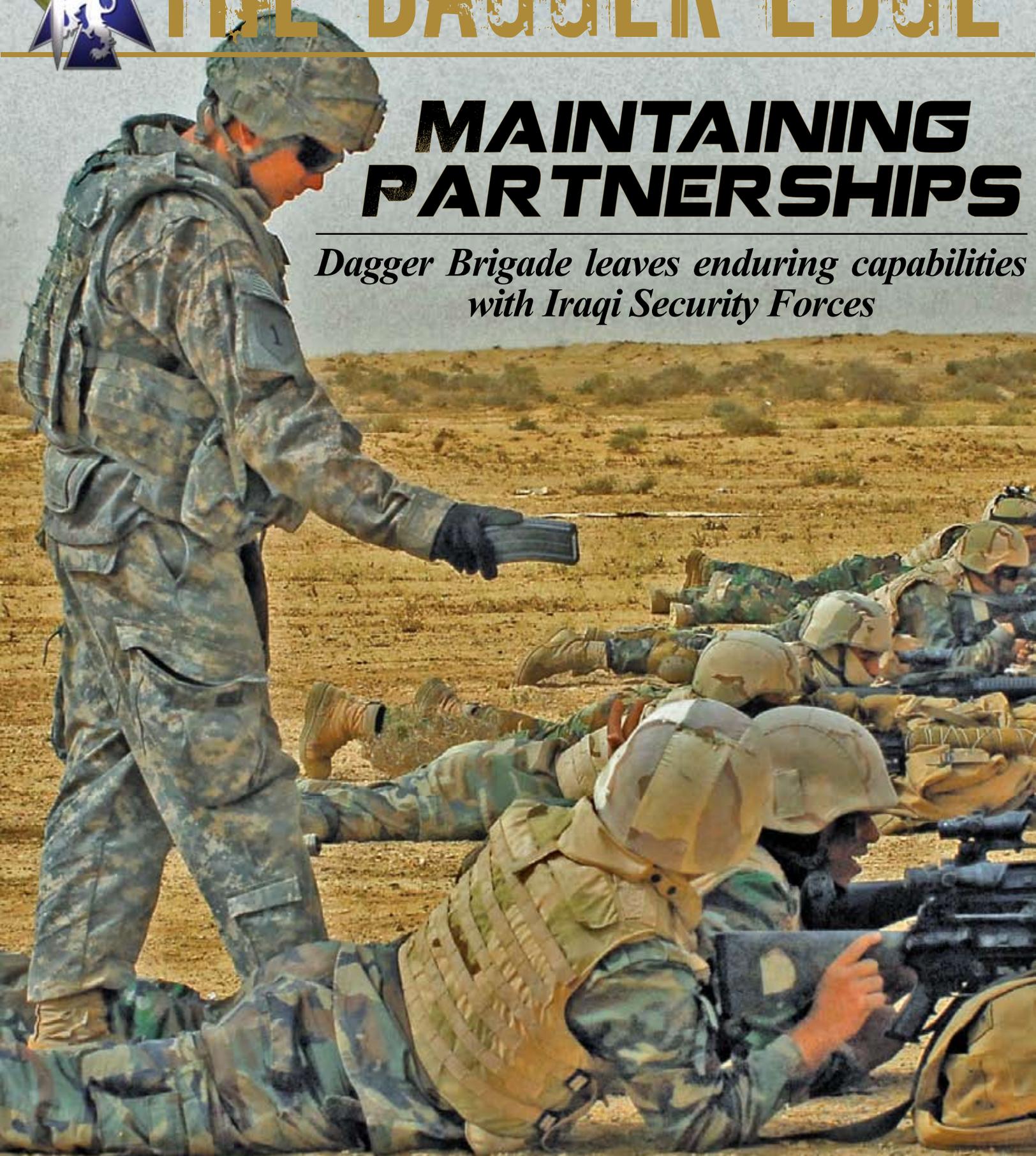




# THE DAGGER EDGE

## **MAINTAINING PARTNERSHIPS**

*Dagger Brigade leaves enduring capabilities  
with Iraqi Security Forces*



June 2011 Volume 1, Issue 4

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**On the cover:** Spc. Michael Wilcox, with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st "Dragon" Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division and an Omaha, Neb., native, passes out ammunition to a Soldier with the 17th Iraqi Army Division commando battalion during scout sniper training at Qa'qaa range, south of Baghdad, April 13, 2011. The course, which covered marksmanship and basic concealment skills, is intended to leave an enduring scout-sniper capability with the IA. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Daniel Stoutamire, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.)



**Back Cover:** A memorial stand (top) and a pair of battlefield crosses (bottom) pay tribute to Sgt. 1st Class Clifford E. Beattie and Pfc. Ramon Mora Jr., both formerly of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division. Beattie and Mora died May 22 of wounds suffered when enemy forces attacked their unit with an improvised explosive device. A memorial service was held May 26 at the Division Chapel at Camp Liberty, Iraq. (Top photo: U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jennifer Saram, 29th MPAD, USD-C; Bottom photo: U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Daniel Stoutamire, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.)

The Dagger Edge: Informing the Dagger Community on the issues and events throughout the brigade.

June 2011; Vol. 1, Issue 4

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# COL. PAUL CALVERT "DAGGER 6"



Dagger 6 is currently on leave. His column will resume in the August edition.

## DAGGER BRIGADE CELEBRATES 94TH BIRTHDAY IN IRAQ

Story and photos by Sgt. Daniel Stoutamire, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.

Soldiers and leaders with the 2nd "Dagger" Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division – Center gathered at the brigade's dining facility at Camp Liberty, Iraq, to mark the 94th anniversary of the Dagger Brigade's formation May 24, 2011.

