**By Spc. Cassandra Monroe,
135th Mobile Public Affairs Det.**

Sergeant Major of the Army Kenneth O. Preston explained that the promotion system for junior enlisted Soldiers will dramatically change next summer, during a town hall meeting at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, near Tikrit, Iraq, Sept. 27.

The process will be streamlined and become a near paperless system. However, that is not the biggest change. Sergeant Major of the Army Preston said commander and board points will go away, and points will be redistributed toward physical fitness, range qualifications and military, educational courses.

"Soldiers need to be the best they can be. They need to be an expert in their profession," said Sgt. Maj. of the Army Preston. He went on to add that there are multiple opportunities for Soldiers to demonstrate they are better than

their peers, and those achievements will be worth promotions points.

He also talked about what makes a good noncommissioned officer.

"Spending that extra time with your Soldiers is what sets you apart as an NCO," he said. "That's what gets you promoted. It's not always about how good you are as an NCO, it's how good your Soldiers are. The most important thing you can do as an NCO is to teach, share information and coach Soldiers.

Following the town hall meeting, Sgt. Maj. of the Army Preston met with a group of Soldiers for some one-on-one Soldier interaction during a dinner at the base's Freedom Rest center. There, he addressed more questions with the promotions scale and emphasized on teaching younger Soldiers to participate in instructional self development courses, correspondence courses and military schools, such as the Warrior Leadership Course, to become a better Soldier and to excel at the boards.

"I'm a new sergeant, and I took away new ways of training to help my [Soldiers] at the board," said Sgt. David Laumeyer, a medic with 3rd Squadron, 7th U.S. Cavalry, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, and an Elizabethtown, Ky., native. "It was an honor because there's only been 13 Sergeants Major of the Army. It's not someone you get to meet often, so it was a good experience."

For others in leadership positions, such as Command Sergeant Major James Daniels, the brigade command sergeant major for 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Armored Division, having Sgt. Maj. of the Army Preston was a visit his Soldiers deserved for their hard work.

"If you go to the boards ... you learn and you should be rewarded," said Command Sgt. Maj. Daniels, a Fort Gaines, Ga., native. "This gives the Soldiers a chance to ask tough questions, then to tell their unit the answers.

3rd ID fulfills obligations, pays for land use

by Sgt. Johnathon Jobson
TF Marne PAO

Iraqi citizens who own the land on Forward Operating Base Paliwoda were compensated for the use of their land during a claims payment mission held at Joint Base Balad, Sept. 19-21.

U.S. forces use of private land throughout Iraq was vital to strategic interests during the war.

However, the land was not just taken from the country and the Iraqi citizens that own it.

Per the Security Agreement signed by both the U.S. and Iraqi governments, the citizens whose land is being used by U.S. forces are to be compensated appropriately.

Soldiers from the Client Services section of the 3rd Infantry Division Staff Judge Advocate office began receiving claims for payment of leases when FOB Paliwoda was closed in January of this year, said Capt. Todd Chard, the chief of Client Services for the 3rd ID SJA. The Client Services section then began working with

the U.S. Forces-Iraq J-7 Real Estate Division to track down names of all people who owned land used at FOB Paliwoda.

After all proper claimants were identified and funding was obligated, the names were released to local government for notification, he added.

The mission paid claims totaling the equivalent of approximately \$1 million, converted into Iraqi Dinar, to just under 300 claimants for the use of their land dating back to 2006. These claimants represented nearly half of all retroactive leases in Iraq.

Captain Chard said it was important because it carried a message to the Iraqis that U.S. forces are keeping their word by fulfilling these lease obligations.

"The Iraqis know that U.S. forces are leaving," said Capt. Chard, a Hudson Falls, N.Y., native. "We don't want to leave with the Iraqis thinking that we are occupiers, we are not. We pay for what we use and we want to compensate these civilians for some of the troubles they have endured because of

the war."

Captain Chard coordinated with the 103rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command SJA at JBB to conduct the payouts because JBB is closer to where FOB Paliwoda was located.

The payments were well received, and one Iraqi man already has plans for using the money.

"[The claims process] was very easy," said Athir Muhmmad Salman, a teacher and owner of land that was used for FOB Paliwoda. "The amount they gave me was moderate, not a large amount, but enough. I plan to use the money to purchase a new car; mine is old and broken."

