

Victory Times



Telling the United States Forces - Iraq story

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Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. Edward Daileg
United States Forces-Iraq Public Affairs

Sergeant Major of the Army Kenneth O. Preston visited Camp Victory Sept. 26 to speak with Soldiers and leaders from United States Forces-Iraq.

Preston toured several unit areas and spoke with Soldiers in a town-hall meeting about issues ranging from worldwide deployments to comprehensive Soldier fitness.

“Today we have approximately 231,000 Soldiers deployed throughout 80 countries around the world. Approximately 50 percent of these Soldiers are in Kuwait, Iraq, Afghanistan and Horn of Africa,” said Preston.

He credited the Army Reserve and

See Preston, Page 3



Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston speaks with Soldiers during a Town Hall meeting at the Joint Visitors Bureau Hotel at Camp Victory Sept. 26.

USF-I Soldiers advise Iraqi guards during prison search

Story and photos by
Sgt. 1st Class Roger Dey
United States Forces-Iraq Public Affairs

Sergeant First Class Mamie Williams stood in the center of a square concrete building at the Khark Prison in Baghdad.

She made a mark on the checklist she carried and continued to watch as members of the Rusafa Emergency Response Team rifled through the sleeping mats, prayer rugs and blankets

lined up on the floor.

The Rusafa team, which normally operates at the Rusafa Prison in Baghdad, performed the search instead of the Khark team to help maintain relations between the inmates and the Khark guards. As the ERT conducted the compound compliance inspection, more commonly known as a shakedown, Williams said they were performing in a very professional search.

Williams was one of five U.S. Soldiers and several advisors from the

International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program to accompany the search teams in order to evaluate the techniques and training of the Iraqi correctional officers as they conducted the inspection.

Occasionally a toothbrush with a scuffed-up handle, a length of wire from a chain-link fence or pieces of paper with numbers scrawled on them would be set aside.

See Inspection, Page 4

INSIDE:

*Dancers celebrate
Hispanic heritage*
Page 6

*SMA welcomes Soldiers
to NCO Corps*
Page 7

*III Corps runs
Historical Half*
Page 8

Chaplain's Corner

Build strong relationships despite distance

By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Keith Goode
Deputy United States Forces - Iraq Chaplain

We have many choices to make in life and the choice to maintain our relationships during deployments is one of the most important choices we can make.

The problem with deployment is that we have no choice about entering into a long distance relationship. It's par for the course, but I believe the relationships in our life can grow stronger during this time of separation. The question becomes how do we not only maintain, but continue to cultivate our relationships?

During my last deployment, my wife and I worried that separation would have a negative impact on us; that somehow we would grow apart during the 15 months I was going to be away.

The reality was that we actually grew closer and stronger, and here are a few tips you can use to continue to build your relationships while you are separated.

First, give each other a time to share during conversations. This is time for each of you to "unload" without fear of having to justify or defend your actions.

I believe the relationships in our life can grow stronger during this time of separation.

The task for the listener is just to listen and not to fix things or find blame. I know, it's easier said than done, but if it were easy everybody would do it.

My wife and I also talked about our future plans. It gave us something to focus on besides the fact that we were apart. This is great because when you combine it with the ability to unload and share with the safety of distance you can really "talked about" things. It is very exciting to make plans about the future, and it gives your relationship more depth by not leaving anyone out of the planning process.

My favorite technique, and the one my wife and I grew from the most, was reading books together and discussing them. Depending on the books chosen, it not only increases your knowledge about one another's interests, but it allows you to devote time to each other by preparing for your conversations.

The most important concept in this is that both people need to be willing to put forth the effort to build the relationship during the separation.

Once you both agree to that, you can use these powerful techniques to continue to keep your relationship strong while you are away. Give them a try!

SARC Smarts

It is committed in many situations — on a date, by a friend or an acquaintance, or when you think you are alone.

Educate yourself on "date rape" drugs. They can be slipped into a drink when a victim is not looking or put in a drink given to you. Never leave your drink unattended — no matter where you are. Try to always be aware of your surroundings.

Date rape drugs make a person unable to resist assault and can cause memory loss so the victim doesn't know what happened.

