



DANGER FORWARD



November 22, 2010 | Issue 43

By Sgt. James Kennedy Benjamin
305th MPAD, USD-S PAO

BASRA, Iraq – The president of Kansas State University and his staff received the experience of a lifetime when they visited United States Division-South Soldiers in Iraq from November 8 through 11.

Kirk Schulz, the KSU president, and three other members of ‘Task Force Wildcats’ got to see life through the eyes of deployed Soldiers as they watched USD-S conduct a variety of daily operations, from providing convoy and ground security while visiting Basra University to taking a flight in Blackhawk helicopters to transport Soldiers and assets to their destinations.

“We have done things [here] that I would not have imagined I would have done, from flying in a Blackhawk with the doors open to having an Iraqi meal with a general,” Schulz said, recalling highlights of his trip. “It is a unique cultural experience.

Virginia Moxley, dean of the College of Human Ecology, described the trip as remarkable.

“We have had experiences that civilians just don’t get,” Moxley said.

During their visit, Schulz and his colleagues, Jeff Morris, vice president of Communications and Marketing, Art DeGroat, director of Military Affairs, and Moxley attended several meetings with USD-S leadership, Basra University representatives, the Iraqi general who

See KSU, page 10

MIDEAST MEETS MIDWEST

University of Basra receives Kansas State University delegates



Photo by Sgt. James Kennedy Benjamin

Saleh Ismail Najim (center), the chancellor of the University of Basra, talks with Kirk Schulz (right), Kansas State University president, and Barbara Leaf, Basra Provincial Reconstruction Team leader, while walking through a courtyard at the University of Basra Nov. 9. Representatives from KSU, Basra PRT and United States Division-South met with university staff to discuss issues surrounding Iraq’s higher education system.



Water flows again - p. 6



Firefighters get hot - p. 7



Amputee finishes WLC - p. 11

Danger Six sends

Thanksgiving Day dates back to the early years of our nation's history when President George Washington proclaimed the Thanksgiving tradition in 1789.

It is a holiday which gives us a chance to reflect on the blessings we have as Americans. Traditionally, Thanksgiving Day includes a wonderful meal often shared with Family and friends. As we gather together with our brothers and sisters in arms this Thanksgiving, let us remember all that we have been able to accomplish with our time here and what remains to be done in the time we have left in Iraq.

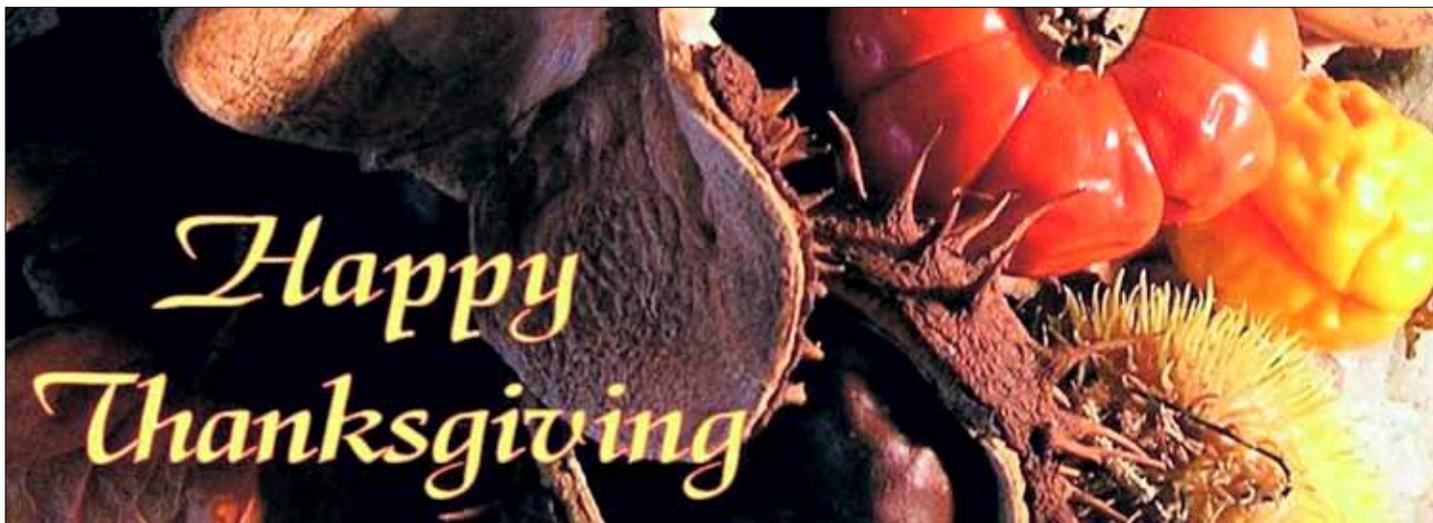
The people of Iraq have seen their country begin to rise from some of its darkest days to the light of a new dawn. They will see that day coming because of your hard work and dedication to duty.

Myself, Command Sgt. Maj. Champagne, and the rest of the command staff are truly thankful for the service and sacrifice of all of you who serve together with us here. Serving your country, although deeply rewarding, has its many challenges. We cannot thank you enough.

Have a Great Thanksgiving...Duty First!



