

# Victory Times



*Telling the United States Forces - Iraq story*

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## Training program ensures Soldier safety

Story and photos by Sgt. Joseph Vine  
USF-I Public Affairs

Two humvees filled with Soldiers roll down a deserted street in Iraq. The lead vehicle runs over a pressure plate that triggers an Improvised Explosive Device.

Instead of an explosion, an ear-piercing alarm sounds. A truck drives up next to the humvees and two trainers instruct the Soldiers to get out of the vehicle. The training is over.

The Soldiers involved in the exercise are part of the Counter-IED training conducted by Task Force Troy on Camp Victory and Camp Slayer, Iraq.

“We are here to teach Soldiers counter-IED awareness and to let them know what type of IEDs are being used by insurgents currently in Iraq,” said Chief Petty Officer Xavier Gamez, from Victorville, Calif., and a C-IED course instructor with Task Force Troy on Victory Base Complex.



*Soldiers attending a recent Counter-Improvised Explosive Device Training course conducted by Task Force Troy, listen to C-IED instructor Mike Hockman discuss ways terrorist try to conceal IEDs.*

Throughout the course, the students are taught how the enemy constructs, places and detonates IEDs.

Gamez said they set up different types of IEDs encountered by U.S. and

Iraqi Security Forces, like pressure plate or command-wire detonated IEDs out in the training lanes to test the Soldiers’

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## Iraqi corrections training center celebrates milestone

Story and photos courtesy of the United States Forces - Iraq Detainee Operations

Iraqi corrections leadership celebrated the first graduation of a joint-instructed correctional training class during a ceremony Dec. 9 at the National Corrections Training Center on Forward Operating Base Future, Baghdad.

The graduation marked the first joint correctional training class led by instructors from the Ministry of Justice and the

Ministry of Interior.

Previous classes were taught only by MOJ instructors however, MOI recently assigned two certified instructors to NCTC who will continue to remain part of the staff.

Members of the International Criminal Investigation Training Assistance Program also provided invaluable assistance and guidance throughout the course.

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## Gift giving is chance to think of others

Story by Chaplain (Capt.) Johnny Elder  
Task Force 4-5 Chaplain

Somewhere around each of us are a pile of gifts.

Even here in Iraq, we can't help but see the piles of boxes in gift-wrapped paper all around us.

Now most of us have given gifts for one occasion or another, so if you are not into Christmas or the holidays, you can still relate to gifts.

We give gifts for multiple occasions; it's just that right now all the "gifts" seem to be coated with similar paper; it is called "gift wrap."

There are two things I want to talk about for just a moment; one is gifts and the second is wrapping paper.

I Googled gifts and came up with 97,100,000 entries. I don't think the system would let me look up every one of these entries. However, there are some things I think we can learn about gifts.

Gift-giving is everywhere - formally entwined in ritual occasions (weddings, ceremonies, Christmas), or expressed in everyday life through smaller spontaneous acts (such as giving a friend a loaf of homemade bread).

Between these two extremes exist myriad forms and instances of gift exchange, some individually defined by the givers and recipients who participate in them, others more socially and culturally constructed and proscribed.

In looking at gifts there are two key elements, the giver and the receiver.

As children we often rejoice in getting, but as one gets older, sometimes the giving outweighs the receiving.

Studies show that in the act of giving, I begin to look beyond myself and look at others; I look outward. This looking outward makes for healthier relationships with people on all levels.

**" Studies show that in the act of giving, I begin to look beyond myself and look at others; I look outward. This looking outward makes for healthier relationships with people on all levels."**

My giving of a gift to you is a part of my affirming who you are and your worth to me.

On the other hand, if I refuse to participate in some token of gift exchange, I may be preventing both of us from experiencing the joy of engaging in this activity.

The second, part of these thoughts today, is the paper covering the gifts.

Have you ever wondered why we have wrapping paper?

One story is that Hallmark started it in 1917 when the colored tissues used in that day ran out.

It is presently about a \$2.6 billion annual industry, not to say anything about the waste or recycling created.

What are we saying when we use gift wrap? One, we are hiding a surprise by covering it with paper. We want to surprise the receiver of our gift.

Gift wrapping is an art; from the selection of the paper, to the manner in which it is folded, to the content of the package. Volumes have been written on this topic and more will be coming.

But for our purposes here today "what do I see when I see the pile of packages in the local DFACs?"

I see the intent of the giving; though we are separated by thousands of miles from loved ones, the visibility of these gifts is a reminder that the rest of life has normality.