Call the USF-I Deployed Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (DSARC) at 485-5085 or 435-2235 for help.

Army members should seek assistance with their Unit Victim Advocate (UVA) or (DSARC).



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Preston, from Page 1

Army National Guard for their role in contingency operations around the world, and for the missions they are performing in the United States. Preston said about 62,000 Reservists and Guardsmen are serving on active duty in support of homeland security and Operations New Dawn and Enduring Freedom.

With so many Soldiers affected by the rigors of deployment, Preston stressed the importance of the Army's Comprehensive Soldier Fitness Program, adding that emotional, social, spiritual and family dimensions of fitness are as important as physical fitness.

"You need a level of fitness far beyond passing the Army Physical Fitness Test to do your military occupational specialty, especially in a deployed environment," said Preston.

Following his remarks, Preston opened the floor to questions from Soldiers, who asked him about promotions, pay, and housing benefits.

Staff Sgt. Thuy-Linh Pollack, an intelligence sergeant with Company A, 368th Military Intelligence Battalion, said she appreciated the chance to meet the Army's top NCO and speak with him.

"I never expected to be able to speak with, let alone ask a question to the sergeant major of the Army," Pollack said. "As

an Army Reservist, it's just not something you expect."

Three young Soldiers likewise got something they did not expect when Preston not only attended their promotion ceremony, but put on their sergeant stripes and welcomed them into the NCO Corps.

One of the Soldiers, Sgt. Kasi K. Miller, a supply clerk with the 199th Garrison Command, said being promoted by the highest ranking noncommissioned officer in the Army was a unique opportunity she was fortunate to experience.

Sergeant. Jessica Clements, a transportation specialist with the 199th Garrison Command, was also promoted by Preston.

"Being promoted by the Sergeant Major of the Army was definitely a surprise, privilege and an honor," she said

Other stops for Preston included a tour of Camp Victory's Freedom Rest to get a first-hand look at the facilities Soldiers in central Iraq can enjoy while on pass.

He also met with members of Task Force 807th Medical Brigade where he spoke to more than 100 Soldiers about the Army's mission.

Preston said one of his goals for this visit was to let the service members of Camp Victory and throughout Iraq know that he appreciates what they do, and that he is proud of what Soldiers have accomplished the past seven years here in Iraq.

ABSENTEE VOTERS WEEK

SEPTEMBER 27 - OCTOBER 4

Service members and civilians are reminded to vote by absentee ballot before your state's deadline. For more information log on to www.vote.army.mil



Service members may be eligible for \$500 per month in retroactive pay for each month their service was extended under "stop loss" between Sept. 11, 2001 and Sept. 30, 2009.

Apply at www.defense.gov/stoploss no later than Oct. 21, 2010

► Staff Sgt. Joshua Hartsoe, a resident of Victor, N.C. with the 105th Military Police Battalion, observes members of the Rusafa Emergency Response Team as they search for contraband in the inmate living areas at Khark Prison near Baghdad Sept. 23. The search was an opportunity for members of the 105th and the International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program to advise the Iraqis on their search techniques and procedures



▼ Sgt. 1st Class Mamie Williams watches as members of the Rusafa Emergency Response Team search the rooftop of an inmate housing area for contraband in the living areas at Khark Prison



Inspection, from Page 1

“They’re actually doing a very, very good job. They have a very systematic search (method),” she said of the team.

Outside in the courtyard, another Iraqi ERT member used a red-handled butter knife to probe the gap between one of the buildings and the cement slabs that made up the yard of the compound, pulling out paper and detritus.

Although the Rusafa team seemed to be collecting bits and pieces of junk, its presence in the living quarters of the inmates at Khark Prison meant it was contraband, and Williams, a member of the 105th Military Police Battalion and the senior corrections specialist advisor to the United States Forces-Iraq Provost Marshalls Office, said they were doing an excellent job of finding it.

Williams and her counterparts are no strangers to what it takes to conduct a shakedown of Khark’s Compound Two, the only compound in Khark

prison that currently houses inmates. Until July 15, when it was transferred to Iraq’s Ministry of Justice, Khark Prison was called the Cropper Theater Internment Facility and was the last large prison run by U.S. forces in Iraq.

