

Victory Times



Telling the United States Forces - Iraq story

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Wounded warriors receive hero's welcome

News release by
USF-I Public Affairs

Six wounded warriors returning to Iraq for the first time since they were injured, received a hero's welcome during a ceremony at Al Faw Palace on Camp Victory, Dec. 6.

About 300 United States Forces - Iraq service members and leaders greeted the wounded warriors and their military mentor with cheers and applause as they entered the palace rotunda to begin their trip back in country.

This event was part of Operation Proper Exit, which provides service members who were injured during their deployment in Iraq the opportunity to return and see the changes that have occurred because of their service and



Photo by Staff Sgt. Edward Daileg
Wounded warriors arrive at Sather Air Base for Operation Proper Exit, Dec. 6. This is the first time the service members have been back in Iraq since they were injured.

sacrifice and to continue their healing process.

During the event, Command Sgt. Maj. Arthur L. Coleman Jr., senior enlisted advisor for the USF-I deputy commanding general for operations, and III Corps command sergeant major, introduced the service members. The wounded warriors then talked about their injuries and what they are currently doing as they heal.

Coleman said the service members and their stories are an inspiration to all who wear the uniform.

"These Soldiers decided to not give up on life. Things

See Warriors, Page 8

VBC garrison command leadership changes

Story & Photos by Staff Sgt. April Davis
116th Garrison Command

The 116th Cavalry Brigade uncased its colors to officially assume authority of the garrison command for Victory Base Complex, Iraq, Dec. 3.

Its subordinate unit, the 2nd Squadron, 116th Armored

Reconnaissance, also conducted a transfer of authority ceremony and took control of the VBC Base Defense Operations Center.

Col. Guy Thomas, 116th Cav. Bde. commander, and his senior enlisted advisor, Command Sgt. Maj. Steven Woodall, uncased the 116th's colors signifying the beginning of

their mission. The 116th, which is headquartered in Boise, Idaho, will take over the garrison command as Task Force Snake.

The outgoing unit, the 199th Brigade Support Battalion, 256th Garrison Command, USD-C, cased their colors

See Command, Page 8

INSIDE:



Reunion secret
Page 2



Staying on the net
Page 3



Finding closure
Page 4

Chaplain's Corner

Working together is secret for successful reunion

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

With redeployment come the joys of reunion and the stress of figuring out life.

Whether figuring out life is with a spouse, family or friends, I want to share the "secret" to making your reunion the best it can be.

The key is to start now.

S: Sort out the roles. While you were away, your family had to fill in the roles that you used to fill.

When you return, there needs to be a negotiation of who will do what; who will handle the finances, discipline the children, get the groceries, cook dinner, or do the laundry; and the list goes on.

There is no right way to do this, but you need to talk about your expectations and then negotiate to reach an agreeable conclusion.

E: Expectations. Simply put, expectations are desires we have about a given situation, and we may or may not express them to others involved.

The problem with not expressing our expectations is that we are asking the other person to be a mind reader. No matter how small or silly it may seem, you need to discuss your expectations with each other and then negotiate.

C: Commitment. There needs to be a commitment to the process. Obviously there is already a commitment

to the relationship, but that does not necessarily mean that you are committed to the process. Commitment to the reunion process will help to make your relationship stronger than any other step.

R: Responsibility. This keeps things from happening to us; to put it another way, it keeps us from being a victim to our circumstances.

For instance, "you make me angry," means I have no control over my feelings, but you do.

"I choose to be angry" gives me control and responsibility. The same goes for positive actions. Taking responsibility will provide a catalyst for growth in the relationship after reunion.

E: Effective Communication. You can do everything right, but if you don't communicate your intentions and desires then it could all go wrong.

Most issues we face in our life can be improved, if not fixed, simply by communicating. Effective communication is ensuring what you say is what they understood. This can be accomplished by simply asking, "what do you think I meant by that?"

T: Time Management. There will be many things competing for your time during the reunion process. Proper time management will ensure that all needs are met, including yours, during this stressful time.