Vincent K. Brooks
Major General, U.S. Army
Commanding



 Commanding General  Major General Vincent K. Brooks	Command Sergeant Major  Command Sergeant Major Jim Champagne	<h1 style="margin: 0;">DANGER FORWARD</h1>
PAO 1st Inf. Div. PAO: Lt. Col. Sophie Gainey Command Info OIC: Capt. Brian Melanephy Command Info NCOIC: 1st Sgt. Charles Owens Email: MND-S_PAO@iraq.centcom.mil Phone: (Iraqna) (0790)-194-2865 (770)-263-9379.	Danger Forward Print NCOIC: Staff Sgt. Nathan Smith Editor/Layout: Sgt. Jason Kaneshiro Staff Writers: Staff Sgt. Chanelcherie DeMello, Staff Sgt. Cody Harding, Sgt. Jason Kemp, Sgt. Raymond Quintanilla, Sgt. James Kennedy Benjamin, Spc. Eve Ililau	Contributing Units  3rd ACR  3rd AAB, 4th Inf. Div.  305th MPAD 

CSF: FAMILY EDITION

Army News Service

WASHINGTON - Army family members can now use the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness global assessment tool and all its online self-improvement modules without having a sponsored Army Knowledge Online account.

While family members have been able to participate in CSF for the past nine months, program participation required them to have AKO accounts.

These accounts needed to be sponsored by a military member, which was cumbersome, according to the program's director, Brig. Gen. Rhonda Cornum.

She said that's all changed now.

"We went through a lot of development and discussion and tried to loosen up the rules for AKO use, but that was not possible," said Cornum. "Family members can now get their own, unique ID, user name and password directly with the Soldier Fitness Tracker, so all they need to do is give their social security numbers once, because we now verify through [the Defense Enrollment Eligibility System]."

It's mandatory Army family members participate in the DEERS. The database includes more than 23 million records

pertaining to Active Duty, Reserve Component troops and their family members.

Originally, enrollees needed to have AKO-sponsored accounts, but that was a problem, explained Cornum, because it was cumbersome and required being re-sponsored every 120 days at the expiration of an AKO password.

"You have to think up a new, unique, painful password and as you can imagine, people were not very excited about that because it could take you 15 minutes to complete the CSF global assessment tool, but two days to get an account. It just wasn't very user-friendly," Cornum said.

The CSF director encourages family members to participate in the program because she said family is often a large part of the solution to building and enhancing the other four dimensions of strength - the physical, emotional, social and spiritual.

The family version of the Global Assessment Tool is similar to the Soldier GAT, Cornum said, but added that it obviously doesn't ask questions that aren't relevant to family members, such as the perceived readiness of the Soldier's unit.

Instead, it poses questions related to the readiness of the family in facing an upcoming deployment, such as "do you think your family is ready for the potential of your Soldier's deployment?" ■

THIS WEEK IN ARMY HISTORY...



1st Infantry Division History

November 24, 1966 – The 1st Infantry Division, along with the 196th Light Infantry Brigade and the 25th Infantry Division, conclude Operation Attleboro during the Vietnam conflict.



Operation Iraqi Freedom History

November 25, 2004 – The BBC reports that U.S. Marines in Falluja found a laboratory in the city that contained instructions on how to manufacture anthrax and blood agents. The discovery was made after a major offensive in the city.



3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment History

November 24, 2005 – Soldiers from 3rd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment discover a large weapons cache during a joint patrol with Iraqi Army soldiers in the North Babil district.

USD-S Soldiers get “Victory Strong”

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

BASRA, Iraq – The United States Division – South hosted its first Victory Strong program at the USD-S Resiliency Campus from Nov. 14 to Nov. 18. The five-day event was aimed at empowering Soldiers to spread resilience throughout their units.

The initial class in the program was Master Resiliency Training, which formed the basis of the rest of the training to come by showing the students how to detect and deal with stress. Students learned about how jumping to conclusions and thinking in a negative way can affect the mission, not just on a personal level but at the unit level as well.

Sgt. 1st Class James Padilla, the NCO in charge of the Resiliency Campus and a master resiliency trainer, said that the training is the result of over 30 years of study and experiment into Soldier Fitness.

“The training enlightens the Soldiers to give them an understanding that these are some of the areas that they need to be fit,” said Padilla, a Denver, Colo. native. “Not just physically fit, but comprehensively fit.”

The third and fourth days covered the five pillars of Comprehensive Soldier Fitness; Physical, Emotional, Spiritual, Social and Family. Classes were given by master fitness trainers in the five areas and went into detail on how the pillars help Soldiers.

Cpt. Marlene Gubata, the physical fitness trainer for the Resiliency Campus, taught Soldiers about the role physical wellness plays on comprehensive Soldier fitness. Her classes covered nutrition, supplements and how exercise can help relieve stress.

“The class is actually quite eventful” said

Gubata, a Providence, R.I. native. “There’s a lot of questions and I think they’re much more receptive than maybe some other classes. They came prepared to learn about it, they just seem eager to find stuff out.”

Informing the Soldiers on how to deal with the situations caused by stress has shown the leadership potential in the students, said Padilla.

“Soldiers are natural born leaders, and it’s something that’s coming out onto the table,” Padilla said. “We’re starting to see that these people are able to approach situations in a positive way.”

The structure and setting for the courses helps the Soldiers absorb the training more effectively, said

Spc. Robert Richardson, an operations and training clerk with Headquarters

and Headquarters Troop, 3rd Advise and Assist Brigade, 4th Infantry Division.

“It’s a lot better than how we first received the resiliency training, in two hour blocks,” said Richardson, an Oak Harbor, Wash. native. “I enjoy the setting they have here at the resiliency center. It’s more relaxed than what it was for the other classes.”

The change of pace can also mean a new breed of challenges, which makes Comprehensive Soldier Fitness all the more important to Soldiers at war.

“This mission is a lot different than my prior missions in Iraq,” Richardson said. “It’s a lot more oriented towards the Iraqis in charge. We’re here as advisors on how they can do things. A lot of the Soldiers, especially in combat arms, don’t know what to do with themselves and it is, in my opinion, a more stressful environment for combat arms.”