With U.S. forces now operating in an advise and assist role, the Iraqi government requested their presence to help them improve their techniques and to offer insight on how they can continue to improve. Williams thinks Iraq’s prison guards are doing it right and are adapting the training they have received from the U.S.

“Basically our mission was to advise them on how to conduct a search and shakedown,” Williams said. “If their current training is sufficient . . . we just evaluate them and help them (improve) their techniques.”

“We trained them, we gave them what we knew,” she said. “They’ve implemented those procedures and made some modifications of their own and they’re pretty much charging forward with it.”

Fahlah Mahad, a slim man in a neatly pressed desert camouflage uniform, is a

shift supervisor with the Iraqi correctional officers at Khark and has worked with the Americans for four years.

He said this was the first time since the Ministry of Justice took control of Khark that Americans have come in to advise them on their search techniques.

“We have had a lot of searches during the month,” he said. “The main goal to do these searches constantly is to make sure that our staff is safe.”

Mahad said the emphasis on safety has always been stressed by the Americans.

“The Americans always insist we keep ourselves safe,” he said, pointing out that it is a rough neighborhood outside the compound and if something should happen out there, they need to make sure both the correctional officers and inmates will be safe inside.

As the inspection continued, the inmates, clad in yellow pajamas, kept a watchful eye on the few activities they could see through the chain link and concertina wire enclosure they were gathered in. As one of the Americans pointed out to the Iraqi searchers, they were more interested in seeing where they weren't searching than where they were.

After clearing their first set of buildings the team members physically searched each inmate that was housed there before allowing them back in. Outside, Mahad paid close attention as Williams, Sgt. Maj. Ralph Wright, 105th MP Bn. operations sergeant major and a member of ICITAP, briefed the Iraqi prison administrators on how the searches could be improved before the team moved on to the next housing area.

A brief commotion ensued inside the search area as a cell phone sim card was pulled out of an inmate's mouth. The sim cards, two of which were found, are used in cell phones that are smuggled into the compound.

For Mahad, such advice and training is the key to the future success of the Iraqi correctional officers.

“They assist us to understand how to work according to Geneva Conventions;

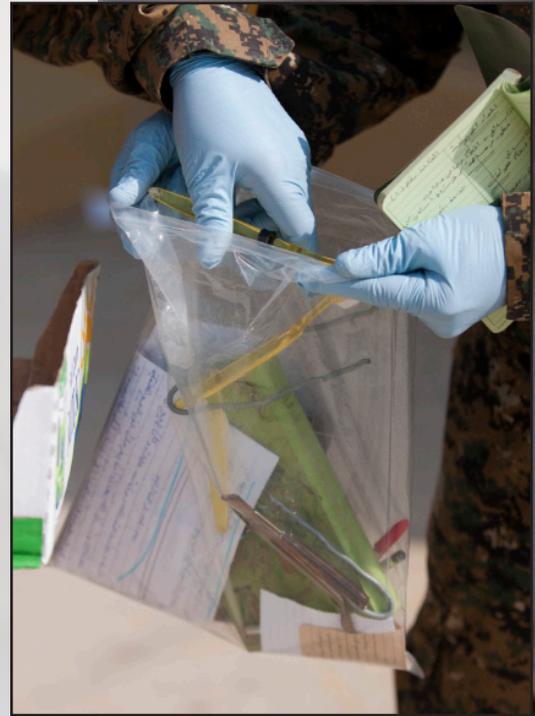
how to treat people ... with human rights,” he said. “Feed them well, clothe them and (good) living conditions ... all these things will leave you with success.”

The hard work the Iraqis have put in with the help of the U.S. is starting to pay off.

One of the most common items uncovered in the inspection were toothbrushes with handles scoured to a point on the concrete walls. The shakedown also turned up a steak knife, civilian clothes and a number of razor blades, as well as two sim cards and a cell phone charger.

Although Williams said the search teams did not find the cell phone they suspected was in the compound, she said the search was fluid and efficient, an improvement by “leaps and bounds” since July.