There you have it; following these pointers is the **SECRET** to a successful reunion.

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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Airman 1st Class Arthur Burney, an information management officer with the 151st Expeditionary Signal Battalion, and an instructor at the Signal University, helps an Iraqi Army sergeant find his way through a simulated network at the Signal University on Camp Iraqi Hero.

151st ESB partners with IGFC signaleers

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

As the Iraqi Security Forces continue to grow and improve their ability to conduct operations, it is critical that reliable communications are always available.

To help increase Iraqi communication capabilities, United States Forces - Iraq service members are teaching Iraqi Soldiers network and server management skills.

The 151st Expeditionary Signal Battalion and Iraqi Soldiers held a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the first Signal University courses available at Camp Iraqi Hero, Dec. 4.

The four-week class takes place at a satellite campus on the Iraqi Camp. Signal University, the school where U.S. communicators attend their courses, is on Camp Victory, said Maj. Jeff Heaton, from Greenville, S.C., and the executive officer for the 151st ESB.

"It's important to conduct the training in their environment; this is their home, and this is their university," he said.

The class instructors, three service

members attached to the 151st ESB, are teaching Iraqi officers and sergeants crucial computer skills that will increase the efficiency of the Iraqi defense network.

"We are training the Iraqi soldiers so they can go out and perform all the necessary network and server management," said Airman 1st Class Arthur Burney, from Robins Air Force Base, Ga., an information management officer with the 151st ESB, and an instructor at the Iraqi Ground Forces Command Signal University.

"We want to be able to give the Soldiers of the IGFC the knowledge and skills to be network managers themselves," he said.

"This training is part of an overall effort by USF-I to augment existing institutional training programs for Iraqi Army signaleers," said Heaton.

"We need to be trained on the computers to be able to work on them independently without the assistance of the U.S.," said 1st Lt. Sadq Thaph, the deputy commander of communications for the IGFC. "We will be able to increase productivity with the Iraqi Defense Network."

The training also increases the knowledge base of signal leaders, better preparing them for the future.

"This training plays a role in continued development and strengthening of the Iraqi Army and its capability," said Heaton.

Another class is scheduled to begin in two weeks and there is already a list of Soldiers who want to attend, said Burney

The 151st ESB plans on conducting the courses throughout their deployment.



1st Lt. Sadq Thaph, deputy commander of communications for the Iraqi Ground Forces Compound, is one of the first Iraqi Army personnel to attend network and server management at Camp Iraqi hero.

Operation Proper Exit

Injured combat veterans return to find closure

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

The last time retired Spc. Derek Bradshaw was in Iraq, the final thing he remembered was being tossed around inside a humvee as it rolled over.

After the traumatic incident, Bradshaw wasn't aware of anything else that happened until he woke up at Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington D.C.

Bradshaw's story is similar to that of the five other service members who returned to Iraq on Dec. 6, to seek closure and see for themselves how their efforts helped change this country.

The six service members who were previously injured in Iraq returned for Operation Proper Exit. OPE was created in 2009 and has helped 49 service members deal with their injuries by affording them the opportunity to return to Iraq.

During their time in Iraq they are able to travel throughout the country to see the changes that have occurred because of the sacrifice of service members like themselves.

Rick Kell, executive director of the Troops First



Foundation and co-creator of OPE, who brought the wounded warriors back to Iraq, said he helped create the program with the goal of helping the service members get a sense of closure and a chance to experience the positive changes that are happening in Iraq today.

"We hope to provide the opportunity for them to see that their sacrifices have great meaning. They have equity in this country and it's not being wasted," Kell said.

"The wounded warriors come out here to look for something that fills their need and when they find it, they move on and become better emotionally," he said.

During this OPE visit, the eighth overall, the wounded warriors visited the three United States divisions' headquarters and a few of the outlying bases.

Soldiers like Bradshaw and retired Spc. Carlos Ortiz had the opportunity to visit the place they were injured.