As Iraqis left the pay station with the money that was owed to them, Capt. Daniel D'Isidoro, an operational law attorney for the 3rd ID SJA commented on the success of the mission.

"Everything moved along quickly," Capt. D'Isidoro, a Braintree, Mass., native, said. "All proper claims were settled and everyone was in a good mood as they were leaving. We had an excellent turnout."

Hispanic Heritage Month ignites history, dance lessons

by Spc. Cassandra Monroe
135th Mobile Public Affairs

Sombreros surrounded the tops of tables and balloons advertised a "fiesta!" at the main dining facility's overflow room at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Sept. 25. Soldiers and civilians celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month through cultural education and entertainment.

National Hispanic Heritage Month is celebrated from Sept. 15-Oct. 15, and celebrates the achievements of Hispanics in the United States.

Chief Warrant Officer

Sergio Diaz, a field artillery intelligence officer with Task Force Marne introduced the Hispanic culture with famous and memorable individuals. Chief Warrant Officer Sergio Diaz, a Miami, Fla., native, originally from Chile, spoke about Gabriela Mistral, a Chilean poet, educator, diplomat and feminist who was the first Latin American to win the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1945, and Pablo Neruda, a Chilean communist writer and politician.

Sergeant Joshua Allen, a motor pool dispatch

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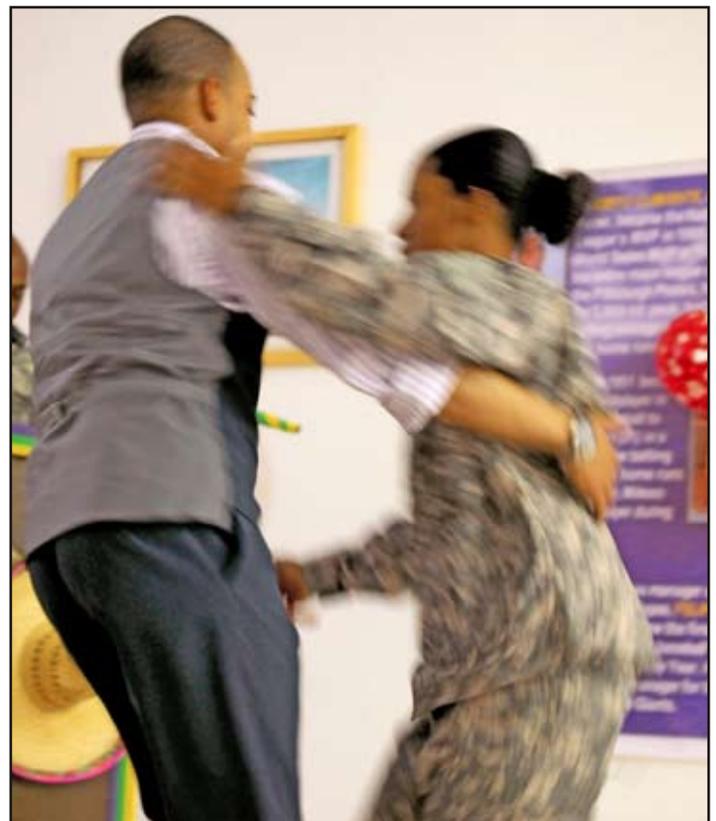


Photo by Spc. Cassandra Monroe, 135th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Specialist Felix Jimenez, a terrain specialist with HHOC, DSTB, 3rd ID, salsa dances with Staff Sgt. Mayreny Abreu, a supply sergeant with HHSC, DSTB, 3rd ID, during a Hispanic Heritage Month Luncheon, Sept. 25, at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq.

Conference focuses on police primacy, Iraq's security

By Sgt. Johnathon Jobson
TF Marne PAO

Law Enforcement Professionals, Civilian Police Advisors, Judge Advocates, Stability Transition Teams, and members of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams from Task Force Marne units met at Contingency Operating Base Speicher for a Rule of Law conference, Sept. 23, to discuss the way forward for U.S. and Iraqi Security Forces as the U.S. conducts stability operations in support of the ISF.

The conference focused on the transition to police primacy, which would give them the lead for security in the cities so that the Iraqi Army can focus on external defense.

The conference was opened by the Commanding General of TF Marne, Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo, and the TF Marne Chief of Intelligence, Lt. Col. Michael Marti, with a short briefing on the complexities of the demographics and security of northern Iraq.