Though the training is new to the military, and there are still issues to be resolved, Padilla says that the training is going to succeed in its goal of preparing Soldiers to meet the stressful challenges of the Army.

“They’re going to be able to take back what they learned,” Padilla said. “And not only teach it to their fellow comrades, but I think they’re going to start using it on a regular basis.” ■

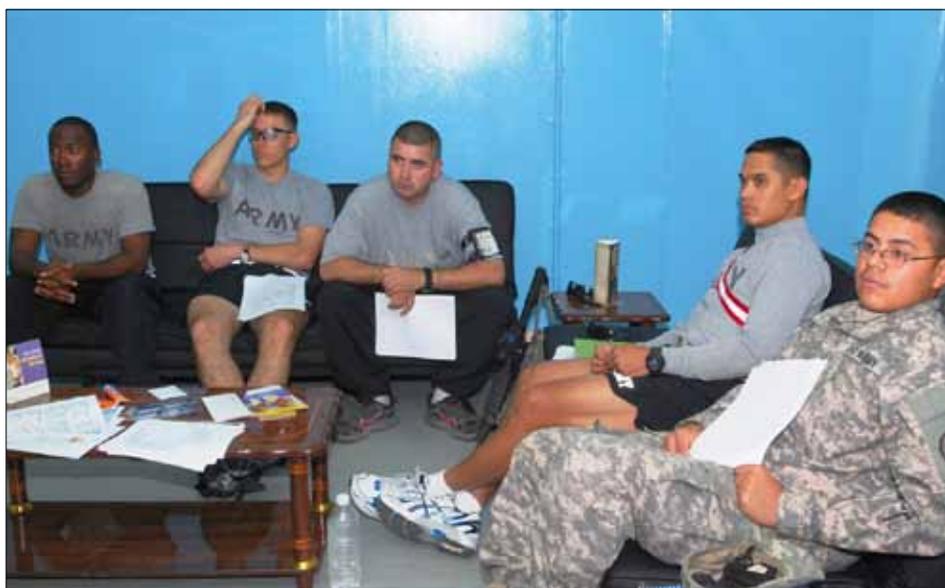
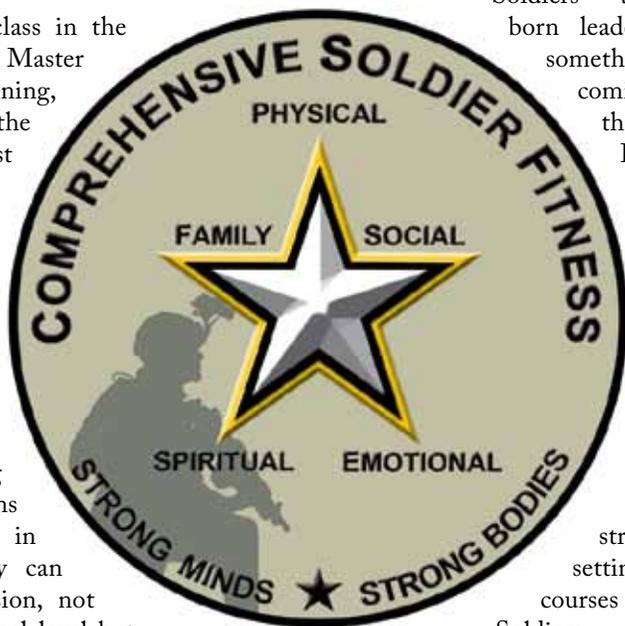


Photo by Staff Sgt. Cody Harding

Soldiers from the 3rd Advise and Assist Brigade, 4th Infantry Division listen to Cpt. Marlene Gubata during a Victory Strong class on diet and nutrition at Contingency Operating Base Basra Nov. 15. The classes covered the five pillars of Comprehensive Soldier Fitness: Physical, Spiritual, Emotional, Social and Family needs.

Getting the water flowing in Numaniyah

By Staff Sgt. Garrett Ralston
3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment PAO

WASIT PROVINCE, Iraq – After seven years of sporadic operation, farmers in Numaniyah recently received new water pumps for a pumping station that helps irrigate 1,500 farms.

The new pumps were provided by the Wasit Provincial Reconstruction Team and the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment. The PRT, escorted by Soldiers from Company H, 2nd Squadron, 3rd ACR held a meeting on Nov. 14 with local farmers in the Numaniyah area to see the pumps in action and discuss future management of the pump station.

“The operation of this pumping station has been on and off since 2003,” said Armand Lanier, a PRT agricultural advisor from the United States Agency for International Development. “The station has pumped water through four antiquated pumps that have needed constant maintenance.”

In recent years, the station has struggled to pump enough water to supply the 1,500 farms in the area and was costly to keep up. With nobody officially responsible for the station, it seemed it would remain out of service.

Now, with the new pumps and discussions developing between

the farmers, the station is on its way to effective production once again.

After the PRT assessment, funds were appropriated for two new heavy capacity generators to provide power for the pumps. The new pumps pull water horizontally from tubes that reach out further into the river allowing for greater pressure and more water. The canal now flows at the limit of its banks.

