

THE ARROWHEAD

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SUBMISSIONS — The Arrowhead Staff invites articles, story ideas, photographs and other material of interest to members of the U.S. Army. Please keep all images in an unedited .jpg format and at a reasonable size. The Arrowhead Staff request all correspondence to be emailed to 36IDPAO@gmail.com.

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In Spite of Hell!



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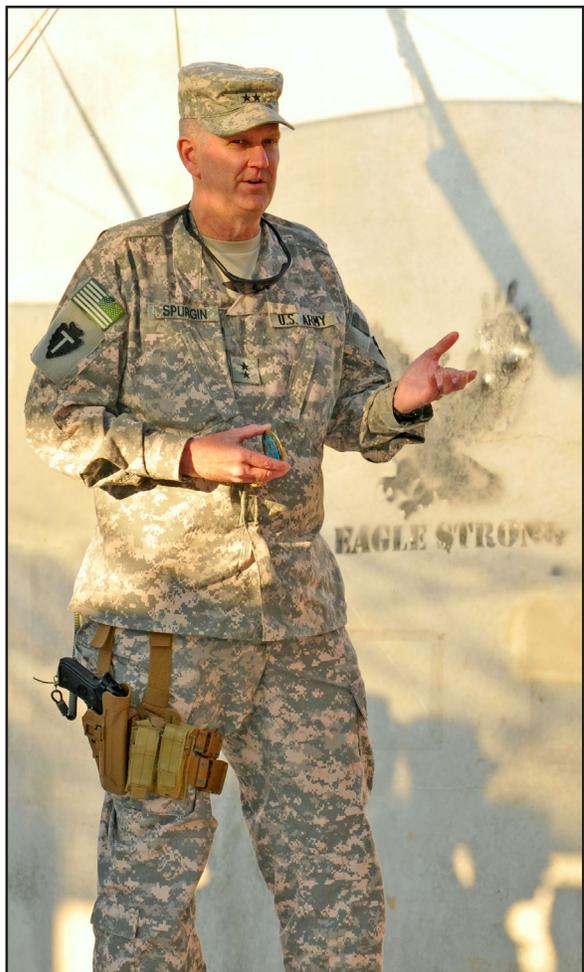
ON THE COVER:

An Iraqi Soldier joins Soldiers from the 36th and 1st Infantry Division during the Transfer of Authority on Jan. 2 as a member of the Color Guard.

(Photo by Sgt. David A. Bryant, 36th Inf. Div. PAO, USD-S)



Arrowhead 6 Sends...



we're not out there doing a good job ourselves, day after day, making a difference that is worth writing about and publishing.

It shouldn't be hard. Since assuming command of USD-S on 2 January, I've been deeply impressed and pleased by the hard work and professionalism of our Soldiers, as well as the Airmen, Coast Guardsmen, and Civilians who make this headquarters what it is. The work we're doing on behalf of our Nation and the people of Iraq is important and historic; never before has there been anything quite like it, nor is there likely to be for a long time to come.

When the last U.S. Soldier leaves Southern Iraq and our mission is complete, the new U.S. consulate will only be the most visible symbol of our legacy. The success of the Iraqi Security Forces and the continued march of economic and political

fought with distinction in the First World War and was the first unit in military history to employ the use of Native American "code talkers," thanks to the Choctaw Soldiers serving in the ranks of the 36th.

That same spirit of initiative and innovation is alive and well in this headquarters today because of the diversity of skills and experience our able Citizen-Soldiers bring to this deployment. It's truly an honor to serve among so many capable men and women.

Be proud of the great work you're doing here and more importantly be well—physically, mentally, and spiritually. Take care of yourselves, and look out for one another so we can all cross that distant finish line together. In Spite of Hell." 

Eddy M. Spurgin
Major General
Commanding

“Soldiers, service members, and Civilians of U.S. Division—South, welcome to the first issue of The Arrowhead Magazine.

What you're holding is the final product of many weeks of great work by our public affairs team. I couldn't be happier with it, and I hope you'll agree that they did an outstanding job.

Take some time out of your busy schedules to enjoy the articles and photos in the pages that follow, and if you can think of ways to make the next issue even better, don't hesitate to contact the Public Affairs Office.

Their mission is to tell our story—the story of the 36th Infantry Division, USD-S, and the many fine people serving here—and they can't do that if

progress in the nine southern provinces of Iraq will be another.

One day, each of us will look back and tell our children or grandchildren that we helped make that happen, that it was only the beginning of a better future for a region that history books call the “cradle of civilization,” and some call the Garden of Eden.

As many of you know, the arrowhead shape of the 36th Division patch represents the Oklahoman part of our unit's heritage.

Created in 1918 from units of the Texas and Oklahoma National Guard, the division



MOVING IN AND...



The 36th Infantry Division flag proudly flies next to the Iraq and U.S. flags on the morning of Jan. 2, 2011.



Master Sgt. Jose A. Mancias centers the "Fighting Panthers" emblem, a crest used by the 36th Inf. Div. during World War I.



Sgt. Ruben Lopez ensures the "T" in the division's crest is centered before permanently affixing it to the Division Main Tactical Operations Center wall.



Soldiers from the 36th Inf. Div. level photos of "Arrowhead 5," the division's command group.



Maj. Gen. Eddy M. Spurgin explains his vision for USD-S as part of Operation New Dawn.



Maj. Gen. Eddy M. Spurgin renders a salute during the playing of the national anthem at the transfer of authority ceremony



Maj. Gen. Eddy M. Spurgin and Command Sgt. Maj. Wilson L. Early jointly cut a cake to symbolize the formal transfer of authority to the 36th Inf. Div.

Maj. Gen. Eddy M. Spurgin and Command Sgt. Maj. Wilson L. Early unroll the Division Colors to formally symbolize the transfer of authority of United States Division–South from 1st Inf. Div. to the 36th Inf. Div.



...TAKING CHARGE



Sergeant 1st Class John Wayne Savage is a force protection noncommissioned officer with the 36th Infantry Division, The Phoenix, Ariz. native and resident of Austin, Texas, deployed with the Army National Guard at the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom, again during the 2006 surge, and will have the unique opportunity to see the completion of U.S. operations in Iraq.

