



MPs prepare for home, reflect on historic mission



Spc. David Buckner with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 105th Military Police Battalion, guards his sector at Camp Cropper.

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

Inside the T-walls and barbed wires at Camp Cropper, the 105th Military Police Battalion was part of the historic transformation of internment operations in Iraq.

The MPs, who are now making their redeployment preparations, can look back at their deployment knowing they

impacted the future of this country by assisting and training Iraqi corrections personnel who assumed control of the last U.S. detention base in Iraq.

Since their arrival in Iraq in April 2010, the 105th assumed the duties of internment and resettlement operations at Camp Cropper.

On July 15, the MPs took part in the

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III Corps leaders discuss mission, transition at town hall meeting

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

III Corps Soldiers met with their command team during two town hall meetings at Camp Victory last week to receive a mission status update as well as to hear about leadership concerns.

Lieutenant Gen. Bob Cone, United States Forces – Iraq deputy commanding general for operations and III Corps commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. Arthur L. Coleman Jr., USF-I DCG-O senior enlisted advisor and III Corps command sergeant major, held the meetings Dec. 17 and Dec. 18 at Hope Chapel to speak with the Phantom Warriors as they move into the final phase of their deployment.

Cone began the meeting with praise for the efforts of the Phantom Corps during this deployment.

“I can’t tell you how incredibly proud I am of your performance here in Iraq,” he said. “It’s incredible for me to watch an organization as large and as complex as this, from the different levels of officers and noncommissioned officers, to do an impressive job and take care of business out here.”

Cone told the troops that during
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Don't let criticism alter path in life

By Chaplain (Capt.) Larry Van Hook
USF-I

Some folks receive criticism like “water off a duck’s back,” while others carry the weight of the disparagement around all the time, enervating their joy and enthusiasm.

I sometimes envy those who seem to be so stoically unaffected by the criticism of others. They have a strong sense of identity and confidence in their own perceptions. It must be wonderful to have such phlegmatic temperament.

Many people, especially the very creative among us, take criticism very personally. Dr. Eric Maisel, author of “Toxic Criticism,” describes it as the kind of criticism that “gets under our skin and lodges in our mind, can fester like an open wound.”

Why is it so hard to emotionally let go of criticism? A lot has to do with our basic temperament.

Those susceptible to toxic criticism view their interaction with others, especially confrontations, not through the simple lenses of right or wrong but friend

or foe.

Toxic criticism is like a parasite that eats at our sense of worth, security, and stability of our relationships. It is a threat not to our mere opinion of the situation, but who we are. In other words, the toxicity is absorbed by the soul, it is taken personally.



What is the antidote to toxic criticism? Maisel suggests six important steps.

First, you must gain a clear appreciation of the path you have chosen in life.

Second, you must be able to decide if the criticism is really worth distracting you from your chosen path.

Third, you must control your attitude instead of it controlling you; it is learning some of those stoic skills mentioned earlier.

Fourth, you must practice new scripts to play in your head. You must turn negative self-talk into realistic, positive self-talk that matches your life path.

Fifth, you have to practice self-control and manage your personality. This means you respond to the criticism instead of some knee-jerk reaction.

Lastly, you build on these previous steps to outline a course of action that effectively deals with the criticism, whether fair or unfair.

In short, dealing with toxic criticism is about understanding that you matter, and that God has a plan for your life, a path that you must choose to follow.

Divine opinion is far greater than some individual opinion.

Yes, it is important to judge the fairness of some criticism but it is more important to be fair with yourself.

SARC Smarts

What are your rights as a sexual assault victim? (AR 27-10):



- Be treated with fairness, dignity and respect
- Be protected from the offender
- Be notified (present at) court proceedings
- Confer with the prosecutor
- Receive information about the court-martial process
- Seek damages
- Have privacy rights respected

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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USF - I Commanding General: Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III
USF - I Senior Public Affairs Officer: Col. Benton A. Danner
USF - I Senior PA Enlisted Advisor: Sgt. Maj. James Posten
Editor: Staff Sgt. Edward Daileg
Print Staff: Sgt. Tanya-Jo Moller,
Spc. Joseph Vine
Layout: Spc. Charlene Mendiola

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Photos courtesy of Task Force 5/5 (C-RAM)

The four newest inductees to the Order of Saint Barbara pose for a photo with the distinguished guests and leaders during the Saint Barbara's Day banquet Dec. 17 at Camp Victory, Iraq. The event honored the new members and paid tribute to fallen artillerymen.

Soldiers inducted into Order of Saint Barbara

Story by 1st Lt. Katie Foremny
Task Force 5/5 (C-RAM)

Four Soldiers were inducted into the Order of Saint Barbara during a banquet Dec. 17 hosted by Task Force 5/5 (C-RAM) at the Joint Visitors Bureau Hotel on Camp Victory, Iraq.