"94 years is a long time," said Col. Paul Calvert, commander of the 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div. and an Athens, Ga., native. "A lot of people in this formation's history have served underneath [the brigade] colors."

Calvert noted the significance of the "Big Red One" shoulder sleeve insignia – former wartime service, worn by members of the 1st Infantry Division. For the brigade's birthday, many of the Soldiers in attendance had switched out their usual deployment patch, with its black "1," for patches with a bright red "1."

"It's very fitting, for this brigade and our division, that we happen to wear the number one [on our shoulder sleeve insignia], and it happens to be colored red," Calvert said. "Red for the courage displayed by numerous Soldiers that have served underneath the colors, and red for the blood that's



**Command Sgt. Maj. Rodney R. Lewis and Pvt. Gregory Curtner, 18, with Company D, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, cut the ceremonial cake together during the Dagger Brigade's 94th birthday celebration May 24, 2011 at Camp Liberty, Iraq. Curtner was asked to participate because he is the brigade's youngest Soldier.**

been shed by numerous Soldiers that have paid the ultimate sacrifice."

The history of the Dagger brigade is a rich one. Constituted originally as Headquarters, 2nd Infantry Brigade, 1st Expeditionary Division on May 24, 1917 during World War I, the brigade fought in France on the infamous Western Front, in campaigns such as Montdidier-Noyon, Aisne-Marne, and Meuse-Argonne.

A generation later, the brigade was called into action again, and earned a campaign credit

for the Normandy invasion, fighting across France into Germany during the Second World War.

"The heritage of 94 years—the people that have worn this uniform before us—they've been everywhere representing this division and this [Big Red One] patch," said Command Sgt. Maj. Rodney R. Lewis, command sergeant major of 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.

The Dagger Brigade next served during the Vietnam War, landing in 1965 at Cam Ranh Bay and fighting nearly nonstop for the next five years, earning at great cost eleven campaign credits.

The brigade is currently on its fourth deployment to Iraq since 2004, and its first under Operation New Dawn. It is now the only brigade in Baghdad province, responsible for advising, training, and assisting two Iraqi Area Commands and seven Iraqi Security Force divisions. It is expected to be the final partnered unit in Baghdad.

"When you think in the many years prior to this campaign, and how many Soldiers have fallen under these colors, and you should be absolutely proud to have had the opportunity to serve in [this brigade]," Calvert said to the Soldiers assembled for the birthday celebration. "It's an absolute honor for me to have the opportunity to lead this great formation and people like you."

"I think what we're doing here today and every day, sporting this [Big Red One] patch, representing this society—it's important for us and for past generations," Lewis said. "Thank all you guys for being here and participating."

## MAY AND JUNE ARMY BIRTHDAYS





# CSM RODNEY R. LEWIS "DAGGER 7"



Dagger Soldiers, Families, and friends,

HAPPY BIRTHDAY BIG RED ONE!

As we pass the half-way point of our deployment, I want to take this opportunity to remind all of you the importance of honoring and reflecting on our first 94 years. The Dagger brigade was originally formed as a part of the first expeditionary force on May 24, 1917. On June 8, 1917, the expeditionary force was officially renamed the First Infantry Division. Privileged to have Fort Riley as my first duty station, deployment with the 3rd BDE (FWD) during OIF II, and having recently served with the division since October 2005, I obviously have a history with this division. As a current member deployed once again, I, along with each of you, continue to build on our brigade and division's long and storied history.

Soldiers at Ft. Riley will once again participate in the Division's "Victory Week" celebration as we continue our mission here in Baghdad. I ask that each of you keep them in your thoughts, as we will be in theirs. I also challenge each and every one of you to take



the time to remember our past veterans of the division during this time. As I stated in the combat patch ceremony, years

**I CHALLENGE EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU TO TAKE THE TIME TO REMEMBER OUR PAST VETERANS OF THE DIVISION DURING THIS TIME. AS I STATED IN THE COMBAT PATCH CEREMONY, YEARS FROM NOW YOU WILL REFLECT ON THE CERTIFICATE YOU RECEIVED AND REMEMBER YOUR SERVICE WITH OUR BRIGADE AND DIVISION.**

from now you will reflect on the certificate you received and remember your service with our brigade and division.

For those of you who are not familiar with the BRO association, the Society of the First Infantry Division is one way to remain part of the division long

after you have departed. If you have not yet joined the organization, I would ask that you take a few moments and research the website and familiarize yourself with the society and understand the many ways it supports our Soldiers. For those currently serving in the division, they offer a reduced lifetime membership rate of only \$100, clearly a small amount to pay for a lifetime of membership with the greatest division in our Army today. I have also spoken with our Division CSM and the Executive Director of the 1st Infantry Division, and have received approval to initiate a BRO streamer program for our company guidons. Once we have this plan finalized,

companies will receive streamers based on membership at the company-level. I challenge each of you

to take an active role in joining the BRO today. If you have any questions, contact your battalion or brigade CSM for additional information. Thank you for your continued service to our nation.

Daggers! Ready Now!

**Dagger 7**



# IN PRAISE OF MOTHERS

Mothers experience the life transitions of their children in ways that fathers never can, because only mothers have that organic physical connection to their children. A mother's bond to her children is a connection that says, "I am in you and you are in me."

Abraham Lincoln said, "No man is poor who has a godly mother." There have been many mothers in the history of the world who have impacted their children in a tremendous way. Abraham Lincoln was one of those. St. Augustine, the great religious leader, had a mother named Monica, and it was her prayers that brought him to the foot of the cross. Others have had godly mothers in the history of the world.

## HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT ALL OF THE ROLES THAT YOUR MOTHER FILLED WHILE YOU WERE GROWING UP?