From the Beginning to the End:

An Army National Guardsman's Time in Iraq

Story and Photo by Sgt. David A. Bryant
36th Inf. Div., USD-S Public Affairs Office

BASRAH, Iraq – His ice-blue eyes grew slightly unfocused as his mind took him on a journey back through time. The year was 2003 and Operation Iraqi Freedom had just begun; it would be the first of three deployments to Iraq for Sgt. 1st Class John Wayne Savage.

The 39-year-old Motor Transportation sergeant, currently serving as a force protection noncommissioned officer, vividly recalled the beginning of the conflict as a time of uncertainty.

“We didn’t know when we’d be coming home back then; we were there for six months before we were even told we’d be staying in Iraq for a year,” said Savage, a Phoenix, Ariz. native and resident of Austin, Texas. “I served with the 2220th Transportation Company, Arizona Army National Guard, and our mission was fluid. Everyone was learning the mission together. We improvised and just did things the best way we knew how.”

At the beginning of OIF, the amenities Soldiers normally enjoy were in short supply.

“When we first got to Iraq, we had no latrines, no chow halls, no (post exchange) and no shower points. We had to improvise,” Savage said. “We had Soldiers taking showers standing in a drip-pan using their camelback and doing laundry out of big plastic tubs. Our water source was a water buffalo. As we draw down our forces in Iraq and start closing things down, it will be interesting to see whether or not we go back to the way it was in the beginning.”

Savage’s perspective of OIF is unique; he was there for the beginning, served a second tour in 2006 and will now see the fruition of the United States’ efforts in Iraq as he deploys with

the 36th Infantry Division for Operation New Dawn.

The tall, whipcord-thin Savage served in the United States Navy for six years before getting out in 1995. After a three-year break in service he enlisted as a Citizen-Soldier, a member of the Army National Guard willing to leave a civilian career to answer his Nation’s call.

“It was a lot of work, but what we did made it possible for fellow Soldiers to do their job effectively.”

Deploying is difficult at times, but Savage said he considers himself no different from the hundreds of thousands of his fellow Soldiers who have made the same sacrifice on behalf of fellow Americans.

“The chance to serve alongside the best America has to offer makes the sacrifice worthwhile,” he said.

“Every day I work with Soldiers whose professional capabilities make me proud to be associated with them,” Savage said. “They are the reason I continue to serve; their courage inspires me to be a better Soldier.”

2006 brought a surge in troops to Iraq and a new mission for transportation Soldiers. Savage’s second deployment would be more focused than the first,

with a clear mission to provide long-haul convoys of supplies to major hubs in the theater of operations.

“The primary difference is there were no breaks; it was just work,” he said. “We were running missions all the time and almost all movements were made at night between midnight and 5 a.m. It was a lot of work, but what we did made it possible for fellow Soldiers to do their job effectively.”

Savage said he remembers moving so much materiel during his second deployment that he figured it would be a tough job getting it all out when the time came to bring everyone home.

Now, with Operation New Dawn, he will get the chance to find out; even though he will miss another year in the lives of his 17-year-old son and 13-year-old daughter and will celebrate his 20-year wedding anniversary during the deployment.

“I think it’s cool seeing how this will end, seeing how different Iraq will be from the way it was when we first arrived,” Savage said. “I want the chance to see the success stories of the Iraqi people — that Iraqi police officer proud of what he is doing and that Iraqi soldier proud to be serving his nation. I want to be able to say we were a part of that; we were there and we made a difference.” 

Soldier's Health

“Never take advice from someone that doesn't look better than you.” - Culver

By Staff Sgt. Chanelcherie DeMello
305th MPAD, USD-S Public Affairs Office

BASRAH, Iraq –Dirt and dust fills the air no matter where you go in Iraq or at what time. In some cases practically blocking the sun and turning daylight into darkness in only a matter of minutes. This common occurrence forces many runners to find a different location for their exercises. The solution is the treadmill, a safe and dust free alternative in the effort to stay fit to fight.

1st Lt. Monique Culver, 36th Infantry Division, Air Missile Defense operations officer shares her expertise and passion for fitness and health.

“Transitioning to treadmill running benefits your lungs in this environment,” said Culver, adding that “Your air intake as you run outdoors will result in a higher concentration of dirt and sand.”

Culver, who recently graduated with a degree in kinesiology from St. Mary's University in San Antonio, Texas, was prepared for the many changes that the new environment would bring to the human anatomy when she found out that she would be going to the “sand box.” The need to inform her fellow Soldiers of the many fitness opportunities available to them soon became an importance for her.

“I emailed my section some tips,” said Culver. “I was thinking about when people would start to wonder how they could stay fit when a sand storm was going on or the weather was bad.”

It was during this email exchange that she developed the treadmill idea, a dynamic cardio workout using a treadmill as your average road, hillside



Conducting tempo runs will increase speed, strength and endurance, says 1st Lt. Monique Culver as she runs on a treadmill at the main Basrah gym. (Photo by Sgt. Jeremy Spires)

and (5k) marathon.

“Through the treadmill, you can build your leg strength. Make it more fun by doing sprints in intervals or raise your incline,” said Culver.

Her workout consists of three different drills, called tempo runs, uphill repeats and VO2 max interval-High Intensity Training (HIT). VO2 max is the maximum capacity of an individual's body to utilize oxygen during incremental exercise.

Tempo runs are sustained movements at a challenging pace, she explained. The exercise starts with a light run intended to warm-up your muscles, followed by a consistent pace that the individual can maintain without fatiguing.

“Tempo runs are a great way

to increase speed, strength, and endurance,” said Culver. “It teaches your body to adapt to the increased intensity and it's a great way to train your brain to keep going when it wants to stop.”

According to Culver, uphill running can get a little challenging. She recommends uphill repeats. Aim for effort rather than speed. Begin with a half-mile warm-up. Follow this with a five percent raise of the treadmill and an intensifying three to five minute run with a one minute break of jogging on an incline in between.

“To improve your anaerobic capacity and leg muscle power, warm-up for about a half-mile, then run the uphill with sprints lasting 20-45 seconds,” said Culver. “These repeats can make you a faster runner.”

In the event you decide you'd like to increase your metabolism and burn more fat in less time, Culver suggests the HIT, an exercise designed to alternate high and low intensity periods.

“Starting with a half-mile warm-up preceded by two-minute intervals of varied paces for 20 minutes can benefit any Soldier on the go,” said Culver.

Through Culver's motivation and knowledge of the mind and body at work, she believes there are no excuses to staying fit.