“Today they did phenomenal,” Williams said. “Any changes that we asked them to implement, they implemented immediately on the next section that we moved to. They're trained and they're doing a great job here.”



▲▼ Members of the Rusafa Emergency Response Team inventory contraband found during “Operation Clean Sweep” at Karhk Prison near Baghdad Sept. 23. The search netted sharpened toothbrushes, cell phone sim card, civilian clothes and razor blades, among other prohibited items.



Hispanic Heritage Month

Hispanic pioneers of military success

Edward Hidalgo became the first Hispanic-American to serve as U.S. Secretary of the Navy in October, 1979, following a long and distinguished legal career.

Born Eduardo Hidalgo October 12, 1912, in Mexico City, he moved with his family to New York in 1918. Hidalgo later became a United States citizen and by 1936 he earned his doctorate in law from Columbia Law School.

Hidalgo was introduced to the Navy during World War II when he became a lieutenant in the U.S. Naval Reserve in 1942.

Hidalgo served as a special assistant to two Secretaries of the Navy. He served under James Forrestal from 1945 to 1946, and two decades later worked with Paul H. Nitze.

One of Hidalgo's top priorities during his tenure as Secretary of the Navy was to improve recruiting among Hispanics. He felt a naval career could provide them with valuable education and experience they could use to their



*Edward Hidalgo
First Hispanic
U.S. Secretary of the Navy*

advantage in civilian life or in a career in the Navy. He was particularly interested in encouraging enlisted Hispanic Sailors to apply for officer positions.

In December 1980 Hidalgo convened the Hispanic Officer Recruitment Conference to help identify ways to make naval careers more attractive to Hispanics. The conference resulted in the establishment of the Association of Naval Service Officers, which provided encouragement and mentoring to young Hispanics who were looking at a career as a naval officer.

Hidalgo's efforts paid off in 1986, when two hundred Hispanic cadets attended the U.S. Naval Academy. A decade earlier, Annapolis had only five Hispanic cadets.

As Secretary of the Navy, Hidalgo played a major role in establishing recruiting techniques to attract Hispanic youths to the U.S. Navy. Today, more than 63,000 Hispanic-American sailors and civilians serve honorably in the U.S. Navy.

Dancers celebrate Hispanic-American Heritage



Members of the Salsa Sensations, a dance group made up of service members and civilians from Victory Base Complex performed Salsa, Bachata and Merengue in the Al Faw Palace rotunda, Sept. 24 to celebrate Hispanic-American Heritage Month. (Photos by Staff Sgt. Edward Daileg)

Sergeant Major of the Army 'pins' new NCOs during visit

Story by Sgt. Tresa L. Allemang
199th Garrison Command Public Affairs

Three Louisiana Army National Guard Soldiers at Camp Victory received their stripes directly from Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston during a battlefield promotion ceremony, Sept. 26.

The new sergeants, Jessica N. Clements, of Dry Prong, La., Kasi K. Miller, of Lafayette, La., and Cody M. Mclean of New Iberia, La., all with the 256th Infantry Brigade Combat

honored to be part of the ceremony and gave them some words of wisdom to accompany their new chevrons.

"Talk to your Soldiers," he told them. "Teach your Soldiers, and share your knowledge. Your primary role now is to develop future NCOs."

"What makes a great NCO is one who teaches, and most importantly one who teaches from experience," Preston said, encouraging them to learn everything they could about the Army.

According to Miller, his guidance was eye-opening for the new NCOs.

"After listening to him speak I started to realize what an important role a noncommissioned officer actually takes on," he said.

Clements, who works as a transportation officer for the 199th Garrison Command, said she will incorporate his guidance into her career and will pass it on to future NCOs.

"By (Preston) taking the time to be a part of our promotions, it was a reminder to me that no matter what your rank is, you always have to make time to take care of your Soldiers," said McLean, who is part of the Joint Visitors Bureau personal security detachment

While Miller and McLean called home immediately to share the news, Clements didn't have far to go; her husband, sister, and brother-in-law are all deployed with her.