You may not know the name Anna Jarvis, but she was the first one to suggest having a national observance of an annual day honoring all mothers because she had loved her mother so much.

At a memorial service for her mother on May 10, 1908, she gave a carnation—which was her mother's

favorite flower—to every person who attended. Well, the idea of honoring mothers soon caught on. May 9, 1914, by an act of Congress, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day. He established it as a time for "public expression of our love and reverence for the mothers of our country."

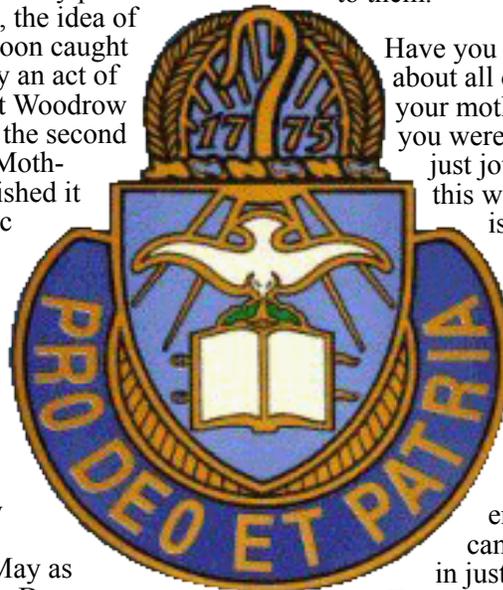
Moms, we salute you. We do so for many reasons. The most obvious is because our society has designated the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day.

We have come a long way since the first observance of Mother's Day. Hallmark estimates that 150 million Mother's Day cards will be sent this year, making Mother's Day the third largest greeting card holiday of the year.

A bit of advice to husbands: The five dumbest words a husband can ever say are, "But she's not my mother." If she is the mother of your children, remember Mother's Day.

The fourth commandment tells us to "honor our mothers and fathers." Scriptures everywhere remind us of the importance of maintaining respect and appreciation for mothers. Giving honor to whom honor is due is a fundamental human value.

And I'll tell you, after all that our mothers do for us while we're growing up and even after we get out of the house, they deserve at least one day out of the year to be honored and to have gifts and calls and cards sent to them.



Have you ever thought about all of the roles that your mother filled while you were growing up? I just jotted down a few this week—and this list is by no means exhaustive. Nurse, counselor, spiritual advisor, educator, nutritionist, accountant, transportation center, maid, peacemaker, entertainer, and I came up with those in just a few minutes.

There are so many other roles that our mothers fulfill each and every day.

And so, on Mother's Day, we want to say thank you to all of our mothers for undying love, untiring work, unselfish giving, and undivided devotion. And this morning, we want to honor, bless, thank, and encourage them for all that they have done and are doing to raise up this generation and the next.



# MAJ JASON CLARK DAGGER SURGEON



## STAYING COOL AND HYDRATED DURING SUMMER HEAT

**D**aggers! Hope you all are doing well, as we are now far into the deployment. Since we have been here quite a while, I fully expect many of us to experience melancholy or frank boredom. Just keep in mind that we are doing important work, and we at brigade appreciate all that you do, and realize how tedious this can be. As we are also in the hot part of the year, I want to reiterate some key points about preventing heat illness.

Many supplements, particularly any containing caffeine, can cause the body to excrete greater amounts of water, thus dehydrating the body. I would strongly encourage Soldiers to minimize caffeine products and supplements during the hot weather.

Dehydration, heat cramps, and heat stroke are common problems that we face, and can have fatal outcomes. This sort of illness can also result in medical separations, redeployments, and other issues that can affect a military career. Rhabdomyolysis, or severe muscle breakdown from over-exertion, also occurs more frequently in hot weather. These conditions are largely preventable. Our brigade has done a good job of training us for hot weather injuries, and I hope that you all have absorbed this training and are now applying it.

In addition to what these classes have given, I want to expand on some interesting points about hydration and rehydration. As we all know, the body contains large amounts of water. This water is in various compartments in the body. Much is in circulation, traveling in the blood. Water is also present in the cells,

as well as the space between them. It is lost in several ways, either as perspiration, through urine, or through droplets in respiration. Of course, water loss is increased when it is hot, primarily through sweat and from evaporation, such as from the mouth or lungs. The water will also move out of the blood and into the soft tissues to help cool the body.

When the body is stressed, it will attempt to retain fluids by decreasing urine

production. The body also loses salts, in sweat and urine, and this has been found to be very important over the last ten years. Water in the body, no matter where it is located, contains salts, and the cells of the body rely on a certain concentration of salts, primarily sodium and potassium, to function properly. We have found that if the body is well hydrated, but salt is lost, then people become quite sick from that as well. Just as dangerous is consuming large amounts of distilled water, beyond what the kidney is able to get rid of, thus diluting the salt in the body too much. This is a syndrome known as exertional hyponatremia, or more commonly, as water toxicity.

So, what does this mean? It means that hydration is essential, but it must be done appropriately. We no longer recommend drinking huge amounts of water, because that can be harmful. At the same time, we should consume enough water that the

urine is relatively light in color. In fact, newer recommendations for endurance athletes, such as triathletes or marathon runners, are to “drink to thirst.” This means having water available during hot weather activities, such as a full callback during missions, so that as your body needs fluid, you then consume fluid. Another strategy, though not proven as well in studies so far, is to drink fluids containing electrolytes. The bottled water here is very distilled, with fewer electrolytes than tap water at home. I would recommend adding some sort of electrolyte to every bottle of water that you consume in Iraq. Having said that, most sports drinks contain a lot of sugar, which is good for physical activity where the body uses a lot of sugar. However, when not exerting, the sugar will increase fat production. Other issues to remember are consuming substances that alter how our bodies utilize water.