“I just think health is wealth,” said Culver. “Exercise is a stress reliever and it's positive for your health, mind and body.” 

We talk a lot about the sacrifices and hardships of deployments, especially the combat deployments. There is no doubt that the list is long and varied for those who have deployed, and for some, more than once.

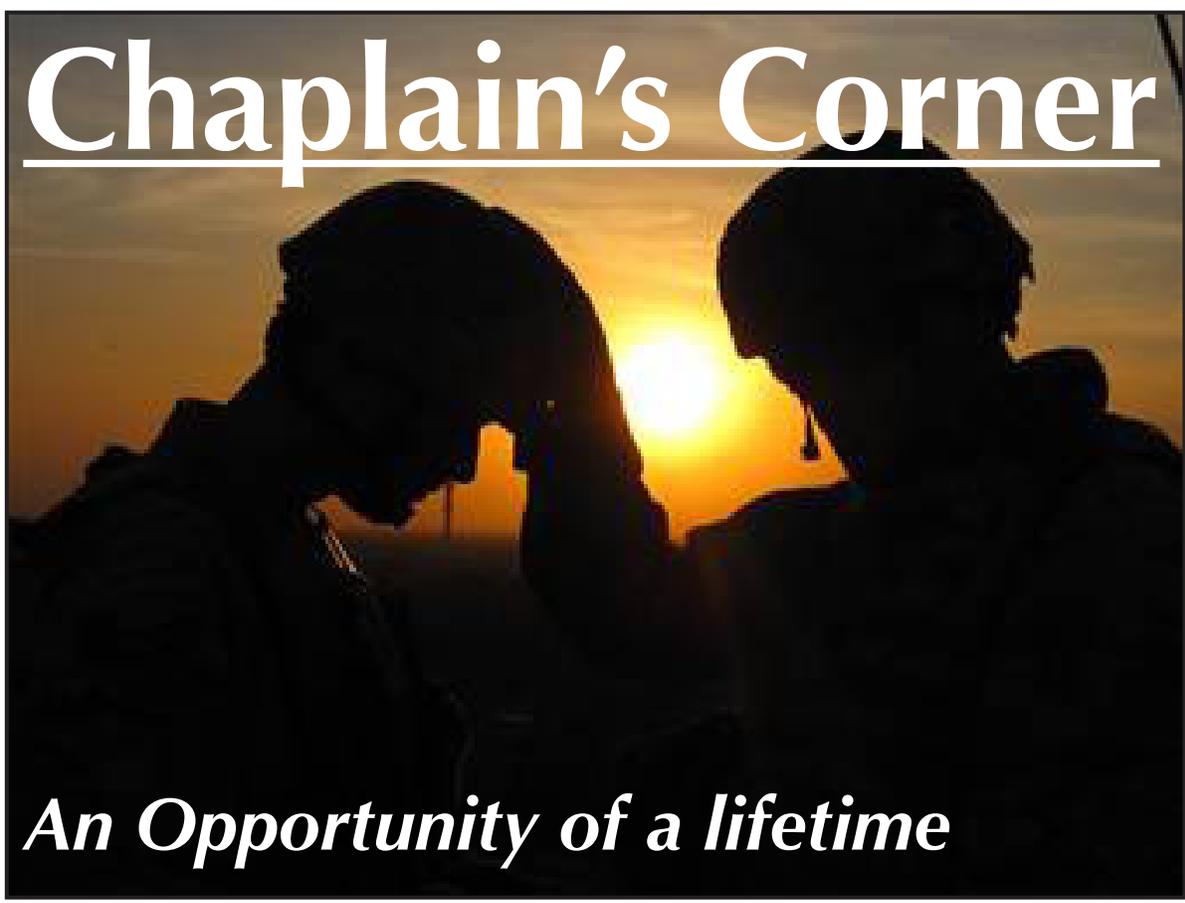
What is not always emphasized, and, in my estimation, should be, is that the same deployments can also offer tremendous opportunities for growth and experiential knowledge and an expanding of our understanding of ourselves, others, the world around us, and, yes, even God. Many have noticed that not only are there legitimate cases and examples of Post

Traumatic Stress, but there are also a large number of cases and examples of Post Traumatic Growth.

Our Commanding General, Maj. Gen. Eddy Spurgin, often reminds us that every day is filled with opportunities and that we should make the most of them.

The Apostle Paul also says something similar in Ephesians 3:15-16, where he writes, “Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.” And elsewhere Paul writes, “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” (1 Corinthians 10:31)

Chaplain's Corner



An Opportunity of a lifetime

Combat deployments are filled with challenges, but when seen as opportunities to excel instead of as problems to fear, these challenges can mold and shape us into stronger, more confident and competent individuals who can face the future with resolve and resilience, no matter what the challenge ahead.

When we recognize that our presence on this deployment is an honor and a privilege and an opportunity to experience and accomplish things that we would never be able to experience or accomplish otherwise, it can transform our attitude and help us focus on making the most of it rather than regretting and fretting about the

sacrifices and hardships caused by it.

Being on this deployment, with this mission that we've been given at this critical time in history is truly an opportunity of a lifetime. Yes, we all have made great sacrifices to be here—some much more than others.

However, nothing truly of great value in life comes free without a bit of blood, sweat and even tears. But the rewards are great if we choose to “seize the day” to make the most of every opportunity and seek to “Serve wholeheartedly as if you were serving the Lord, not men.” (Ephesians 6:7) 

“WHEN WE RECOGNIZE THAT OUR PRESENCE ON THIS DEPLOYMENT IS AN HONOR AND A PRIVILEGE AND AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE AND ACCOMPLISH THINGS THAT WE WOULD NEVER BE ABLE TO EXPERIENCE OR ACCOMPLISH OTHERWISE...”

— CH (LT. COL) J. CRAIG COMBS



IED can't put Downs down



Purple Heart recipient humbled by award

Story and photo by Sgt. Raymond T. Quintanilla
305th MPAD, USD-S Public Affairs Office

BASRAH, Iraq –Injured, but not out of the fight, a young American Soldier has been awarded the oldest military decoration still in use for wounds received from an enemy attack.

Spc. Elizabeth Downs, a 22-year-old resident of Fresno, Calif., and a U.S. Army reservist with the 422nd Military Police Company, Bakersfield, Calif., was presented the Purple Heart Medal from the U.S. Division-South and 36th Infantry Division commander, Maj. Gen. Eddy M. Spurgin, here in Basrah, Jan. 4.