What we may be experiencing here is not the norm; at least not the norm that many of us have experienced in our lives.

These wrapped "boxes" can provide an opportunity for us to look beyond ourselves and see all the individuals around us.

So, whether gift or wrapping paper: am I a giver or receiver? Blessings to all!



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# National Guardsmen celebrate birthday in Iraq

Story by Staff Sgt. April Davis  
116th Garrison Command, USD-C

National Guard Soldiers serving on Victory Base Complex as part of United States Forces – Iraq, gathered at Al Faw Palace Dec. 13 to celebrate the birthday of the oldest component of the U.S. Armed Forces.

“Today we celebrate the 374th anniversary of the creation of the National Guard,” said Lt. Col. Robert Preiss, deputy of National Guard Affairs for USF-I.

During the ceremony, the senior National Guardsman serving in VBC, Maj. Gen. Nelson J. Cannon, USF-I deputy commanding general for detainee operations and provost marshal general, talked to the audience about the dedication of Guardsmen serving their country.

“Today there are nearly 500,000 serving in the Guard, and over 50,000 of those are deployed. They are regular folks who will, on a moment’s notice, stop what they are doing, set their personal and professional lives aside in order to respond to the community, the state, or the nation’s call without hesitation,” Cannon said.

According to the USF-I National Guard Affairs section, Guardsmen make-up nearly one-fifth of the overall U.S. military force in Iraq with approximately 7,200 members of the Army and Air National Guard representing 25 different states.

The largest National Guard formations currently in Iraq represent the states of Idaho, Texas, California, Montana, Oregon, Wisconsin and Alabama.

They perform a wide array of missions to include route clearance, driving and escorting convoys, performing advanced disposal of explosive ordnance, and providing command, support, and security for military installations.

“There is no better venue for today’s celebration than being here in this



Photo by Sgt. Caleb Barrieau

From left, Maj. Gen. Nelson J. Cannon, United States Forces - Iraq deputy commanding general for detainee operations and provost marshal general, and Pfc. Jacob Wood of B Troop, 2nd Squadron, 116th Armored Reconnaissance, United States Division – Center, prepare to cut cake with a sabre to celebrate the National Guard’s 374th birthday at Al Faw Palace on Camp Victory, Dec. 13.

palace in Iraq,” said Cannon. “There are many great parallels to how and why the National Guard was created 374 years

ago and being here, helping establish democracy for people who haven’t had it for more than 30 years. The people here embrace these ideas of freedom and I can’t think of any organization that’s better suited to do this job than the U.S. military, and in particular, the National Guard.”

The birthday celebration began with a Color Guard made up of National Guardsmen, posting the colors, and ended with the senior- and the junior-ranking members of the National Guard on VBC cutting the birthday cake.

“Honestly, I was a little embarrassed to find out I’m the youngest (Guardsman) here, but it’s a privilege to be chosen for this honor,” said Pfc. Jacob Wood, of B Troop, 2nd Squadron, 116th Armored Reconnaissance, U.S. Division -Center, about cutting the cake. Wood, age 19, has only been in the military for a year and a half. He lives in Sandpoint, Idaho, and serves with the 116th Cavalry Brigade, Idaho Army National Guard.



A Color Guard made up of National Guard Soldiers pays tribute during a ceremony celebrating the 374th birthday of the National Guard, Dec. 13.

# USF-I serves up Thanksgiving Day DFAC awards



Photo by Sgt. Caleb Barrieau

*Maj. Gen. Edward Cardon, United States Forces - Iraq deputy commanding general for support, presents a plaque to Tech Sgt. Tracy Harrell of Sather Air Base DFAC for winning first place in the Thanksgiving Day dining facility decoration competition, during an awards ceremony on Camp Victory, Dec. 15.*

**Story by Staff Sgt. Edward Daileg**  
**USF-I Public Affairs**

The Sather Air Base and Camp Cropper dining facilities scooped up top honors for their Thanksgiving Day decorations at an award ceremony on Camp Victory Dec. 15.

Sather, the large category winner, competed against four other DFACs, while the Cropper DFAC beat out two other DFACs in the satellite, or small DFAC, category.

“I think hard work and dedication to put out the best customer service and provide handmade decorations was what separated us from the competition,” said Tech Sgt. Tracy Harrell, a contracting officer technical representative with the 447th Air Expeditionary Group from Sather Air Base, after receiving the first place trophy.