Many supplements, particularly any containing caffeine, can cause the body to excrete greater amounts of water, thus dehydrating the body. I would strongly encourage Soldiers to minimize caffeine products and supplements during the hot weather. Another key point for dealing with the heat is to acclimatize one’s self to the weather. This should be easy to do, as the heat will be unavoidable. However, if you have the luxury of air conditioning, be careful not to spend all of your time in the cool air, then suddenly go on a mission or run in the heat. Try to incrementally increase exposure to the heat, and while doing so, train yourself to increase fluid intake based on your bodies needs.

More information about this topic is available at the National Athletic Trainers’ Association website ([www.nata.org](http://www.nata.org)), at USA Track and Field ([www.usatf.org](http://www.usatf.org)), or the American College of Sports Medicine ([www.acsm.org](http://www.acsm.org)). As always, be safe, and thank you for your hard work.



# MAJ. SHAWN SMITH DAGGER SJA



## ON FAMILY SUPPORT AND HEALTH AND WELFARE INSPECTIONS

### FOR DAGGER SOLDIERS – FAMILY SUPPORT IAW AR 608-99

**Bottom Line Up Front:** *Under Army Regulation 608-99, Family Support, Child Custody, and Paternity, a Soldier is required to provide financial support to his/her family members, even when the Soldier is geographically separated from them.*

In a deployed environment, the issue of family support comes up quite frequently. In many cases, family support issues arise from a negligent Soldier's failure to make the proper financial arrangements for his or her dependents prior to deploying. In other situations, family support issues arise when the relationships between Soldiers and their dependents become strained.

The stress and strain that deployments place on Soldiers can often lead them to try to avoid their regulatory obligations to pay family support. However, in the absence of a court order or an agreement with the other party to whom payment is required, a Soldier is obligated to provide financial support on a monthly basis to his or her spouse and children. The monthly obligation amount that Soldiers must pay their dependents is based on rank. The BAH RC/T (or BAH II) allowance chart, featured as part of the 2011 Military Pay Rates, provides the applicable figures for this year. No later than the first of each month, Soldiers must make their payments to the other party at the WITH DEPENDENT rate. And while commanders should not order Soldiers to make payments in arrears, or back payments, Soldiers should take proactive steps to avoid UCMJ action for failing to support their families.

An example of a common family support scenario that gives rise to AR 608-99 concerns is contained in Appendix B-4. The following fact pattern summarizes Example 5:

**Q:** A civilian wife separates from her Soldier husband and moves out of Government housing into an apartment she shares with another man. The Soldier and his wife have two children. One child resides with the Soldier; the other lives with the wife. There is no court order or written financial support agreement.

**A:** In this situation, the Soldier must provide two-thirds of his BAH RC/T (or BAH II) to

his wife as support to her and the child who resides with her. The Soldier retains the remaining one-third because one of his three dependents resides with him.

Fortunately for the Soldier in Example 5, under paragraph 2-15 of AR 608-99, brigade commanders have broad authority to release Soldiers from their spousal support obliga-



tions as a matter of fundamental fairness. For example, if the Soldier's wife in this scenario chooses to live with another man, while delaying divorce proceedings, these facts might compel a brigade commander to relieve the Soldier of his spousal support obligation. However, not even a brigade commander can relieve a Soldier of his AR 608-99 requirement to support his/her children.

### FOR DAGGER COMMANDERS – HEALTH AND WELFARE

**Bottom Line Up Front:** *Treat Health and Welfare Inspections of Containerized Housing Units (CHUs) in Iraq no differently than barracks inspections at Fort Riley.*

Even though we are deployed to Iraq, Soldiers still have a reasonable expectation of privacy in their living quarters. While it is important to ensure that our Soldiers are living in a safe, clean, and contraband-free environment, commanders must exercise caution in how they conduct CHU inspections.

Commanders are under no obligation to provide Soldiers with advance notice of an inspection. However, brigade legal recommends that any health and welfare inspection be conducted based on an equitable plan to ensure that any contraband seized will be admissible as evidence in a court-martial. Otherwise, the inspections look more like

searches, which require probable cause determinations.

To avoid crossing the line between a lawful health and welfare inspection and an unlawful search (i.e., a search conducted without a probable cause determination), here are some key points for commanders to consider:

1. Room inspections tend to be random. Room searches tend to be targeted.
2. Room inspections tend to be checks on living conditions, where supervisors are not looking for anything specific. Room searches tend to involve looking for a specific thing in a specific location.
3. Room inspections tend to be done with the room occupants present. Room searches tend to be done without regard for the occupants' presence, with the main concern being seizure of a specific item in a specific location.
4. Room inspections should be done with prior authorization from commanders. Room searches should be done based on a probable cause determination by an attorney.

Health and welfare inspections should be authorized by battalion commanders in advance and in writing. Battalion commanders should simply set a future date for the inspection and memorialize the date in a Memorandum for Record. That way, in the event that contraband is found and seized, the battalion commander's Memorandum for Record may be included in any subsequent request for UCMJ action. Including memoranda signed by battalion commanders before health and welfare inspections will guard against any allegations that noncommissioned officers inspecting their Soldiers are conducting unlawful searches and using the term "inspection" as a subterfuge. The inadmissibility of evidence seized during unlawful searches is discussed in Military Rule of Evidence 311.

Commanders suspecting that someone in their command possesses contraband items in a CHU should immediately contact the Brigade Trial Counsel, CPT Brian Kargus, and seek advice on getting search authorizations IAW Military Rule of Evidence 315.