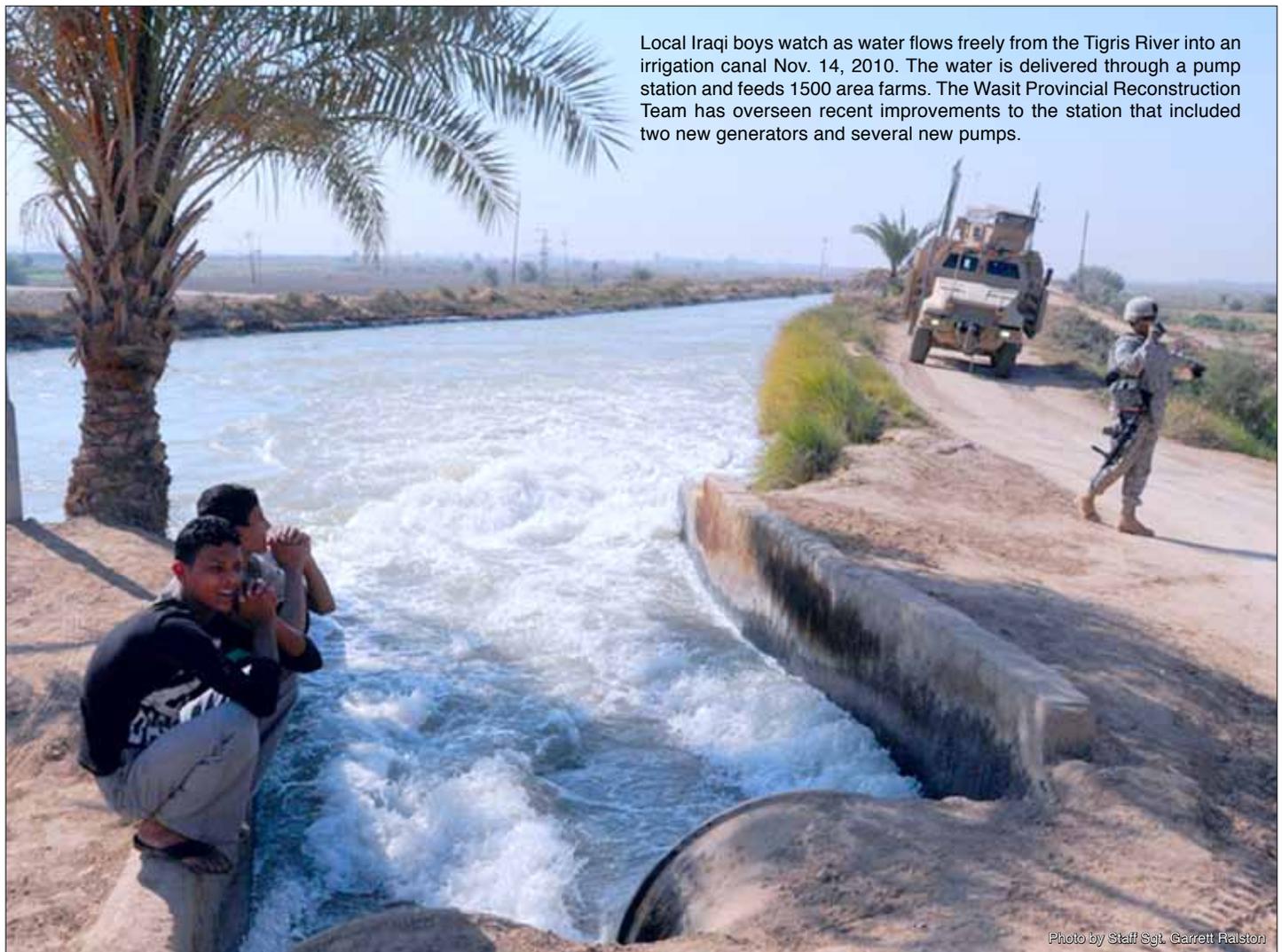
“The PRT plans to meet monthly with the farmers’ Water User Association,” said Lanier. “We want to teach them to be more water conscious which will increase production for them.”

The Soldiers of Company H have an essential piece of the development of the area as well.

“Our responsibility is to enable the PRT by getting them out here and making sure they have a safe environment to operate in,” said Sgt. 1st Class Jeremy Hubacek, a platoon sergeant in Company H. “We also spend a lot of time with ISF (Iraqi Security Forces) and try to maintain positive relationships with them.”

Hubacek said it was important for U.S. Forces to be engaged with these processes of Iraqi reconstruction.

“We really want to train the farmers to be better users of their water and agricultural resources,” said Lanier. “We want them to be effective on their own because that’s the aim of these projects.” ■



Local Iraqi boys watch as water flows freely from the Tigris River into an irrigation canal Nov. 14, 2010. The water is delivered through a pump station and feeds 1500 area farms. The Wasit Provincial Reconstruction Team has overseen recent improvements to the station that included two new generators and several new pumps.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Garrett Ralston

MRAP STARS

Improvements to the vehicle allow mechanics to help fellow Soldiers see clearly and keep cool

By 1st Lt. Brian L. Graddy, Jr.
64th BSB, 3rd AAB, 4th Inf. Div.

CAMP ADDER, Iraq – On patrols lasting up to 10 hours, mine-resistant ambush-protected vehicles can fall victim to damaged condensers, clogged air conditioners, and a loss of visibility through the windshields given the coarse dirt roads of southern Iraq.

Unsatisfied with the routine of putting their vehicles and equipment through the endless cycle of abuse and repair for something as simple as a clogged filter, the Soldiers of Company B, 64th Brigade

Support Battalion, 3rd Advise and Assist Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, came up with a solution by developing a custom mud guard to reduce the amount of road debris that would foul their vehicles components.

“We’re always looking for cost-efficient ways to achieve our mission,” said Warrant Officer Marquest O’Neil of Newport News, Va., an allied trade maintenance warrant officer, with the maintenance section of Company B, 64th BSB.

The maintenance section developed the basic plan to mount mud guards on the vehicles. Using existing hardware, the mud



Photo by 1st Lt. Brian L. Graddy, Jr.

Pfc. Aubrey Hanson, a wheeled vehicle mechanic with 64th BSB, cuts the material to be fitted on the MRAPs.

guards would save the Iron Brigade from having to replace the condensers that were getting damaged.