The Iron Oasis DFAC from Camp Liberty took second place in the large category, followed by the Sports Oasis DFAC on Camp Victory.

The dining facilities were judged by United States Forces – Iraq sergeants major, officers, and food service representatives. The judges evaluated the facilities on decorations, menus, staff friendliness and culinary presentation.

Holiday meals at the DFAC not only provide service members with great food, but also provide a big morale boost.

“Every day, food service professionals in a deployed environment have a profound impact on the morale of our service members; being away from family during the holidays is a very

tough time. Our food service professionals improve that morale by preparing something special during the holidays,” said Sgt. Maj. Michael Perry, USF-I Theater Class I sergeant major and III Corps food service sergeant major.

“Thanksgiving is an American holiday, it’s often a feast of sorts, and what these groups of service members did at their dining facilities reminds the people of the greatness of America,” said Maj. Gen. Edward Cardon the USF-I deputy commanding general for support, who presented the awards.

The service members who work in the DFACs, said the recognition they receive for their extra work to make the holidays special for everyone makes them

proud.

“I am proud to accept this award because the contractors and soldiers leaned forward and did the best they could to present the best possible Thanksgiving atmosphere for the soldiers,” said Sgt. 1st Class Brian W. Gorby the food operation management noncommissioned officer for Headquarters Support Company, Special Troops Battalion, III Corps, whose DFAC came in third place



*Maj. Gen. Edward Cardon, presents a plaque to Sgt. 1st Class Carmen Pearl Swig from the Camp Cropper Dining Facility for winning first place in the Satellite DFAC category.*

## Training, from Page 1 —

ability to recognize the threats or the signs that an IED may be there.

“We are taking what happens in the real world and implementing them in this class,” he said.

Along with the classroom and hands-on training, this course also helps the Soldiers remain focused on the dangers that are still out there, said Mike Droubay, a civilian instructor for the C-IED course.

“It’s important to keep people from getting complacent,” he said. “Just because a service member has deployed before doesn’t mean it’s the same, months or years later. The enemy changes their tactics, techniques and procedures all the time.”

Staff Sgt. Brent Benes, a squad leader with the 1167th Brigade Support Company, 67th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, and native of Raymond, Neb., said that Soldiers need to remain adaptive to the changes in enemy tactics.

“Once we can get a better idea of how IEDs are used against us, we can form new TTPs to defeat them,” said Benes, who recently completed the C-IED course.

During the three-day course, the Soldiers get both classroom and hands-on training. The first day is classroom instruction. The second and third days consist of different field exercises that give Soldiers a chance to sharpen their IED detection skills, which isn’t always easy to do.

“It’s always a challenge while in a vehicle ... trying to locate the indicators of an IED,” said Benes. “The class exercises helped make it easier to identify the indicators and warning signs of an IED.”

After completing the course, the Soldiers are then certified



*Mike Droubay, a counter-improvised explosive device instructor with Task Force Troy, shows Soldiers insurgent IED concealing techniques during the field exercise.*

and take the knowledge back to their units to train their battle buddies.

“When they go back to their units they are able to provide realistic IED training to their Soldiers that have not had any experience with IEDs,” said Gamez.

“I will be taking what I learned back to my unit and will be applying it in the field,” said Benes. “It’s good to have this knowledge if we go outside the wire.”

After the IED alarm was shut off and the Soldiers dismounted the humvees, the instructors talked to them and asked them what they just learned.

“To be more vigilant when looking for IEDs,” said a Soldier standing in one of the turrets.

With that, the Soldiers got back in their humvee to run through the training lane again. This time, they got it right.

# Electrical Fire Safety

Never overload extension cords or wall sockets.

Do not place cords and wires under rugs, over nails, or in high traffic areas.

Replace all worn, old, or damaged appliance cords immediately.

Look for products that meet the UL standard for safety when buying electrical appliances.

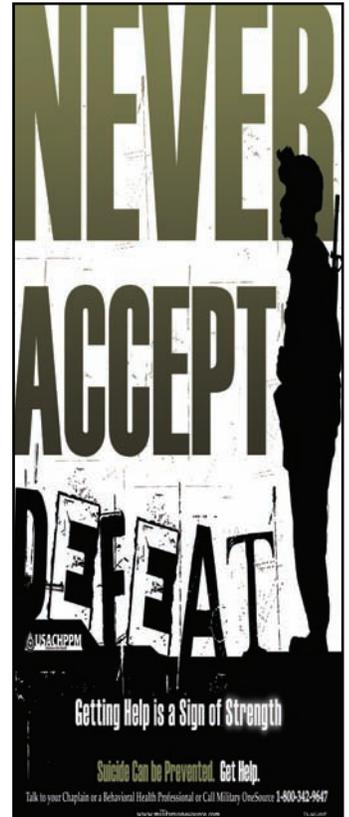
Do not trap electric cords against walls where heat can build up.