Returning from a key leadership engagement, the mine-resistant-ambush-protected (MRAP) vehicle Downs was in, received damage from an improvised explosive device around noon on Jan. 3.

Downs' squad leader, Staff Sgt. Annette King, of Los Alamitos, Calif., said Downs was immediately brought to the medical treatment facility on post and is now in good spirits.

"She has overcome so much," King said. "She handled what happened yesterday with courage and everybody is just very proud of her."

Downs' platoon sergeant echoed that sentiment.

"I'll be ready in a few weeks, sergeant," said Staff Sgt. Rommel Bautista of Bakersfield, Calif., repeating the words of his injured Soldier. "It makes me proud to serve with her, but the best thing is for her to return home and have a speedy recovery."

1st Lt. Alexandra Brenner of Sioux Falls, S.D., a registered nurse with the 162nd Area Support Medical Company, said Downs was in stable condition and will be medically evacuated to the Landstuhl Army Regional Medical Center Hospital in Germany.



Soldiers from 2nd Platoon, 422nd Military Police Company, an Army Reserve unit from Bakersfield, Calif., visit Spc. Elizabeth Downs at an Army military treatment facility in Basrah, Jan. 4. Downs, from Fresno, Calif., was presented the Purple Heart Medal by Maj. Gen. Eddy M. Spurgin, the commander for the U.S. Division-South and 36th Infantry Division, for injuries resulting from an improvised explosive device attack in Basrah, Jan. 3.

“She handled what happened yesterday with courage and everybody is just very proud of her.”

Downs, appearing tired, said she was in good spirits and is grateful for the support from the medical staff and her unit.

"The people here have been really great," said Downs. "Our commander flew in the same day from Adder. I really appreciate that."

Unpretentious about receiving the award, Downs said she was just doing her job.

"There have been so many other people who have historically received this award before me," Down said. "It's an honor for me to get it when other people have risked their lives. I just got injured."

It appears it would take more than an IED to destroy the fighting spirit of this Soldier.

"I'm hoping that I won't be injured too long," Downs said. "I am still a Soldier. I signed up for it." 



Taking Care of Business

Single Mother Deployed to Iraq Excels for Children's Sake

Story and photo by Sgt. David A. Bryant
36th Inf. Div., USD-S Public Affairs Office

BASRAH, Iraq – She originally was thinking of joining the Air Force once she graduated high school, but that was put on the back burner after her first child came along.

Then came the second and third children; by that time, going on active duty in the military was no longer an option. Spc. Rubi A. Torres, supply clerk for Company B, 36th Division Special Troops Battalion, was willing to entertain.

“At that time, I didn’t want to have to give guardianship to anybody and by the time I had my three, I was like ‘oh crap, I’m going to have to just do it,’ so I decided to go Guard,” the 25-year-old San Antonio native said. “I didn’t want to go active duty since my kids were so young and I didn’t want to be traveling all over the place.”

In reality, she admits, it was her mother who pushed her into finally enlisting.

“My mom forced me to do it. She said ‘you ain’t doing anything, so why don’t you join the Guard and you can go to school.’ So I said okay, and here I am,” Torres said.

This is her first deployment in the three years she’s now been in the Texas Army National Guard, and the longest time she’s been away from her kids, she added.

“It’s a struggle, but I guess I’ve gotten used to it a little bit since I have already been away from them before at basic and (advanced individual training),” she said. “I wish I was at home, but this is something that I have to do to better the life for myself and my children. You have to make a sacrifice sometime.”

Torres is handling her first deployment very well, said 1st Lt. Crystal M. Warren, executive officer for B Co.

“She’s staying focused and getting the job done. I’m glad she’s here with us,” added Warren.

Staying focused is a lot easier thanks to some modern communication capabilities such as “Magic Jack” and Skype, Torres said. The fact that her sister and mother are taking care of her children while she’s gone is another factor setting her mind at ease and allowing her to focus on her work, she added.

“My kids miss me, but I talk to them every day. I have a Magic Jack, so I

call them at home. I’m waiting for my sister to get her computer fixed and get a webcam so we can Skype,” Torres said. “My youngest asks all the time, ‘Mommy, are you at work?’ She already knows the time difference, so she knows that it’s night when I call. She’ll ask me ‘is it already tomorrow for you?’ So I think she’s catching on about where I am for my work.”

While deploying is difficult and she misses her children, Torres said she’s not really worried about her children because she knows they are safe. Being single only makes it easier for her, she added.

“It’s less stressful I think, as a single mom, because I can only imagine how much more stressful it is for married couples and having that extra person to worry about,” she said. “I don’t think it’s as stressful for me. Kids are easy, dealing with other adults is the hard part.”

Because of the people she works with in B Co., Torres feels her first deployment will be challenging and fun.

“I enjoy working with my chain of command. They’re just awesome,” she said. “It’s more like a family here because we take care of one another. It’s the next-best thing to having my kids with me.” 

“I wish I was at home, but this is something that I have to do to better the life for myself and my children.”



Basrah Police Academy graduates new officers

Story and Photos by 1st Lt. Ian Norwalk,
1st Bn., 68th Armor Reg., 3rd AAB, 4th Inf. Div.

BASRAH, Iraq – U.S. Soldiers escorted the stability transition team “Justice” to the Shiabah Police Training Center Jan. 9 to honor the new Iraqi police officer graduates from the Iraqi Police Academy.

Company C, 1st Battalion, 68th Armor Regiment, 3rd Advise and Assist Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, helped train the officers over the last year to prepare them for this day. The day was also significant because it marked the 89th anniversary of the Iraqi police, an important day for police throughout Iraq, not just the new officers.

“This is an important day for the new Iraqi police officer graduates,” said Lt. Col. Abas Saleme, 12th Emergency Response Battalion commander, in the Al Jubaylah region of Basrah. “These graduates have studied and trained for

the past two years. It is important that we show support for the graduates.”

The event began with a reading from the Koran, followed by speeches to the new Iraqi officers.

Afterward, select units from the Oil Police, Public Order Police, Basrah Special Weapons and Tactics Team, Traffic Police, explosive ordinance disposal units and units from Basrah’s emergency response battalions all conducted a pass and review to honor the new graduates.