The banquet, held to celebrate Saint Barbara's Day, also paid tribute to fallen artillerymen.

During the event, Brig. Gen. John Rossi, director, J33 current operations, United States Forces – Iraq, inducted the new members including Capt. Kim-Cameron King, commander of Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 5th Field Artillery Regiment; 1st Sgt. Billy Lingar, first sergeant, Troop A, 5th Bn., 5th ADA Regt.; Sgt. 1st Class Linwood Oliver, Air and Missile Defense Joint Operations Center noncommissioned officer in charge; and Staff Sgt. Eric Slough, platoon sergeant, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 5th Bn., 5th ADA Regt.

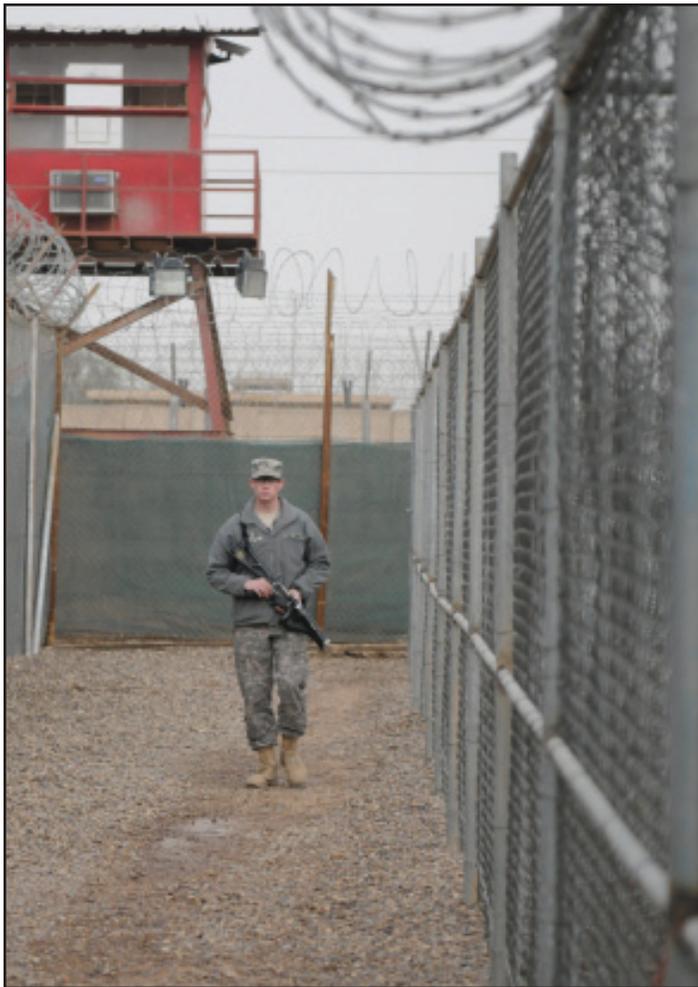
Saint Barbara came to be the patron saint of all those in danger from thunderstorms, fires, explosions, cannon misfires and muzzle bursts, and was thus adopted by the earliest artillerymen, archers, stone-hurlers and catapulters as their patron saint.



Above - From left, Brig. Gen. John Rossi, director, USF-I J33 current operations, presents the certificate of the Order of Saint Barbara to 1st Sgt. Billy Lingar with Troop A, 5th Battalion, 5th Air Defense Artillery Regiment, during the Saint Barbara Day banquet.



Left - Master Sgt. Russell Collie, USF-I air and missile defense non-commissioned officer in charge from Company A, Special Troops Battalion, III Corps, fills a cup of Fires Punch for Spc. Travis Desue, from Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 5th Battalion, 5th Air Defense Artillery Regiment.



Pfc. Thomas Tilley, a guard force member with the 105th MP Bn., performs a routine patrol inside at Camp Cropper.

Cropper, from Page 1

historic transfer of the Cropper Theater Internment Facility to the Government of Iraq. The Cropper TIF was the last major U.S. run detention facility in Iraq.

As the U.S. and Iraqi forces prepared for the Cropper handover, the MPs assisted in the transfer of more than 1,500 detainees to Iraqi detention facilities throughout the country.

“The handover of several TIFs to the Iraqi government was a symbol of our hard work and dedication to the people of Iraq. The 105th is definitely proud to be part of this accomplishment,” said Maj. James Sasser, executive officer, 105th MP Battalion.

In order for the transfer to be successful, the 105th MP Bn. Soldiers provided critical training to the Iraqi correction officers, ensuring they were up to the task of managing prison operations and securing the prisoners.