In Forward Operating Base Gains Mill at USD - North, both Soldiers met with their comrades and saw the



Sgt. Alexander Reyes (Right) and Spc. Euri Reyes look at a photo on the wall at Joint Base Balad Hospital Dec. 9. The photo is an image from the actual room that Sgt. Reyes was brought to before he got medically evacuated.



Above - Retired Master Sgt. Tom Carpenter speaks to service members at the Al Faw Palace Dec. 6. Carpenter is a mentor for the service members who participate in Operation Proper Exit.

majority of that area of responsibility had been turned over to the Iraqi Army.

“This place is a lot smaller than before. I am very happy to see that they are able to train the Iraqi Army to take over the most of the area,” said Bradshaw. “It’s safer for the Soldiers because they don’t go out as much as we used to before.”

“Coming back out here to put my boots on the ground at my old FOB helped me clear my mind, he said. I was able to see the progress that my fellow Soldiers achieved through our sacrifices.”

The service members also had the opportunity to visit the Joint Base Balad Hospital. The hospital is where all of them were treated before they were flown out of Iraq for further medical treatment.

“When I came through here before, I could only remember so much at that time,” said retired Sgt. Alexander Reyes. “Today, I was able to see the people who helped save my life and thank them for what they do.”

While not every warrior was able to step foot on the location where they were injured, this trip did give them a sense of clarity and closure. This time the warriors were able to leave Iraq under their own strength and on their terms.



Retired Sgt. 1st Class Joe James looks for the name of a fallen Soldier at the United States Division - Central Memorial Hall on Dec 10. The Soldier died in the same roadside bomb that injured James.

Unsung Hero



Staff Sgt. Herinah B. Asaah 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. 10. Asaah received the certificate for her exemplary performance while serving as the USF-I chaplain noncommissioned officer-in-charge.

**NEVER
ACCEPT
DEFEAT**

Getting Help is a Sign of Strength

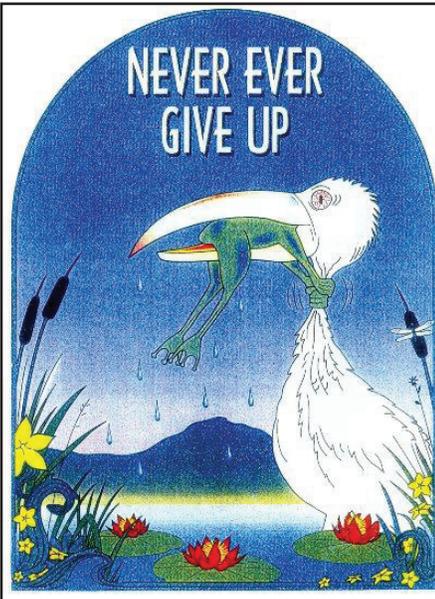
Suicide Can be Prevented. Get Help.

Talk to your Chaplain or a Behavioral Health Professional or Call Military OneSource 1-800-342-9647
www.militaryonesource.com

Electrical Fire Safety

- Routinely check your electrical appliances and wiring.
- Never overload extension cords or wall sockets.
- Do not place cords and wires under rugs, over nails or in high traffic areas.
- Immediately shut off light switches that are hot to the touch or lights that flicker and have them replaced.
- Frayed wires can cause fires. Replace all worn, old, or damaged appliance cords immediately.
- Keep electrical appliances away from wet floor and counters.
- 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. Never force it to fit into a two slot outlet or extension cord.
- Check your electrical equipment regularly for signs of wear. If the cords are frayed or cracked, replace them. Replace any tool if it causes even small electrical shocks, overheats, shorts out or gives off smoke or sparks.

Ref: <http://www.pep-c.org/electricalfires/>



Sisterhood Against Sexual Assault

WE ARE.....SASA!
Prevention before Reaction

Guest Speakers:
CW5 Jeanne Pace (I1)
SGM Lenora Johnson (I4)

Male's Point of View:
MSG Burkholder (TF 807 MED)



What: SASA's Monthly MTG- Topic: **Never Give Up!**

When: 20 DEC 2010 from 1600-1800.