“Everyone is here to celebrate all of the hard work and training that has been done throughout the year,” said Muhammad Hasan Fareed, police commissioner. “The Iraqi



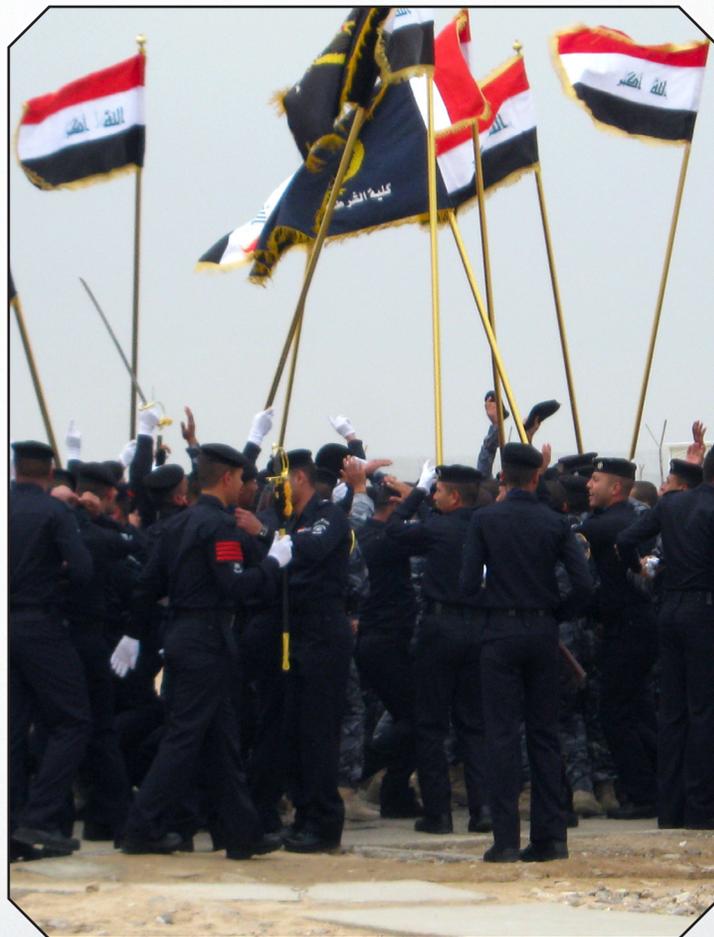
police have improved a lot over the past year. With more training and hard work, the police force in Basrah will continue to improve.” Fared is one of the instructors at the Shiabah Training Center.

“It was good to see some of the police officers that we have been training with throughout the year,” said Staff Sgt. Dennis Leonard, from Company C, 1st Bn., 68th Armor Reg. “We have worked with the Basrah SWAT team and several of the emergency response battalions, so it has been good to see all of the familiar faces.”

At the conclusion of the parade, the class of new officers gathered in celebration chanting, “Now that we have our stars on our shoulders, we can put our boots on the terrorists.”

RIGHT— Newly graduated Iraqi police officers gather in celebration, chanting “Now that we have our stars on our shoulders, we can put our boots on the terrorists.”

BACKGROUND— A platoon from Basrah’s 4th Emergency Response Battalion marches before guests during the pass and review. This year marks the 89th anniversary of the first Iraqi Police Day.



IRON STRONG!





The “Lone Star” Soldiers of the 36th Inf. Div.

Of 180, only four remain

Story and photo by Sgt. James Kennedy Benjamin
305th MPAD, USD-S Public Affairs Office

BASRAH, Iraq – After World War II, the National Guard was authorized to create two armored divisions: the 49th and 50th. While the 50th Armored Div. stood up in New Jersey and the 49th in Texas, both served as strategic reserves for the Army during the Cold War. In the 1960s, the 49th Div. was called up in response to the Cuban Missile Crisis but never left American soil. It seemed the 49th was destined never to face an enemy combatant on foreign ground.

In 2004, a company-sized cavalry element from the Texas National Guard made history when 180 of its Soldiers deployed during Operation Iraqi Freedom II, becoming the first unit of the 49th Div. to deploy before it was deactivated in May of that year.

David “Eric” Tyler of Georgetown, Texas, was among the Soldiers of that cavalry unit. Then a young lieutenant

and executive officer for the troop, Tyler recalled his experience at Camp Ashraf, a small detainment facility.

“We had a unit that was motivated, ready to go,” said Tyler, a 12-year veteran of the Austin, Texas police force. “We were all excited. That is how a cavalry unit is.”

Tyler, a major with military intelligence for United States Division-South, is among four Soldiers of the 36th Inf. Div who last served under the 49th Armored Div.

“This thing never saw combat ever,” Tyler said pointing to his patch, “except for when we were there.”

Sgt. 1st Class Herbert Cox of Temple, Texas, and the battle noncommissioned officer in-charge for USD-S, is another Soldier who wears the 49th Armored Div. “Lone Star” patch.

During deployments, Soldiers would boast about the different combat patches each wore on his sleeve, said Cox, a 20-year veteran.

“Only four of us here can say that we have been with the 49th,” Cox said.

A couple of months into their deployment the unit was reorganized to become the 36th Inf. Div., making history yet again, as the Soldiers became the first full-sized element from the Texas National Guard to deploy in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. This small band

of brothers was the last to wear the “Lone Star” patch and the first to wear the “T-Patch.”

Brig. Gen. William L. Smith, deputy commanding general of maneuver for the 36th Inf. Div. and USD-S, was the squadron commander at the time. He explained the reason for the reorganization.

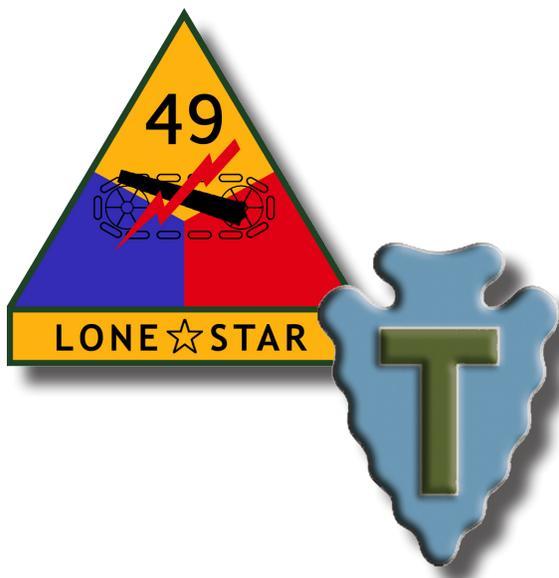
“While they were in Iraq, we got orders from the Department of the Army to change the 49th Armored Division to the 36th Infantry Division,” Smith said. “What that gave the Army was something more flexible and versatile. You can use an infantryman to do different things. To keep a tank force training, it takes a lot of money and a lot of time, and you need special places to do it like at Fort Hood. A light infantry mission does not cost that much in maintenance, and you can train the Soldiers just about anywhere there is dirt.”