# LTC JOHN CROSS “VANGUARD 6”



**G**reetings to the Vanguard Nation and the Dagger Brigade!!!

The Vanguard Nation continues to perform exceedingly well here in north Baghdad and our relationships with the 9th and 11th Iraqi Army Divisions have really begun to flourish.

Company A, “Apocalypse,” is now conducting train-the-trainer courses for the three brigades of the 9th IA Div., helping to establish their base of training cadre for future training events.

Company B, “Barbaric,” transitioned their training efforts from the Commando Battalion to the three divisional brigades. They are now training up the 11th IA Div.’s training cadre who will start instructing their own Small Unit Tactics courses starting in June and July.

Company D, “Dog,” has returned from Joint Security Station Al Rashid and is fully-integrated in support of the 9th IA Div.’s Stability Transition Team and supervising the M1A1 Tank training conducted by 3rd Platoon, Company C, “Chaos.”

Company C, “Venom,” with the Special Troops Battalion, training with the Bomb Disposal Companies and Field Engineer Regiments, has really gained ground with the Iraqis conducting many of their own counter-IED patrols.

Company F, “Falcon,” our Forward Support Company, has even gotten into the mix, providing first aid, cutting torch, resupply, and vehicle recovery



training to the 9th IA Div.’s support brigade.

Chaos Company continues to run Forward Operating Base Hammer for United States Forces – Iraq and has started to move toward the transition to the Office of Security Cooperation – Iraq.

Last, but not least, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, “Hammer,” continues to keep the battalion running through the staff, securing our Provincial Reconstruction Team, and providing quick reaction forces for our area of operations.

On May 3, we celebrated the 150th Birthday of our beloved Regiment! Here at Camp Taji, we held an organizational day to commemorate this momentous occasion.

I firmly believe that it speaks well of the 18th Infantry Regiment that, on our 150th Birthday, we find both battalions deployed in harm’s way, fighting in both Iraq and

Afghanistan.

We here in the 1st Battalion raise our glasses to our brothers who have served before us and to our brothers serving today in 2nd Battalion in support of Operation Enduring Freedom!

I’m pleased to announce the selection of our HHC Commander, CPT Jacob Jeffers, for promotion to Major. Jake has done a tremendous job for the battalion and his selection is well-deserved.

Additionally, CSM Evans was selected as a Brigade CSM for the 198th Infantry Brigade at Fort Benning, Ga., and SGM Stoker, the Operations SGM, was selected as the CSM for 2-34 AR in 1st Brigade, 1st ID at Fort Riley. These selections are just small indicators of the caliber of Soldiers that are serving in the battalion today.

In closing, I want to thank all of you for your continued support during our deployment. Your thoughts and prayers keep the Vanguard Nation going strong. We continue mission, ‘Til the Last Round!!!

In Omnia Paratus ~’TIL THE LAST ROUND!

John D. Cross

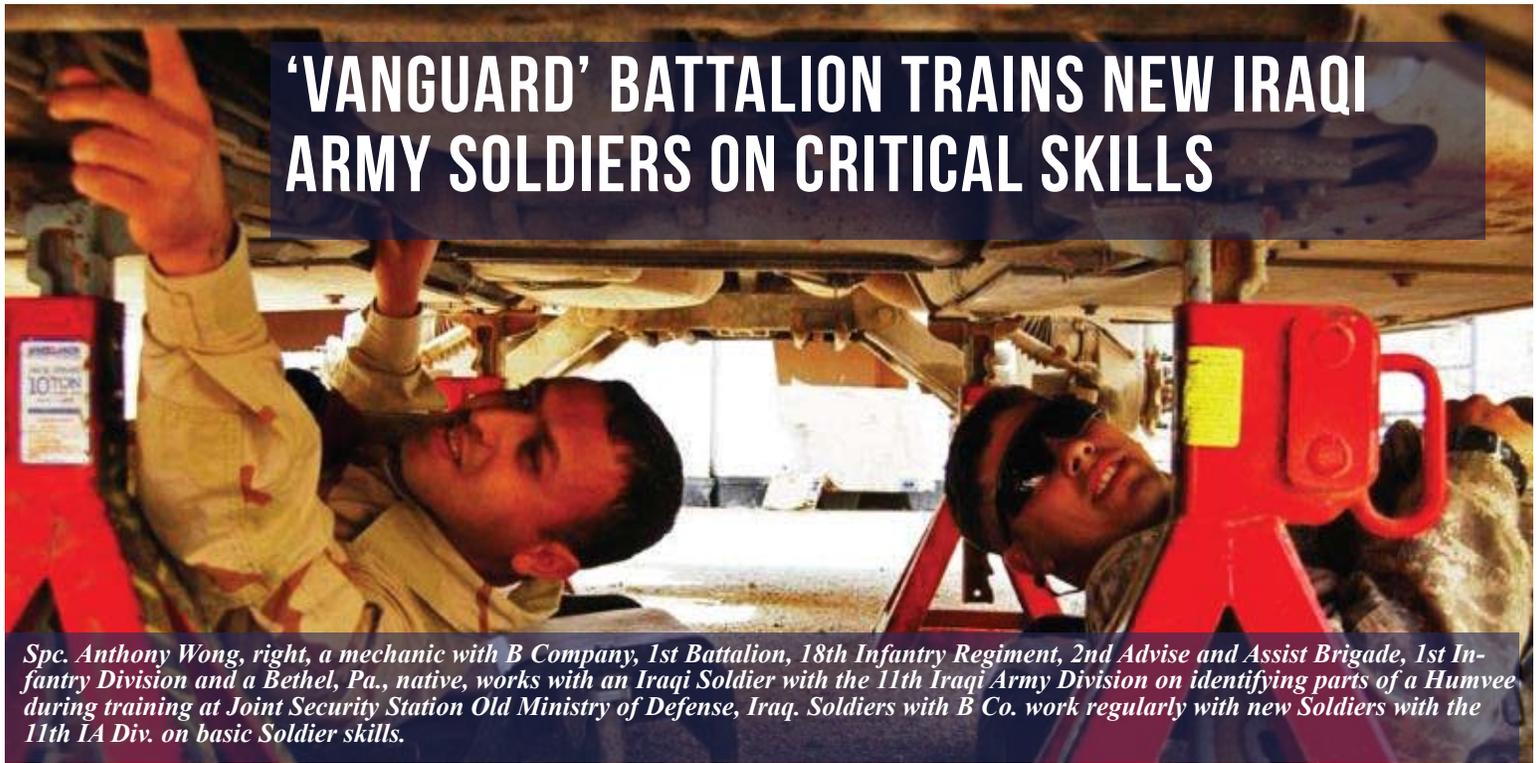
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**Vanguard 6**