"This is one of the best things that have ever happened in my life," McLean said after receiving his chevrons. "Being promoted by sergeant major of the Army Preston has definitely inspired me to push it to the next level and be the best NCO I can be."



Photo by Staff Sgt. Edward Dailey

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston promotes Cody M. Mclean to sergeant during the 199th Garrison Command promotion ceremony, Sept. 26.

Team, only learned of the promotions the day before and waited anxiously for Preston to arrive at the 199th Garrison Command conference room.

The trio's anxiety gave way to pride as Preston "pinned" their stripes on, distinguishing them as members of the corps of noncommissioned officers, the "Backbone of the Army".

"It's such an honor just to be promoted to an NCO, but to be pinned by the sergeant major of the Army was the ultimate privilege and something I will never forget," said Miller, a logistics specialist for the Tiger Brigade.

Preston, who spent about four days in Iraq speaking with Soldiers and leaders, said he was

VBC Facility Operating Hours

Sports Oasis DFAC
Breakfast 5:00 - 8:30 a.m.
Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Dinner 5 - 8:30 p.m.
Midnight chow 11:00 p.m. - 1:00 a.m.
Sandwich Bar open 24 hours

Education Center
8 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Camp Liberty Post Exchange
8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Camp Victory Post Exchange
8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Paul Smith Gym
Open 24 Hours

Victory Main Post Office
Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Saturday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sunday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

USF-I Unit Mail Room
Customer Services/Mail Call:
Daily 3 - 6 p.m.

Al Faw Palace Post Office
Wednesday and Sunday
12:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Golby TMC Sick Call
Monday - Friday 7:30 - 11:30 a.m.
Saturday & Sunday 9 - 11:30 a.m.

Mental Health Clinic
Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Saturday 9 a.m. - noon

Pharmacy
Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - noon;
1 - 4:30 p.m.
Saturday & Sunday 9 a.m. - noon

Websites

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III Corps Fort Hood



THE 'HISTORICAL HALF'

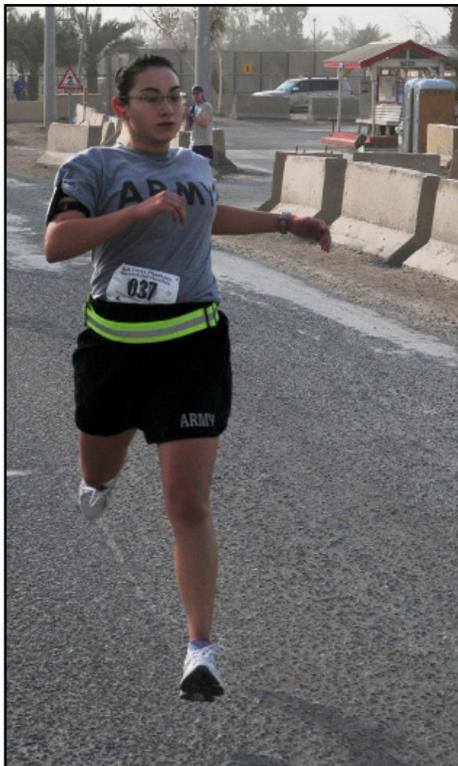
Runners take off at the start of the III Corps "Historical Half" half marathon.

Four-hundred-and-forty-eight service members and civilians took part in the III Corps "Historical Half," Sept. 26 at Camp Victory. The event was a half marathon run in honor of the 92nd anniversary of the Corps' first combat engagement at the start of the Meuse-Argonne Campaign in 1918.

The winding 13.1 mile course took runners through Camp Victory and neighboring Camp Liberty.

The half marathon was conceived of as a way to give Corps Soldiers and other service members a fitness goal to work toward, said Lt. Col. Robert Menti, III Corps Special Troops Battalion commander.

(Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Roger Dey)



▲ A Soldier holds up a III Corps "Historical Half" T-shirt. The first 300 finishers received a shirt and a medal.

► Master Sgt. James Adcock rounds a corner on Camp Victory on his way to Camp Liberty.

◀ Staff Sgt. Alexis Madrigal crosses the finish line of the "Historical Half" in just under two-hours.