“Other than guarding detainees, we also trained the ICOs to take over the detainee visitation program, detainee supply warehouse and logistical functions, engineering tasks and the TIF Operations Center,” said Maj. Diana Stumpf, operations officer, 105th MP Bn.

“With the training and guidance they received from us, we see them now with the same level of professionalism as the U.S.

“Our guard force worked side by side with the ICOs; they have shown great motivation and professionalism to the detainees by treating them with dignity and respect.”

guard force,” said Staff Sgt. Randy Kite, noncommissioned officer in charge of the Iraqi correction officer integration team.

He said that training the Iraqi correction officers was challenging in the beginning, but rewarding in the end.

“After getting them to understand what we did and why we did it, they employed our procedures and made it their own,” said Kite.

“The ICOs were very professional and willing to accept the training. They understood that what they were doing wasn’t for themselves, but for the good of their country,” he said.

Sasser said the training and advising the MPs provided the Iraqi corrections officers to ensure detainees are treated with dignity and respect is one of the main reasons for success.

“Our guard force worked side by side with the ICOs; they have shown great motivation and professionalism to the detainees by treating them with dignity and respect. The ICOs see that professionalism and adapt it to their program,” said Sasser.

As the 105th MP Bn. prepares to head back home to North Carolina in the coming months, Sasser said the professionalism of the Soldiers was critical to the success of both the TIF transfer to the Government of Iraq and the development and increased capabilities of the Iraqi corrections officers.

“Soldiers from different levels have collectively put their efforts on this mission. Now we can look back and see the fruits of the labor,” said Sgt. Maj. Andrew Haswell, 105th MP Bn. sergeant major.



Spc. Bryan DeHart observes detainee activity with surveillance cameras inside Camp Cropper.

Town Hall, from Page 1 —

their deployment, as U.S. forces transitioned from combat operations to an advise, assist and train role, the security situation in the country has continued to improve. He said the Iraqi Security Forces and the Iraqi Government continue to make huge strides.

Even without the formation of their government, he said the ISF continued to improve in their ability and desire to protect the Iraqi citizens from the terrorists.

“The biggest and most important thing that has happened during our deployment is that the Iraqi military and police have grown significantly,” Cone said. “They have continued on even without a government. The Iraqi military understands the role of constitutional democracy. It’s all about the people of Iraq.”

He added that violence is down 20 percent from 2009.

In addition to the security situation, the III Corps leadership also talked about the need for Soldiers to stay focused on the mission.

Coleman said everyone needs to understand that the rules of engagement for Soldiers have not changed.



Lt. Gen. Bob Cone, United States Forces - Iraq deputy commanding general for operations and III Corps commander, speaks to his Soldiers during a town hall meeting at Camp Victory, Iraq, Dec. 17. During the meeting, Cone and his senior enlisted advisor, Command Sgt. Maj. Arthur L. Coleman, Jr., provided the troops with a mission status update and also addressed leadership concerns and the right way to end their deployment in Iraq. The III Corps leadership team held a second meeting on Dec. 18 to ensure they were able to meet with all III Corps Soldiers.

“You do not want to be complacent. We owe it to each other. We have a right and a responsibility,” he said. “Remain disciplined and professional at all times. We’ve got to keep our head in the game all the way up until the end.”

The Soldiers in attendance said that having the leadership take the time to provide information about the overall situation in Iraq and to show their concern for the troops is a good morale boost.

“It’s good to hear what’s going on from our leaders,” said Spc. Richard Howard, a human resources specialist for Headquarters Support Company, Special Troops Battalion, III Corps.

As III Corps prepares to end their mission, Cone told the Soldiers it is important that they provide the incoming unit a proper transition and that III Corps leaves Iraq as professionals.

“Don’t take a short cut. You have to do what’s right; be professional in the hand off,” Cone said. “It’s the professionalism of the III Corps Soldiers that pulled this off. You have done a magnificent job here.”

Command Sgt. Maj. Arthur L. Coleman Jr., USF-I DCG-O senior enlisted advisor and III Corps command sergeant major, speaks with Soldiers during the town hall meeting. He emphasized the importance of remaining focused on the mission during the remainder of the corps’ deployment.