# 1-18 INFANTRY REGIMENT "VANGUARDS"



## 'VANGUARD' BATTALION TRAINS NEW IRAQI ARMY SOLDIERS ON CRITICAL SKILLS



*Spc. Anthony Wong, right, a mechanic with B Company, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division and a Bethel, Pa., native, works with an Iraqi Soldier with the 11th Iraqi Army Division on identifying parts of a Humvee during training at Joint Security Station Old Ministry of Defense, Iraq. Soldiers with B Co. work regularly with new Soldiers with the 11th IA Div. on basic Soldier skills.*

Story and photos by Spc. William K. Ermatinger,  
2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.

A key factor in any military's success is its ability to train new Soldiers. To assist in facilitating this ability within the Iraqi Army, Soldiers with B Company, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division work regularly with new Soldiers of the 11th Iraqi Army Division on basic Soldier skills at Joint Security Station Old Ministry of Defense in eastern Baghdad.

During one regularly-scheduled training session between B Co. Soldiers and their 11th IA Div. counterparts, the day began with joint physical fitness training.

"(Working) together exercising helps improve their physical condition and build camaraderie," said Pfc. Jesse Buck, an infantryman with B Co. and a Springfield, Ohio, native.

After exercising and personal hygiene, Soldiers reported to classrooms for their daily training. The Iraqi Soldiers were separated by their military jobs—infantry Soldiers went to one class and mechanics to another.

Some of the classes hosted by the American mechanics focused on the repair and maintenance of Humvees.

"The Soldiers in the class were mostly drivers and we did have a few mechanics," said Spc. Anthony Wong, a mechanic with B Co. and a Bethel, Pa., native.

The class consisted of two sessions. The first was a formal classroom environment in which the systems of the vehicle were discussed while the second session offered a hands-on approach which allowed the Soldiers to

identify individual parts.

"The (Iraqi Soldiers) were eager to learn, listened, and they retained the information well," said Wong. "This training is necessary so the Iraqi Army will be self sufficient after we leave."

During the infantry training, B Co. Soldiers went over weapons tasks, such as how to perform a functions check and how to disassemble and clean their weapons, with Buck demonstrating how to perform the tasks to standard. After the

**SOLDIERS WENT OVER WEAPONS TASKS, SUCH AS HOW TO PERFORM A FUNCTIONS CHECK AND HOW TO DISASSEMBLE AND CLEAN THEIR WEAPONS, WITH BUCK DEMONSTRATING HOW TO PERFORM THE TASKS TO STANDARD**

demonstration, the class took their own weapons and practiced taking them apart, reassembling them, and then completing a functions check to prove the weapons were assembled correctly.

Additionally, a separate class was con-

ducted for a group of IA officers covering the topics that were trained in the weapons class so they would know the standard being taught to



their Soldiers.

“Most the officers have an understanding of the training, so it’s mostly just reiterating what they learned,” said Sgt. Adam Cain, an infantry squad leader with B Co. and a Baltimore native.

The final training was a Combat Life Saver course that explained how to perform life-saving techniques while on the battlefield.

“This training is essential for all Soldiers to have so they will have

the ability to save someone’s life if needed,” said Spc. Michael May, a medic with B Co. and a Tishomingo, Okla., native.

The medics who taught the class went over the application of tourniquets, field dressings, and pressure dressings. The class also covered how to make improvised tourniquets when medical supplies are not available.

“They were very attentive and ready to train, so overall, the CLS class went well,” May said.

◀ Pfc. Jesse Buck, right, an armor crewman with B Company, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division and a Springfield, Ohio, native, explains the proper way to disassemble and clean a rifle to a group of Iraqi Soldiers with the 11th Iraqi Army Division at Joint Security Station Old Ministry of Defense, Iraq. Soldiers with B Co. work regularly with new Soldiers with the 11th IA Div. on basic Soldier skills.



School children observe the festivities during the al Duwaya Primary School’s opening ceremony in northern Baghdad, March 20, 2011. A project was undertaken more than a year ago to refurbish the school, which had fallen into disarray and used as a combat outpost at the height of the 2007 U.S. troop surge. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jason Young, USF-1)

## FROM SCHOOL TO COMBAT OUTPOST AND BACK AGAIN

*Northern Baghdad primary school, used as a military base during surge, reopens its doors*

Story by Capt. Richard Toland, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.

In late 2006, the Duwaya Primary School in northern Baghdad had no students, no teachers and seemingly no future. The grounds were abandoned. The school’s equipment had been looted and squatters had moved in. Because of insurgent activity, for many local residents, the area had become just too dangerous of a place to send children to school.

Those days, however, are long past, and the school recently reopened after more than a year of planning and construction. As part of the renovation, local contractors refurbished the 12 classrooms and offices of the existing structure and built a new annex containing additional classrooms.