The mechanical maintenance section sketched a rough picture of the design and gave it to the service and recovery section, which specializes in metalworking and fabrication. The metal fabrication team reviewed the draft and finalized a blueprint for a prototype.

“Once we had the blueprint, we figured out what materials we were going to use,” said O’Neil. “Once we came up with that solution, we put it together and fitted it on the truck.”

The service and recovery section fabricated the driver side and passenger side mud guard to reduce blockage in the air conditioning condenser fans and to maintain visibility through the windshield.

“This is the best product we’ve done out here,” said Pfc. Aubrey Hanson, a wheeled vehicle mechanic from Reynoldsburg, Ohio. “It made us feel like we were contributing to the logistics and support mission.”

After receiving approval from the Army’s Tank and Automotive Command, the Soldiers fabricated 46 mud guards for the 64th BSB, to include five prototypes for the other battalions within the area of operations of 3rd AAB, 4th Inf. Div.

“Anything that will help enhance the visibility of our Soldiers outside the wire is a success and worth the work,” said O’Neil. ■



Photo by 1st Lt. Brian L. Graddy, Jr.

Pfc. Aubrey Hanson of Reynoldsburg, Ohio, a wheeled vehicle mechanic, and Pfc. Brandon Schupman, a metal worker from Austin, Texas, both with Company B, 64th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Advise and Assist Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, show the mud guards that were designed to reduce the amount of road debris that would damage the MRAPs.

HOT STUFF

Husayniyah firefighters becoming the pride of the province



By Staff Sgt. Garrett Ralston
3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment PAO

HUSAYNIYAH, Iraq - Working through the Karbala Provincial Reconstruction Team, the Soldiers of Troop A, 1st Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment were able to provide Iraqi firefighters with the training and equipment they needed to effectively and safely fight fires in the town.

In May, the PRT met with the mayor of Husayniyah to see what could be done to improve the city's services and facilities. During discussions, the mayor pointed out that the town's firehouse could use some help.

"We found the firehouse and firefighters themselves to be completely untrained and underequipped to do their job," said Lt. Col. Vince Rice, Deputy Team Leader for the PRT and a San Diego native. "Their entire program was in very poor shape."

In order for an adequate firefighting program to be developed, a considerable amount of equipment would be needed as well as someone to provide specialized training in firefighting techniques.

Petty Officer 1st Class Joseph Cote, a Navy Reservist with the PRT and a full time fire chief in his civilian life in Seattle, had the right experience for the task.

Sgt. Brian Vanwinkle, a member of the PRT's Company Intelligence Support Team, was also qualified to train the Iraqis in proper firefighting methods. Originally from Little Falls, N.J. Vanwinkle is a retired fire captain who had served heroically on Sept. 11, 2001 at the site of the World Trade Center.

With Cote and Vanwinkle's combined experience and an initial \$76,000 appropriated for the project, the work began to assess how the firefighters could be best equipped and trained.

"When I first went to check these guys out, I asked them to get all their gear together as well as the truck so I could see what we were working with," said Cote. "The truck itself had seen better days, they all wore regular mechanics coveralls, and all their equipment fit into two small compartments on the truck."

An inventory conducted during the initial inspection revealed only a pick, some handmade tools, and two respirators for 25 firefighters. They also found that the truck's water hose was made up of eight separate hoses of different lengths.

Petty Officer 1st Class Joseph Cote inspects a fire truck at the Husayniyah Fire Department. Cote applied his firefighting experience to train Iraqi firefighters making them more efficient emergency responders.

See **FIREFIGHTERS**, page 10

The keepers of Camp Adder's umbrella of safety

By Spc. Khori Johnson
3rd AAB, 4th Inf. Div., PAO

CAMP ADDER, Iraq – From the outermost reaches of Camp Adder there is a small group of Soldiers who watch the sun rise over the Ziggurat of Ur every morning. Although this team of Soldiers has the privilege of taking in the scenery of Iraq, they are not simply watching the skies to enjoy the view. They are watching the skies to keep the Iron Brigade safe.

The Slayer crew out of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 3rd Battalion, 29th Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Advise and Assist Brigade, 4th Infantry Division is one of many radar teams who serve as the first line of defense against indirect fire; not only for the Iron Brigade, but for everyone in and near the brigade's main posts throughout southern Iraq.

That umbrella of responsibility includes two other Iraqi army camps, a few Bedouin camps, and small villages.

"We provide security for Camp Adder by detecting indirect projectiles and helping provide an early warning for everyone to be able to take cover," said Staff Sgt. Franky Bunch, of Jefferson, Ohio, radar section leader, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 3rd Battalion, 29th Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Advise

and Assist Brigade, 4th Infantry Division.

The Slayer crew, which is made up of several radar operators and one radar repairer, utilizes the firefinder radar system to keep a watchful eye out for indirect fire.

Although essential, the radar team is not the only piece of the puzzle when it comes to 3rd AAB's defense against indirect fire. They coordinate with many other sections within the brigade to accomplish their mission.

The radar tech crew detects all initial threats and communicates with the brigade fire and effects coordination cell, which serves as the control center for IDF defense, and to the base defense section. The base defense section puts out the audio warning that reaches across Adder once they receive confirmation. This process, from detection to warning, is completed quickly enough to allow Soldiers just enough time to take cover.

Due to the changing nature of combat in recent years, many military occupational specialties work multiple missions on today's modern battlefield. As a result there are many Soldiers who have taken on jobs that are not necessarily in their formally trained skill set. The field artillery fire finder radar operator is one of the few Soldiers on the battlefield that operates in the same skill set they are trained in, said Bunch.

"This is what we do," he said.