By Army directive, the armored division transformed into an infantry division.

“That is why they are authorized to wear that patch, and no one else,” Smith said.

Sgt. 1st Class Gabriel Abalos, now the division operations center sergeant major for USD-S, said being a Soldier during the transition was extraordinary.

“It was amazing,” said Abalos, a native of Waco, Texas, pausing to gather his thoughts. “It is now a part of history.”



Serving under the “Lone Star” was a learning experience for the unit, Cox said. When the unit reached its destination, the Soldiers discovered they were not doing cavalry missions, but would be conducting military police operations.

“I think we did pretty good: from tankers to MPs,” Cox said with a smile. “The missions we did pick up were executed to the best of our knowledge.”

One of the memories that sticks with Tyler to this day was a close encounter with a roadside bomb.

“I can remember the smoke going around, engulfing my truck,” Tyler said. “I can still see that one in slow motion. That is still pretty wild.”

Each Soldier had a different perspective on the deployment.

“There were no individuals there,” Cox said about the unit cohesion. “We all helped each other out. That is why our mission was successful. It was a team effort.”

To Abalos, being a Guardsman brought an advantage to the field of battle.

“We [citizen-Soldiers] bring two things to the table: our military side and our civilian side,” Abalos said, adding that some Soldiers were electricians and mechanics, which helped when the air conditioners broke down or tactical vehicles failed to start.

All three Soldiers agree that the living conditions and overall environment in Basrah are better than what they had in ‘04.

“It is totally different,” Tyler said recalling his days of living in tents and dealing with the extreme heat and poor insulation. “Here is so much nicer,” he said, sitting in a fortified building



Brig. Gen William Smith (far left), commanding general for maneuver for United States Division-South and former commander for the 1/124th Squadron, 49th Armored Division, and Sgt. Maj. Jose Martinez (far right), the information operations sergeant major for USD-S and former human resources personnel services noncommissioned officer for the 1/124th, surround Maj. David ‘Eric’ Tyler and Sgts. 1st Class Herbert Cox (second from the left) and Gabriel Abalos (second from the right) as the three Soldiers flare the 49th Armored Div. ‘Lone Star’ patch in a hallway at the USD-S headquarters.

with reliable central air conditioning.

For Cox, it was the little luxuries in life like Internet and phones, often taken for granted, that made a difference. For the husband and father of two, being able to not only talk to his family, but seeing them through live-video chatting made the transition easier.

“It brings your family a little closer to you,” Cox said. “That is a big moral-boost right there.”

Tyler, Cox, and Abalos are three of the four Soldiers on this deployment serving in Basrah. The fourth Soldier, Sergeant 1st Class Gilbert Flores,

is in Kuwait serving as a 36th Inf. Div. liaison for troops entering and departing Iraq.

The four Soldiers will be making history again, alongside fellow Texans of the 36th Inf. Div., as they close down U.S. operations in southern Iraq.

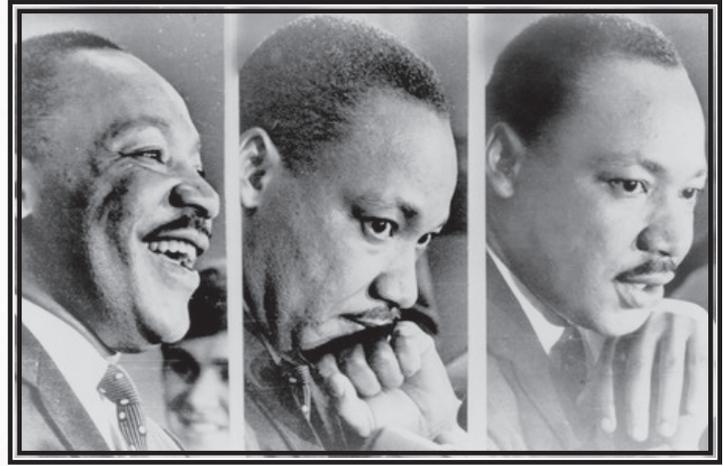
To Abalos, the significance of taking off one patch in exchange for another never dawned on him until recently, he said.

“We are actually the first ones to wear the 36th (T-patch),” Abalos said. “It is a big thing... to end one history and start another was an amazing thing.” 

IN SPITE OF HELL!



The 36th Infantry Division: Paying tribute to a heroic leader in history.

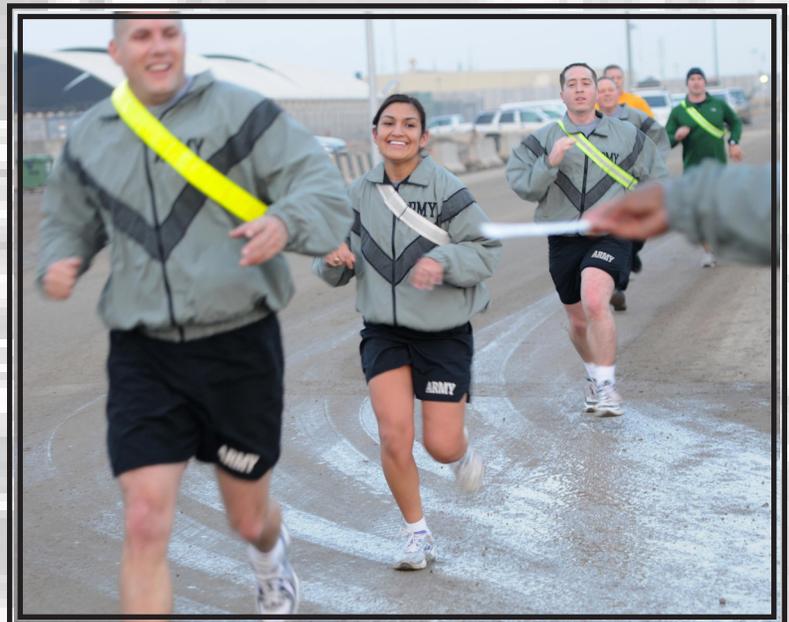


ABOVE— A portrait of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. King was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1977 and the Congressional Gold Medal in 2004. (www.historicalphotostock.com)