The additional rooms mean the average class size is reduced to 40 students, instead of 60. Additionally, the Iraqi Ministry of Education provided the teachers with new blackboards and whiteboards with markers to conduct their lessons.

All of this is a far cry from the school’s not-so-distant past use as a combat outpost during the U.S. troop surge of 2007 and then as base for Iraqi Security Forces.

While many in the neighborhood saw the presence of the ISF as one of the elements that kept violence in the area to a minimum, their presence at the school also prevented the children from returning to the classroom. A new station for the ISF was planned and is currently nearing completion. During the construction, the ISF were able to move out of the school and into temporary buildings on their new compound, which lead the way for allowing children in the area to return to school and prepare for the future.

“Education is the backbone of stable societies and communities such as the one around al Duwaya,” said Dr. Nihad al Jibouri, the deputy minister of education and the education manager for all of Iraq, during the school’s ribbon-cutting ceremony. “We all must continue to focus on improving education well into the future.”

Nihad said he believes that Baghdad still suffers from a severe shortage of schools, but sees the Duwaya School is an example of progress being made.

“There are 3,000 schools in Baghdad Province that need to either be built or renovated, and the Ministry of Education will continue to support the teachers and students in Baghdad just as we have done here,” he said.

For those in the area around the school, the reopening was a big day. Nearly all children who attend the school were present for the celebration with many arriving in suits and colorful dresses. Many girls brought flowers to give as thanks, and others brought potted palm trees to plant at their new school.

Iraqi Security Forces, including the 9th Iraqi Army Division and the local Iraqi Police, attended the ceremony and provided security at the school opening, as they do for many of the events that occur in the area.

“It is important for our young people to receive a proper education to better prepare them for life,” said IA Maj. Gen. Qasim, commander of the 9th IA Div.

School officials thanked the Ministry of Education staff for their support in the renovation work and described the impact the new school would have on the community.

“The new school will be reflected in the attitudes and ultimately the success of the teachers and students,” said Azhar Moosa Kadum, the principal of the Duwaya School. “I also thank the North Baghdad Provincial Reconstruction Team, and the United States forces for their involvement and support of the renovation project.”

All 850 children who are students at the school were presented with new backpacks containing construction paper, crayons, and colored pencils delivered by the 9th IA Div. The school also received soccer balls for physical education classes.

The boy and girl class leaders from each grade were then presented with certificates of achievement, and a large bag of gifts that contained books, boxes of crayons, pencils, pencil sharpeners, dolls for the girls and soccer balls for the boys.

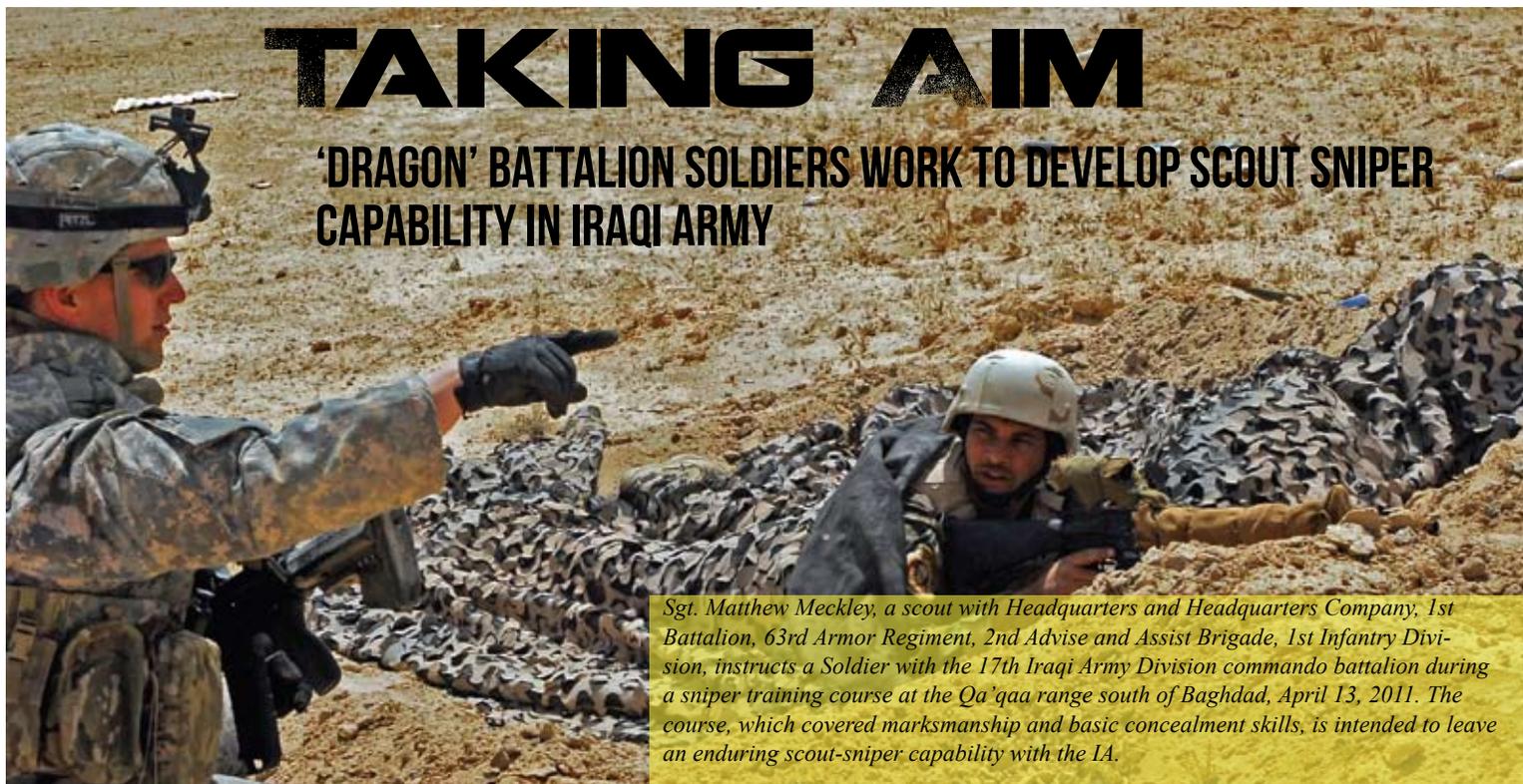
The ceremony concluded with a celebration of traditional Iraqi dance. The men formed a circle in the courtyard with many of the schoolboys in the middle. A popular Baghdad singer sang an old Bedouin folk song while he mentioned all of the people who made the creation of the school possible.