Where: JVB Hotel located on Victory Base Complex
BUS STOP INFO ([Plan Accordingly](#)) White Line #11 or Blue Line #12 to JVB

Who: Army, Navy, Air Force & Marines, DOD Civilians and Contractors

Why: A different approach in the Prevention of Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment

POC: MAJ Belcastro, NIPR 485-6083 lisa.belcastro@iraq.centcom.mil

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What's your favorite part of deployment?



Staff Sgt. Staniel Matlock
Medic

299th Brigade Support Battalion

"The camaraderie that you don't get at your home station."



Chief Warrant Officer Kevin McPeak
Intel Technician

Co. B, Task Force Phantom

"Pursuing my academic interests."



Pfc. Taylor Wagner
Mail Clerk

Task Force Phantom

"Being able to see another country."



Spc. Jessica Wirth

PSD team member

Co. B, 145th Brigade Support Battalion

"The Greenbeans!"



Spc. Keith Frazier

PSD team member

Co. B, 14th Brigade Support Battalion

"Seeing Baghdad from the top of my truck."



Spc. Kelly Jenkins

Gunner

Co. B, 256th Brigade Special Troops Battalion

"All the new experiences."

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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
www.flickr.com/photos/mnfirac
www.twitter.com/USF_Iraq

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

Command, from Page 1 —

symbolizing the end of their mission and redeployed back home to Louisiana.

As Thomas spoke to his Soldiers during the ceremony, he told them he is confident they are prepared for the mission.

“We have a very challenging mission ahead of us and the bar has been set high,” Thomas said. “I know you will get the job done with enthusiasm, determination, and I have no doubt you are prepared for what challenges lay ahead.”

Task Force Snake will be working much like a small city government office, responsible for maintaining infrastructure and support services to thousands of U.S. military and civilians living and working on VBC.

They will manage the departments for public works, logistics, human resources, operations and camp mayors. The departments and mayor cells work cooperatively to ensure VBC residents have adequate housing, electricity, water and other essential life-support resources.

During the 2nd Sqdn., 116th A.R., 116th Cav. Bde., transfer of authority with the 256th Inf. Bde. Special Troops



From left, Col. Guy Thomas and Command Sgt. Major Steven Woodall, the commander and senior enlisted advisor of the 116th Cavalry Brigade, Idaho Army National Guard, uncase their unit colors Dec. 3, signifying the beginning of their mission as Task Force Snake, the Victory Base Complex Garrison Command.

Battalion, Lt. Col. Todd Edgar, commander of 2nd Sqdn., 116th A.R., now Task Force Rattler, said, “We are very proud to be here and to be selected for this challenging and important mission. The chance to give and sacrifice for the protection of others is an honor.”

Warriors, from Page 1 —

might have changed, but they drive on,”

said Coleman. “Coming here brings closure to the incident and also really gives them a proper exit from Iraq.”

Spc. Alexander Reyes, one of the wounded warriors, told those in attendance that what happens in Iraq is just an obstacle.

“I stand here to give you my testimony and let you know that no matter what happens here (in Iraq), you can still overcome

any obstacle that comes your way,” said Reyes, who was later surprised by his brother, Spc. Euri Reyes, who is currently deployed in Iraq with the 289th Quartermaster Company, 13th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 103rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, those in attendance were able to meet with the wounded warriors, offering their thanks and encouragement.

“Everyone welcomed me back to Iraq,” said Reyes. “They also wanted me to continue to earn my degree and continue with my life.”

The wounded warriors spent the week in Iraq traveling the country, to see firsthand, the changes that have occurred due to the service and sacrifice of service members like themselves.



Command Sgt. Maj. Arthur L. Coleman Jr., senior enlisted advisor to the United States Forces Iraq deputy commanding general of operations speaks to Spc. Alexander Reyes, a wounded warrior, while his brother, Spc. Euri Reyes, sneaks on to the stage to surprise him.