LEFT— Brig. Gen. William L. Smith, deputy commanding general for maneuver, U.S. Division-South and 36th Infantry Division, speaks to service members and Defense Department civilians attending a ceremony at the chapel on Contingency Operating Base Basra, Jan. 15, in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the official federal holiday instituted by then U.S. President Ronald Reagan in 1986. (Photo by Sgt. Raymond T. Quintanilla)

Service members and Defense Department civilians participate in a five-kilometer run in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on Contingency Operating Base Basra, Jan. 16. King was one of America's principal leaders for the civil rights movement in the mid 20th-century. (Photo by Sgt. Raymond T. Quintanilla)



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

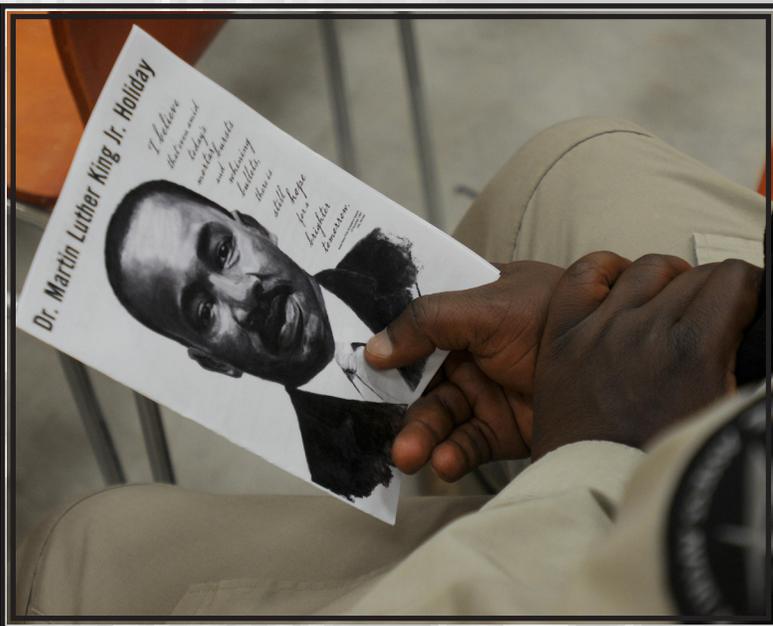
Jan. 15, 1929 —
Apr. 4, 1968



ABOVE— Soldiers attended a ceremony in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at the chapel on Contingency Operating Base Basra, Jan. 15. King was one of America's prominent advocates for desegregation and, in 1964 at the age of 35, he became the youngest man to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. (Photo by Sgt. Raymond T. Quintanilla)



RIGHT— Two Soldiers shake hands during the ceremony to honor the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and the contributions he made to the world as we know it. King was born on Jan. 15, 1929 in Atlanta, Ga., where he attended Booker T. Washington High School.



A Defense Department contractor holds a pamphlet from the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day ceremony. King, along with other civil rights leaders, marched on Washington in 1963. The march, and especially King's speech, helped put civil rights at the very top of the political agenda in the United States and facilitated passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. (Photo by Sgt. Raymond T. Quintanilla)



Iraqi Army Day Jan. 6, 2011



Photos by Pvt. Chastity Boykin
3rd AAB, 4th Inf. Div. Public Affairs Office



Celebrating 90 years of service and dedication



One World

The Ziggurat of Ur

Stories by "David"
36th Inf. Div., USD-S Public Affairs Office

The Great Ziggurat was built as a place of worship, dedicated to the moon god Nanna (or Sin), in the Sumerian city of Ur in ancient Mesopotamia (today's Iraq). King Ur-Nammu and his son Shulgi constructed the temple, which resembles a huge stepped platform, approximately in the 21st century BC. In Sumerian times, it was called (*Etemennigur*) which means in English "House of the platform of Heaven and Earth."

The Ziggurat was meant to be Nanna's dwelling place and as such, it stood in the center of the city and was the center of all administration.

The top of the ziggurat was devoted solely for Nanna's use. There was

a bedchamber for a woman of the village and the priests would bring things for the god's use. The walls of the ziggurat were covered in names of kings and glazed in different colors. The inside of the ziggurat has no chambers, just a thick core of mud and brick to form a "spine" for the monument.

The bricks were made of dried reed and mud and each weighs about four and a half kilograms. The ziggurats were meant to be meeting places between heaven and earth and thus humans could traverse the stairs that led to the top.

Ziggurats were probably very common in ancient Sumaria, but

the Ziggurat at Ur is one of the last standing monuments of the Sumarians.

Today, after more than 4000 years, the ziggurat is still well preserved in large parts as the only major remainder of Ur in present-day southern Iraq.

Ur, the birthplace of the patriarch Abram, was an important city-state in ancient Sumer, located at the site of modern Tell el-Mukayyar in Iraq's Dhi Qar Province.

Once a coastal city near the mouth of the Euphrates River on the Gulf, Ur is now well inland, south of the Euphrates on its right bank, 16 kilometers (9.9 mi) from Nasiriyah. It is close to U.S. Camp Adder in Nasiriyah. 

www.heritage-key.com





The Lamassu

The Lamassu (or bull-man) is an ancient Assyrian protective demon with a bull's body, eagle's wings, and a human head.

The Sumerian word *lama*, which is rendered in Akkadian as *lamassu*, refers to a protective deity, who is usually female. She is often represented as a standing figure that introduces guests to another, superior god. So she is actually a servant. A female lamassu is called an *apsasû*. Her male counterpart is called *alad* or, in Akkadian, *shedu*.

These monumental statues were called *aladlammû* ("protective spirit") or *lamassu*, which means that the original female word was now applied for a rather macho demon. They combined the strength of the bull, the swiftness of birds indicated by the wings, and the intelligence of the human head. The figure has five legs, so that when viewed from the front it stands firm. While when viewed from the side it appears to be striding forward to combat evil. The horned cap attests to their divinity, and the belt signifies their power.