Thankfully, Camp Adder does not receive indirect fire every day, however the radar techs sustain a busy schedule with frequent maintenance and up keep of the fire finder radar system.

"We spend about 70 percent of our time maintaining the equipment to ensure that it works when the time comes," said Bunch.

According to Spc. David Garcia, of Redwood City, Calif., HHB, 3rd. Bn., 29th FA Reg., the tech crew conducts functionality checks every day in addition to keeping it clean in order to continue its serviceability.

The team also stays sharp with on-the-spot training and maintains knowledge by studying the radar operator manuals on a regular basis, said Pfc. Bradford Arnold, of Mooresville, Ind., HHB, 3rd. Bn., 29th FA Reg.

Along with training, another way the Slayer crew stays on top of their mission is sleeping where they work.

Instead of residing in the standard living areas of Camp Adder, the Slayers stay on site in order to always be within arm's reach of the radar.

Holding such a large responsibility within the brigade requires the Slayer team to spend most of their time at the site, so they try to keep their surroundings as comfortable as possible.

"You should have seen this place when we first got here," said Arnold. "We took out what seemed like four or five tours of junk left over. Now this place is 200 to 300 percent better."

The Slayers have remodeled their compound and transformed it from an area reminiscent of a junkyard to a place that they can call home, complete with containerized housing units, a basketball court and a make-shift coffee shop and barbershop.

With good training and maintenance, the Slayer radar operator crew helps keep the Iron Brigade and Camp Adder safe by keeping their eyes to the skies.

"The pressure's always on," said Bunch. "But, I think we do a pretty good job." ■



Photo by Spc. Khori Johnson

Spc. David Garcia, of Redwood City, Calif., Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 3rd Battalion, 29th Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Advise and Assist Brigade, 4th Infantry Division conducts a maintenance check on the firefinder radar system for Camp Adder. Garcia is part of the Slayer crew which serves as the first line of defense against indirect fire; not only for the Iron Brigade, but for everyone in and near the brigade's main posts throughout southern Iraq.

The **1st** Infantry Division/
United States Division-South
Deployment Book

\$11,400

First Infantry Division - United States Division - South



Operation Iraqi Freedom / Operation New Dawn
February 2nd, 2010 - January 2nd, 2011

Bring your cash payment to the 1st Inf. Div. Public Affairs Office

or

Send an e-mail to: 1stinfdivpao@gmail.com

(We'll send you instructions on how to pay through Paypal)



Photo by Sgt. James Kennedy Benjamin

Kansas State University staff take a photo with Brig. Gen. Ricky Gibbs, United States Division-South commanding general for maneuver, and 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division Soldiers at a U.S. military outpost at Minden, Iraq, Nov. 10, shortly after visiting an Iraqi general at Shalamcha Point of Entry. The four 'Wildcats' met with USD-S leadership, Basra University staff and an Iraqi general as part of their visit to Iraq.

KSU, from front page

commands the Shalamcha checkpoint on the Iran border and Basra Provincial Reconstruction Team members. While in Basra, the 'Wildcats' had lunch with KSU alumni of the 1st Infantry Division and dinner with dual-military couples of the division.

At the dinner, the couples talked about different challenges faced with having a single spouse or both spouses deployed in

combat.

"In my college, we study military family issues," Moxley said, "so I especially appreciated all the work that was done to introduce us to married couples in the military."

Part of the discussion will help Moxley provide critical feedback to meet the needs of Soldiers and returning veterans who choose to continue higher education at KSU, she said.

Schulz and Moxley both praised DeGroat

as being the 'master' at strengthening relations between KSU and the Big Red One, serving as the liaison between the military and civilian populations.

"He has helped do the translation between university talk and army talk, between university cultures and army cultures," Moxley said.

KSU has always been supportive of Soldiers and their families, Schulz said.

"It is a close and growing relationship," he added.

Not only did the visit strengthen the bond between the 1st Inf. Div. and KSU, but the delegation also got to see part of history during their visit. On the last day, the Wildcats visited the Ziggurat of Ur, which not many foreigners have had the chance to do until the end of the Saddam Hussein regime. After a tour, the Wildcats were loaded on a Blackhawk once again to make their way to Kuwait where they would depart to the U.S.

"This trip could have not been planned better," Moxley said. "I cannot imagine anybody having facilitated civilians this well over three days so that we can see the range of things we have seen."

"I appreciate the complexity of Iraq," Schulz said. "We'll leave Iraq with a better understanding and even greater appreciation for the work that Soldiers do." ■

FIREFIGHTERS, from page 7

It was clear to Cote and Vanwinkle that the Iraqis were in need of a wide range of personal protective equipment. The firefighters also told them that they had never received any type of official training in their job.

"The crew told me that the only training they had was from what they'd seen on television," said Cote.

During part of the assessment, Vanwinkle identified some of the Iraqi firefighters practices that were inefficient and suggested changes that could help them better respond to fires.

"They would carry their hoses out to fires in separate pieces and then assemble them once they were there," said Vanwinkle. "I showed them how to roll the whole hose onto the truck so they can roll it out at once."

In addition to the firefighting training, the Iraqi firefighters received medical training to assist any casualties that would require treatment while responding to a fire.

An additional \$86,000 was later added to fund the total package, which included new Self Contained Breathing Apparatus kits, complete full length fire hoses and fire suits with all of the necessary protective gear.

"The equipment and training they received were something they had only dreamt of before," said Rice.

The town of Husayniyah, a former Sadr stronghold in Karbala province, had once harbored a negative view of the American



Members of the Karbala Provincial Reconstruction Team pose with firefighters of the Husayniyah Fire Department.

presence. Their resentment has begun to fade with the completion of the project that turned their firefighters into the trained and well-equipped professionals they are today.