Northern Iraq is a very religiously diverse and complicated area, said Maj. Gen. Cucolo. Islam is the dominant religion, but there are small groupings of other religions scattered throughout.

The area also has one thing that no other region has, the Disputed Internal Boundary area, which adds many additional layers of complexity to the security situation, he added.

The Transition of Responsibility for Internal Security to Police, or TRISP, focuses on police assuming the lead for security in the cities. This is a necessity for the security of Iraq, and will free the Iraqi Army to focus on the external defense of the county, said Lt. Col. Paul Heinlein, the TF Marne Provost Marshal.

“In many areas we still have the Iraqi Army controlling security in certain cities within U.S. Division-North. Eventually we need the Iraqi Army to transition to being prepared for and capable of external defense of the country. At the same time they will need to be ready to support police forces in internal defense as needed.”

-Lt. Col. Paul Heinlein, the TF Marne Provost Marshal

“In many areas we still have the Iraqi Army controlling security in certain cities within U.S. Division-North,” said Lt. Col. Heinlein, a Manchester, N.H., native. “Eventually we need the Iraqi Army to transition to being prepared for and capable of external defense of the country. At the same time they will need to be ready to support police forces in internal defense as needed.”

Training of the Iraqi Police is a key factor in the transition of the police assuming the lead for internal security. A few of the primary areas of training are investigative capabilities and working with the judiciary portion of the legal system.

“The police training piece of rule of law is a very important piece,” said Col. Jon Guden, the Staff Judge Advocate for TF Marne and a Chippewa Falls, Wis., native. “We put a lot of focus on that with our police training teams. We have to keep the police training linked up with what we are doing with the judges.”

“The investigative judges work heavily with the police to develop the facts, and collect statements and evidence. Improving the relationships between the police and investigative judges is one of the things we are trying to work on here,” he added.

The ITAM-Police is in charge of that training for the Iraqi Police. They

focus on making sure the Iraqi Police are receiving the proper institutional training and equipment.

“ITAM-Police focuses on the institutional side of the Iraqi Police forces,” Lt. Col. Heinlein said. “They are the equivalent of the [U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command] for the Iraqi Police. They are focused on building the infrastructure, such as training academies; building the training programs of instruction; and establishing the training so that the Iraqis can then have the facilities and equipment to train themselves.”

The ITAM-Police also makes sure that the Iraqis have the necessary equipment to conduct their mission, he added. For Lt. Col. Heinlein, the conference was a success and accomplished the mission of bringing everyone together in an open forum to discuss the current situation with the training of the Iraqi Police.

“I think the conference was successful in allowing all the brigades to hear the information from the division and ITAM-Police,” said Lt. Col. Heinlein.

“They had the opportunity to ask questions and address their concerns with guidance coming down from higher levels. It also gave them a chance to interact with their counterparts from the other brigades, even those that they may not normally have contact with.”

You are invited

Queensryche

Where: FOB Warrior - Oct. 1

Where: COB Speicher - Oct. 2

Michael Peterson

Where: FOB Cobra/Warhorse - Oct. 4

Where: Samarra/Dagger - Oct. 5

Where: McHenry/Irbil - Oct. 6

USO Handshake Tour

Where: Edge, Cobra, Cruz Morris,

Samarra and Dagger - Oct. 17

Buffalo “Jills” Cheerleaders

Where: McHenry, Irbil, India, Heider,

Nimur - Oct. 19

Chuck Mulligan

Where: FOB Warrior - Oct. 22

Where: FOB Marez - Oct. 23

Where: FOB Warhorse - Oct. 24

Task Force Marne Heroes of the North



Specialist Matthew Broyles, a Peoria, Ariz., native with Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 11th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, is the battery's senior medic and an invaluable asset to the unit. His experience level and high degree of technical competency are unique for a Soldier of his rank. Mixed with his previous combat experience, he is the type of Soldier every commander wants in his or her unit. Specialist Broyles participates in nearly every combat mission the battery executes to provide medical support to various elements when they conduct key leader engagements and patrol to deter indirect fire on US bases or other missions. In the true spirit of selfless service, he constantly coaches and mentors the battery's junior medics during his off duty time. He also works past normal duty hours to inspect and fill shortages in the unit's medical kits to ensure patrols are fully equipped to handle any situation. His hard work, subject matter expertise, and dedication to the mission makes him most deserving for selection as the Task Force Marne Hero of the North.