The lamassu is a celestial being from Mesopotamian mythology. Human



above the waist and a bull below the waist, it also has the horns and the ears of a bull. It appears frequently in Mesopotamian art, sometimes with wings. The lamassu and shedu were household protective spirits of the common Babylonian people. Later during the Babylonian period they became the protectors of kings as well, always placed at the entrance. Statues of the bull-man were often used as gatekeepers. The general idea behind them was that they warded off evil (in jargon: they were apotropaic figures or evil repellents). Usually, they have five legs. Lion-bodied protective deities are also known, and are usually called "sphinxes."

To protect houses, the lamassu were engraved in clay tablets, which were then buried under the door's threshold. They were often placed as a pair at the entrance of palaces. At the entrance of cities, they were sculpted in colossal size and placed as a pair, one at each and generally had doors in the surrounding walls, each one looking towards one of the cardinal points.

The Lamassu is used as part of the USD-S symbol and appropriate as a symbol of good against evil in a land it has watched over for nearly three millennia. 🇺🇸

One People



A Moment in History...

The Rapido River Crossing Jan. 20 - 22, 1944

By Lt. Col. Enrique Villarreal
36th Inf. Div. Command Historian

The scene at the Rapido River in Italy in mid-January 1944 would be forever seared in the survivors' memories. It was the night of January 20, and the men of the 36th Texas National Guard Division – the “T-Patchers” as they called themselves – were trying to cross the Rapido River, in the shadow of Monte Cassino. Over the next 48 hours, in what was intended as a diversionary attack, these men would be ordered to do the impossible—leading to one of the greatest tragedies the U.S. Army suffered in World War II.

Maj. Gen. Frederick L. Walker, 36th Inf. Div. Commander, had known since the latter part of December that an infantry division would be required to cross the Rapido near San Angelo, though he did not receive specific orders until January 16 that the 36th would execute the crossing.

“I’ll swear I do not see how we can possibly succeed in crossing the river near [San] Angelo when that stream is the MLR [Main Line of Resistance] of the main German positions... There is

nothing in our favor,” said Walker as he assessed the order to make preparations for the assault.

On the German side of the river, the 15th Panzer Grenadier Division had organized a series of strong points with barbed wire and minefields to their front. Part of the Gustav Line, with its main defensive barrier the Rapido River was supported on either side by mountain ranges which gave a commanding view of Allied activity for several miles. Elaborate preparations had been made with the approaches to the Rapido cleared for miles of trees and shrubs. In addition, the Rapido had been dammed turning the banks into marshes. Hundreds of mines had been laid and all the approaches were covered by German machine guns and artillery.

The Rapido was a formidable obstacle in itself. The river was 50 feet wide and 9 to 12 feet deep with a current of 8 miles per hour, deadly swift to men weighed down with heavy clothing and equipment.

The attack began at 1930 on the Jan. 20, 1944 with an artillery barrage, as the 141st and 143rd Regiments advanced. Shortly after the American shelling stopped, the German artillery began to return fire. The fighting would continue all day and by that night, only a few hundred men had reached the far side of the river.

The next morning General Keyes, II Corps commander, ordered Walker to continue the attack during daylight hours. Walker told Keyes this was impossible but Keyes ordered him to make the attack anyway.



The second attack fared no better than the first. Again on the 22nd, Keyes ordered another attack, thinking that the third attack would be easier than the first two.

Fortunately, General Mark Clark, the 5th Army Commander and architect of the plan, had ordered the attack halted due to the light resistance met at Anzio. Of the 4,000 T-Patchers who made the attack, less than half returned. The rest were killed, captured, wounded, or missing in action. The Germans lost 64 men, with another 179 wounded.



An obelisk honoring the 36th Infantry Division stands in the town square of San Angelo Theodiche, overlooking the Rapido River and the field across which the division launched its ill-fated attacks on Jan. 20-23, 1944. (Photo by Lt. Col. Steven E. Metz)



Hall of Hero's

THOMAS E. MCCALL, STAFF SGT. COMPANY F, 143RD INFANTRY 36TH INFANTRY DIVISION

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at risk of life above and beyond the call of duty. On 22 January 1944, Company F had the mission of crossing the Rapido River in the vicinity of San Angelo, Italy, and attacking the well-prepared German positions to the west.

For the defense of these positions the enemy had prepared a network of machine gun positions covering the terrain to the front with a pattern of withering machine gun fire, and mortar and artillery positions zeroed in on the defilade areas.

Staff Sgt. McCall commanded a machine gun section that was to provide added fire support for the riflemen. Under cover of darkness, Company F advanced to the river crossing site and under intense enemy mortar, artillery, and machine gun fire crossed an ice-covered bridge which was continually the target for enemy fire. Many casualties occurred on reaching the west side of the river and reorganization was imperative.

Exposing himself to the deadly enemy machine gun and small arms fire that swept over the flat terrain, Staff Sgt. McCall, with unusual calmness, encouraged and welded his men into an effective fighting unit. He then led them forward across the muddy, exposed terrain. Skillfully he guided his men through a barbed-wire entanglement to reach a road where he personally placed the weapons of his two squads into positions of vantage, covering the battalion's front. A shell landed near one of the

positions, wounding the gunner, killing the assistant gunner, and destroying the weapon.

Even though enemy shells were falling dangerously near, Staff Sgt. McCall crawled across the treacherous terrain and rendered first aid to the wounded man, dragging him into a position of cover with the help of another man.

The gunners of the second machine gun had been wounded from the fragments of an enemy shell, leaving Staff Sgt. McCall the only remaining member of his machine gun section. Displaying outstanding aggressiveness, he ran forward with the weapon on his hip, reaching a point 30 yards from the enemy, where he fired 2 bursts of fire into the nest, killing or wounding all of the crew and putting the gun out of action.

A second machine gun now opened fire upon him and he rushed its position, firing his weapon from the hip, killing 4 of the gun crew. A third machine gun, 50 yards in rear of the first two, was delivering a tremendous volume of fire upon our troops. Staff Sgt. McCall spotted its position and valiantly went toward it in the face of overwhelming enemy fire.

He was last seen courageously moving forward on the enemy position, firing his machine gun from his hip. Staff Sgt. McCall's intrepidity and unhesitating willingness to sacrifice his life exemplify the highest traditions of the Armed Forces. 



Photo courtesy of Lt. Col. Enrique Villarreal
36th Inf. Div. Command Historian



Legendary Rock Star Joan Jett performs for Department of Defense personnel and service members during a USO tour on Jan. 12. Jett performed a number of her hits, to include "I Love Rock n' Roll" and "Crimson and Clover." (Photo by Sgt. Jeremy Spires)