"These initiatives are designed to demonstrate our commitment to leaving our area of operation in better shape than it was when we arrived," said Rice. ■



Photo by Dustin Senger

Sgt. Charles Berninghausen, Warrior Transition Unit, listens to comments during a Warrior Leader Course graduation ceremony at McMahon Auditorium at Fort Carson, Colo., Nov. 12. Berninghausen is the first amputee to complete the two-week course, which teaches leadership skills, training management, land navigation and war-fighting strategies.

First amputee completes Fort Carson Warrior Leader Course

By *Dustin Senger*

FORT CARSON, Colo. - Sgt. Charles Berninghausen became the first amputee to complete the Warrior Leader Course at Fort Carson Nov. 12, almost four years after an improvised explosive device in Iraq nearly killed him.

Berninghausen is a tall, slender Soldier, who keeps his hair cut high-and-tight and his prosthetic limb tucked inside his left combat boot. His only obvious indication of injury is a slight limp. His right leg also has restricted ankle dexterity, but Berninghausen refuses to call himself handicapped.

“The only thing I couldn’t do was the two-mile run,” said Berninghausen, while gathering with the other 103 graduates after the ceremony. “I could do everything else, like every other Soldier.”

He performed most physical training events during the two-week course, which included pushing a truck.

“It’s only a matter of time before I can run, too,” he said. “I don’t like being singled out, so once I can run, there’s no reason for me to be any different.”

“Each student has to complete the curriculum,” said Command Sgt. Maj.

Edward Macias, 168th Regiment, Regional Training Institute commandant. “Sgt. Berninghausen had to pass the academics and then go out into the field and lead a squad.” Berninghausen is the first Fort Carson WLC amputee graduate, according to Macias.

A 36-hour situational training exercise culminated two weeks of studying leadership skills, training management, land navigation and war-fighting strategies. The final field leadership evaluation positioned Berninghausen into his first tactical situation since suffering his injuries in early 2007. He wrote about surviving enemy engagement and won the WLC class 11-002 Warrior Ethos Essay contest.

The infantryman had been performing late night patrols during the final push through Ramadi, Iraq. While clearing rooms, an IED detonated inside a nearby wall, roughly a foot from the floor. He says the initial sign something went wrong was a bright green flash, possibly from colored chemical light sticks used to mark IEDs. For a moment, he was caught in a deafened state of confusion. And then the pain surfaced.

Berninghausen had absorbed shrapnel from his right ear down to his feet. On his

left side, the explosion had shoved him hard enough to perforate his ear drum, break his tibia and fracture his ankle. He endured a series of surgeries and extensive bed rest. A surgeon at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington D.C., amputated below his left knee after an infection permeated the tissue, nine months after the blast.

“I was really nervous,” Berninghausen said. “I thought I’d have to get out of the Army and support my family with a missing limb. But the Army proved me wrong.”

With nearly five years of service, a review board in June granted the wounded veteran’s request to remain on Active Duty.

Berninghausen is assigned to the Fort Carson Warrior Transition Unit, where he injured war fighters receive dedicated support from senior leaders and medical professionals. He says WTU is “really supportive” and “always willing to help.”

Berninghausen starts training for a counterintelligence military occupational specialty next month.

“I loved being in the infantry. I made some great friends,” said Berninghausen. “But if you go to an infantry battalion with a prosthetic, you’re somewhat ineffective. I don’t want to risk someone’s life.” ■



Which pet is the most BRO of all? That would be Ty and Nelson with Maj. Jerry Landrum, DHHB Effects (right), taking first place in our BRO Pet Photo contest. 'Sniper' (bottom left) takes second place and Lucy (upper left) round out our top three entries.

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

You could have it featured here and receive a coin from DCSM Jim Champagne.





Basra Betty says...



Dear "N.R.Y.,"

I hear you loud and clear! You could either offer them the knife hand and some choice words in a verbal counseling, or you could try a more tactful approach to remind them that we're not out of Iraq just yet and our mission here is not yet complete.

Try stressing to them how important their contributions are to the entire team and how much you and others around them depend on everyone to maintain the same performance standards that you've come to expect of them from the day we first step foot in Basra.

You could also remind them that they're starting to become complacent about their duties and that not only reflects poorly upon themselves, but could also put themselves and their fellow Soldiers at risk.

Keeping our mind on our mission and the mission on our mind (did I

really just say that?) is not just for us to appear professional, but it keeps us focused and prevents careless mistakes and accidents from happening.

It's that lack of focus that can put yourself and others at risk and something that can and should be addressed quickly. This is not the time and place to get stupid about things.

I still remember one of my NCOs from my last deployment that kept on harping about how 'complacency kills', and he was right then and he's still right today.

I can understand how frustrated you may feel as some Soldiers around us have mentally drifted back to the States when we haven't gone anywhere yet. Set the right example, encourage others to do the same, and we'll all get home when it's time.

Not going anywhere yet,

-Betty

Dear Betty,

I'm really looking forward to going back home just as much as anyone else, but I'm getting really frustrated with some other Soldiers in my unit who act as if they're already there mentally and aren't putting the same effort into their work that I have come to expect. How do I tell them to stop slacking off?