UNSUNG HERO



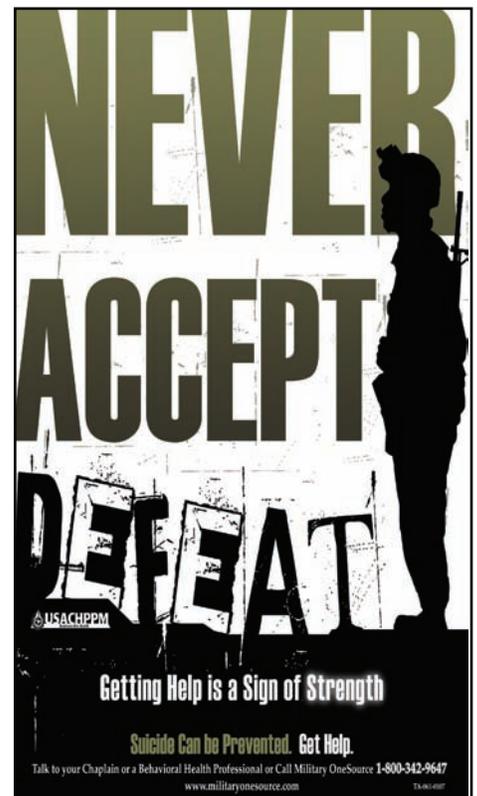
Sgt. Michael Barberi is recognized as this week's Unsung Hero and received a Certificate of Achievement from Brig. Gen. Joseph DiSalvo, Deputy Chief of Staff, United States Forces - Iraq, at Al Faw Palace Dec. 24. Barberi received the certificate for his exemplary performance while serving as a targeting specialist in the USF-I Joint Fires Cell.

Distinguished service



Photo by Lee Craker

Nesrin Dickow receives a Certificate of Tribute signed by Michigan Governor Jennifer M. Granholm from Maj. Gen. Nelson J. Cannon, United States Forces - Iraq deputy commanding general for detainee operations and provost marshal general, during a ceremony at Camp Victory, Iraq, Dec. 23. Cannon also awarded her the Michigan National Guard Distinguished Service Medal on behalf of the Michigan Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Tom Cutler, Michigan National Guard. Dickow received the awards during a live video teleconference with the Michigan adjutant general. In 2003 Dickow began working as a linguist and cultural advisor for Task Force 134 and the DCG-DO/PMG, where she is still currently serving.



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What is your New Year's resolution?

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Spc.
Paul Cobo

Admin Clerk

Co. B., STB, III Corps

"Spend more time with my family and close friends."



Lt. Cmdr.
Edward Moroney

Intelligence Advisor

*Baghdad Operations Command
Advisory Team*

*"Run the Marine Corps
Marathon"*



Sgt. 1st Class
Rene Gonzalez

JVB Hotel NCOIC

HHC, 116th BSTB

*"To reach heroic T11 on
the World of Warcraft."*



Chief Warrant Officer 3
Josie Flammer

Intelligence Analyst

Co. A, 345th MI TSB

*"To enroll in online
courses."*

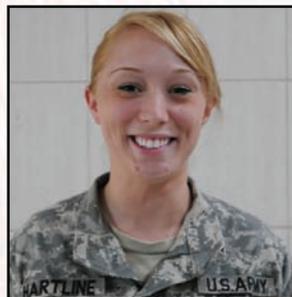


Pfc.
Bethany Golden

Food Service Specialist

HSC, III Corps

"To stop shopping online."



Pfc.
Andrea Hartline

Psychology Technician

547th Med. Co.

"Quit Smoking."

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

'Hope and Freedom' USO show entertains troops

Story and photos by
Sgt. Mahlet Tesfaye
25th Inf. Div. USD-C

The Sergeant Major of the Army brought his 'Hope and Freedom' Tour 2010 to Victory Base Complex, Iraq, Dec. 18, to help raise morale and bring a little bit of home to the deployed troops.

Sergeant Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston hosted the tour, which included the U.S. Army Band, country music artists Keni Thomas and Buddy Jewell, and pop artist Alana Grace. Comedian Chonda Pierce and the Dallas Cowboy cheerleaders also entertained the crowd on Camp Liberty.

"I came out here on this tour, because I wanted to bring you a piece of home, and to tell you how much I appreciate you," Pierce said to the audience, during the show.

the entertainers performed popular songs such as "Sweet Home Alabama," "Help Pour out the Rain" and "Seven Month Itch," which got the crowd tapping their feet, clapping their hands and singing.

The Army Band also got the troops



Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston speaks to service members, Department of Defense employees and civilian contractors Dec. 18, during the Sergeant Major of the Army's 'Hope and Freedom' Tour 2010 at Camp Liberty, Iraq. The USO tour brought different artists together to perform for troops deployed overseas during the holidays.

motivated with their performance.

"It was great to see the Army band here," said Sgt. Erin Bentz, a band member with 25th Inf. Div., and an Emporium, Pa., native. "I think

everybody seems to love it. It was great to let loose and have some time to laugh."



Pop music artist Alana Grace performs for the crowd during the concert. Grace is a veteran to USO tours.



Country music star Keni Thomas performs during the show. This is Thomas' sixth USO tour.