If an appliance has a three-prong plug, use it only in a three-slot outlet.

## Unsung Hero



Spc. Jesse Dale Bryan is recognized as this week's Unsung Hero and received a Certificate of Achievement from Brig. Gen. Joseph DiSalvo, Deputy Chief of Staff, United States Forces - Iraq, at Al Faw Palace Dec. 17. Bryan received the certificate for his exemplary performance while serving as a cable installer and maintainer for Company C, Task Force Phantom, USF-I



### NCTC, from Page 1

The 55 Iraqi corrections cadets, from both the MoI and the Ministry of Defense, completed the Jail Operators Course, which focuses on bringing a unified doctrine to Iraqi Detainee Operations. The 50-hour course emphasized topics including human rights, ethics and professionalism, and jail security. The cadets also learned about international law as it pertains to detainee operations.

Senior representatives from all three ministries attended the graduation ceremony to celebrate the occasion at the country's premier center for correctional excellence.

Mohammed Hammadi, the director of the NCTC, opened the ceremony, congratulated the cadets on their graduation, and talked about the significance of the joint training.

Ibrahim al-Jibori, deputy director general of the Iraqi Corrections Service said the course provides the cadets with information that will ensure the corrections officers treat the detainees with dignity and respect while also keeping Iraq safe now and in the future.

More than 4,200 cadets have graduated from various corrections courses at the NCTC. The organization's goal for 2011 is to train more than 10,000 cadets.



*Maj. Gen. Jerry Cannon, United States Forces – Iraq deputy commanding general for detainee operations, Ibrahim al-Jibori, deputy director general, Iraqi Corrections Service, and Mohammed Hammadi, director of the National Corrections Training Center, congratulate a graduate of the Jail Operators Course during a ceremony at the NCTC on FOB Future, Bagdad, Dec. 9.*

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# What's your favorite part about Christmas?



**Capt. David Neufeld**  
J1

256th Brigade Support Battalion

*"Celebrating with community events and opening gifts."*



**Pvt. Heather Jackson**  
Medic

546th Area Support Medical Company

*"Playing family games."*



**Pfc. Wayne Archie**  
Food Service Specialist  
HHC, 40th ESB

*"Decorating the Christmas tree."*



**Spc. David Osburn**  
Military Police  
HSC, III Corps

*"The cold weather and snow."*



**Staff Sgt. A.J. Merrifield**  
PSO

HSC, III Corps

*"Seeing the look on people's faces when they open their gifts."*



**Sgt. Clinton Potts**  
DSST

HHC, 151 ESB

*"Spending Christmas with my teen age kids."*

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## 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

Check it out:

**USF-I Web pages**  
[www.usf-iraq.com](http://www.usf-iraq.com)  
[www.flickr.com/photos/mnfirac](http://www.flickr.com/photos/mnfirac)  
[www.twitter.com/USF\\_Iraq](http://www.twitter.com/USF_Iraq)

**Facebook -**  
United States Forces-Iraq  
U.S. Army III Corps  
Phantom Battalion  
III Corps Fort Hood

# Entertainers bring holiday cheer to VBC

Admiral Michael Mullen, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, brought a United Service Organization show to Iraq Dec. 13, to spread holiday cheer and keep morale high during the holiday season.

Service members on Victory Base Complex were entertained by several comics and musicians including Robin Williams, Lewis Black and Kix Brooks, from the country music duo of Brooks and Dunn.

After the show, service members were able to meet and get a photo taken with the performers.



Photos by Cpl. Daniel Eddy

Top left, Lance Armstrong, seven-time Tour de France winner, emceed the USO show.

Above, comedian Lewis Black looks down at his iPhone while joking about the technology during his stand-up routine for the service members.



Country singer Kix Brooks, sings "Red Dirt Road" for service members.



Lt. Gen. Bob Cone, United States Forces - Iraq deputy commanding general for operations, talks with comedian Robin Williams before the start of a USO show at Camp Liberty, Iraq.



Comedian Robin Williams signs a reflective belt after his performance during the USO show.