Signed,

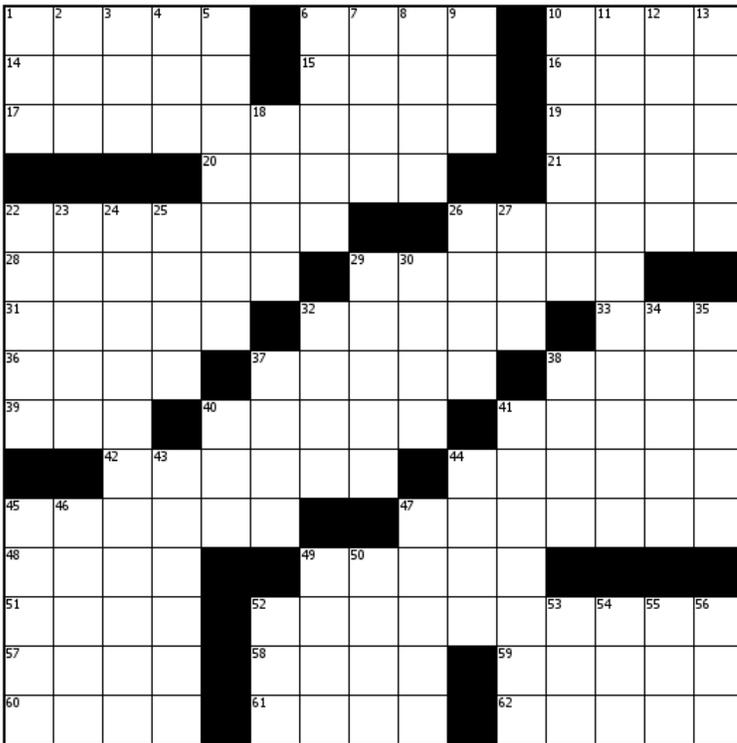
Not redeployed yet

Rock and Roll Trivia

This is the week to say 'thanks' for all of our blessings. See if you can answer this rock trivia on famous rock n' roll thank you's.

- 1) Led Zeppelin showed their softer side by closing out Side A of what album with the song "Thank You"?
- 2) What was Sly and the Family Stone thankful for in their 1970 hit "Thank You?" (Bonus point for correct spelling)
- 3) Sam & Dave and ZZ Top both had hits with "I Thank You," featuring the line, "You didn't have to love me like you did, but you did, but you did. And I thank you." The song was written by Stax Records' David Porter and what other famous soul musician who would later star as the voice of Chef on South Park?
- 4) In her song "Thank U" off of the *Supposed Former Infatuation Junkie* album, what nation does Alanis Morissette thank repeatedly?
- 5) What does Neil Diamond thank the Lord for in his 1967 Top 20 hit?

Answers to this week's trivia:
(1) Led Zeppelin II (2) Falettin Me Be Mice Elf Agin (3) Isaac Hayes (4) India (5) The Nighttime



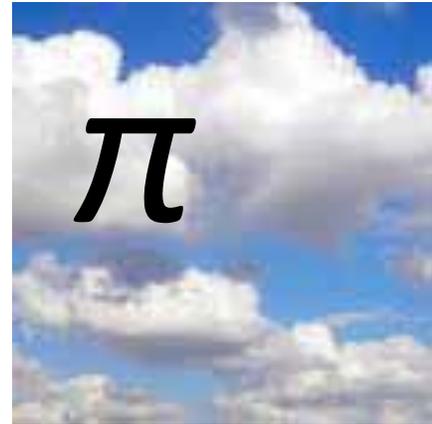
Across

- 1. Midshipman's counterpart
- 6. Equivalent
- 10. Bailiwick
- 14. Close, poetically
- 15. Austen novel made into a movie
- 16. Time divisions
- 17. Boot camp arrival
- 19. Paint remover
- 20. Like eyes, at a sad movie
- 21. A malarial fever
- 22. "Julia" portrayer
- 26. Restraining rope
- 28. Ready to sail
- 29. Bug's antenna
- 31. Places for oars
- 32. Form component
- 33. Water you can walk on
- 36. Analogous
- 37. Secures with cables
- 38. Gulf in the news
- 39. Modern Clay
- 40. Kind of cabinet
- 41. Echo, e.g.
- 42. Parts of the family
- 44. Loath
- 45. Lake Huron port
- 47. Consecrated
- 48. Beat a path
- 49. Eddie of the sportswear chain
- 51. Justice's garb
- 52. Where shots are heard
- 57. Girlfriend in Grenoble
- 58. Type of history
- 59. Fugard's "A Lesson From ____"
- 60. Pixie stick
- 61. Is mistaken
- 62. Red-spotted creatures

Down

- 1. Word with box, sports or cable
- 2. Literary miscellany
- 3. Drop content
- 4. Something to bend on a human
- 5. Earth movers?
- 6. Iceberg to an ocean liner
- 7. Ratite birds
- 8. Disembogue
- 9. Tattle
- 10. Poke holes in, perhaps
- 11. Theodore Roosevelt's group
- 12. Come as a consequence
- 13. Fall flower
- 18. Unfriendly
- 22. Lily type
- 23. Bubbling on the range
- 24. Doo-wop hit
- 25. Tool shed item
- 26. Adder's column
- 27. Man in a lodge
- 29. Penguin perches
- 30. Post a gain
- 32. Word with china or spur
- 34. Fire starter
- 35. Ran its course
- 37. Easily cleaved mineral
- 38. Father of Fear and Panic
- 40. Party souvenir
- 41. Exceeded limits
- 43. "You don't say!"
- 44. Toward the sheltered side
- 45. Horse stall sighting
- 46. It stimulates a sense
- 47. Jordan's team
- 49. 100 Ethiopian cents
- 50. A distant point
- 52. Caviar, literally
- 53. Publican's serving
- 54. Then partner
- 55. Grasp
- 56. Back-and-forth curve

Big Red One Puzzle of the Week



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

*Solution for last week: The Tower of London
Brought to you by the 1st Inf. Div. ORSA Cell*

Sudoku

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

For solutions to this week's puzzle and for more sudoku puzzles, visit:

www.puzzles.ca/sudoku_puzzles/