Maher Al-Masri (Moe), an Erie, Pa., native is an indispensable member of the G-7 section, serving as the United States Division-North Key Leader Engagement manager. He has meticulously archived and updated over 75 KLE profiles while also maintaining records for over 400 KLEs that the command group has conducted over the last year. His diligence in researching and managing the KLEs has provided more rapid updates, better information, and a more complete file than previously maintained in this area. Moe deployed to serve as a linguist for USD-N but quickly showed his diversity of skills and as a result has also served as an adjunct cultural advisor for the G-7. Due to his professionalism and never quit attitude, he is a most worthy Task Force Marne Service Provider of the Week.

A corps rich in history...



Courtesy Photo

The Task Force Marne Provost Marshal's Office celebrates the 69th birthday of the Military Police Corps at COB Speicher, Sept. 26. The Provost Marshal General's Office and Corps of Military Police was established Sept. 26, 1941. Prior to that time, except during the Civil War and World War I, there was no regularly appointed Provost Marshal General or regularly constituted Military Police Corps, although a "Provost Marshal" can be found as early as January 1776, and a Provost Corps as early as 1778. The Military Police Corps is one of the youngest branches of the U.S. Army. The Military Police Corps traces its lineage and history back to the American Revolution with the establishment of the Marechaussee Corps on June 1, 1778. Both were used for the enforcement of order within the Continental Army.

HISPANIC HERITAGE

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noncommissioned officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Support Company, Division Special Troops Battalion, 3rd ID, and a Panama City, Panama, native, also spoke to the audience about famous Hispanic athletes and celebrity figures that are well known in the Hispanic culture.

Following these educational tidbits, guest speaker Lt. Col. Jose Rafael Berrios, the Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear-Explosives operations and Force Protection officer for Task Force Marne, spoke to the audience about his Family influences in the military. Lieutenant Colonel Berrios's Family history includes his uncle, then Lt. Col. Juan Cesar Cordero Davila, who served as a battalion commander for the 65th Infantry Regiment during World War II.

"My focus was an educational piece, since the theme is heritage," said Lt. Col. Berrios. He also focused on the Hispanic community, particularly in the Army and the 3rd

Infantry Division. One of the most rewarding aspects of the event that Lt. Col. Berrios took away was the amount of young Soldiers attending the ceremony.

"It was very interesting to see a high number of junior Soldiers at this celebration," said Lt. Col. Berrios, a San Juan, Puerto Rico, native. "That is the reason why [Hispanic Heritage Month] is done, that's why my message was to teach and pass the torch [of education] to them."

A select number of Task Force Marne Salsa Dancers also performed various salsa dances for the crowd toward the end of the ceremony.

"It's important for us, as Hispanics, to represent our culture and to show that not only we're a part of the military, but also it's important for us to distinguish ourselves as Soldiers and Latin-Americans," said Spc. Felix Jimenez, a terrain analyst with Headquarters and Headquarters Operations Company, DSTB, 3rd ID, and a Silver Springs, Md., native. Specialist

Jimenez was a salsa dancer who participated in the ceremony. "It makes me feel proud to serve as a Soldier, but also to celebrate our particular month in the year for us, the Latin culture."

Sergeant First Class Jeremy Messina, a CBRN-E noncommissioned officer with HHOC, DSTB, 3rd ID, and a Tampa, Fla., native, attended the event and felt that it provided great educational information for the audience.

"The event was well set up and organized, and was very informative on the Hispanic culture and diversity," he said.

"I liked the pictures with the story lines, and the historical aspect on the culture."

The Hispanic culture represents a wide range of nationalities and backgrounds, with many Hispanic men and women serving in the Armed Forces who fought and died to defend the liberties and security of the United States in every war since the American Revolution, many of which serving before becoming American citizens.

The ceremony concluded with a formal cake cutting between the guest speakers and the Task Force Marne Commanding General, Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo, and Commanding Sergeant Major, Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse Andrews. Guests and participants stayed after the event, enjoying the cake and continuing to salsa dance.

Did you know...

- The first Hispanic Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductee was Carlos Santana. He was inducted in 1998.
- The first Hispanic Rookie of the Year was Chicago White Sox's shortstop, Luis Aparicio in 1956.
- Roberto Clemente was the first Hispanic baseball player to serve on the Players Association Board and to reach 3,000 hits, and was also the first Hispanic Hall of Fame inductee in 1973.

THE North Star

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