# 1-63 ARMOR REGIMENT "DRAGONS"



## TAKING AIM

### 'DRAGON' BATTALION SOLDIERS WORK TO DEVELOP SCOUT SNIPER CAPABILITY IN IRAQI ARMY



*Sgt. Matthew Meckley, a scout with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, instructs a Soldier with the 17th Iraqi Army Division commando battalion during a sniper training course at the Qa'qaa range south of Baghdad, April 13, 2011. The course, which covered marksmanship and basic concealment skills, is intended to leave an enduring scout-sniper capability with the IA.*

Story and photos by Sgt. Daniel Stoutamire,  
2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.

Soldiers with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st "Dragon" Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division taught a two-week beginner scout-sniper course to Soldiers with the 17th Iraqi Army Division commando battalion at Joint Security Station Deason and Qa'qaa range—formerly Qa'qaa weapons facility—near Baghdad.

The intent behind the course was to establish a corps of scouts and snipers within the Iraqi Army, some of whom will be relied upon as instructors when U.S. forces leave under the Status of Forces Agreement in place between the two governments, said Maj. Henry Malinverni, with the Stability Transition Team attached to the Dragon Battalion and a Fort Dix, N.J., native.

Traditionally in the Iraqi armed forces, "snipers" have been whichever Soldier in a particular unit was assigned a sniper rifle, Malinverni said, rather than Soldiers with special training and skills capable of providing a valuable battlefield capability.

"We have identified a capability gap within the 17th IA Div. in terms of precision fire," he said. "Doctrinally, we have had to get past differences in terminology—historically for the Iraqis, a sniper is defined as anyone who had a particular piece of weaponry, not necessarily a skill set. So what we did is we outlined, since we had this capability gap and a capability requirement, how we should help them fill that."

Of course, the skill most associated with snipers is the ability to accurately hit specific targets at great distances, and the Dragon Battalion Soldiers had to work almost from scratch with their students, who were using unfamiliar weapons systems with telescopic sights attached.

The trainers and their students gradually moved back the range at which the students were consistently able to hit their targets, said Sgt. Matthew Meckley, an infantryman with HHC, 1st Bn., 63rd Armor Regt. and a Washington state native.

In addition to increasing the range, the instructors made their students

differentiate between targets, by marking them with particular colors, shapes, or numbers.

"The intent we wanted to get across to them—starting in the classroom, to eventually showing them they could do it—was the selective target engagement followed by precision fire," said Staff Sgt. Dustin Capps, a section leader in scout platoon, HHC, 1st Bn., 63rd Armor Regt. and an Oregon native. "To convey the differences between targets, and then to precisely hit what they are aiming at, is a relatively new concept for many of (the IA Soldiers)."

Scout-snipers can be the eyes and ears of a unit, and must be able to conceal themselves and covertly observe enemy activity, along with hitting specified targets at great distances. Part of the training at the Qa'qaa range focused on building effective hides—concealed positions from which to observe—and, if necessary, engaging the enemy.

The Soldiers instructing the course maintained that the actual shooting is the easier of the two skills.



*Maj. Henry Malinverni, left, with the Stability Transition Team attached to 1st "Dragon" Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division and a Fort Dix, N.J., native, answers a question on marksmanship from an Iraqi Army Soldier during a scout sniper course at the Qa'qaa range, south of Baghdad, April 13, 2011. The course, which covered marksmanship and basic concealment skills, is intended to leave an enduring scout-sniper capability with the IA.*

"(Building a hide and shooting) are two ends of the spectrum," Meckley said. "Ask any Soldier that has been to the sniper school or served as a sniper, they will tell you that the shooting is the easy part—everything else is ten times more complex."

The Dragon Battalion snipers hope to have their most promising students from the course attend the advanced sniper course, where they will augment the skills they learned in the beginner's course, and eventually be certified as instructors for future generations of Iraqi Army scouts and snipers.

"Right now we're slated to have two basic courses," said Malinverni.

"From the basic courses, we expect to have some Soldiers that show promise for advanced schooling. They'll move on beyond the defensive nature of the basic course into more advanced training, more offensive-oriented operations...to put that on the table for the IA commanders."

The instructors have had to overcome a variety of cultural and institutional differences between themselves and the IA Soldiers they are training.

"It's still amazing, the things they instantly grasp and do even better than you think (they will) and then other things you anticipate them to understand immediately, are the things they lack on," Capps said. "We've actually all been impressed with some of the things they grasp instantly and run with, and of course there can be natural frustra-

tion when things that you would imagine would be simple, they struggle with."

Despite all that, Capps said the students are eager to learn, and have shown that they care about succeeding and doing their best.

"Another nice thing to see, is when they are struggling, they are upset about it," he said. "To see them be frustrated with it until they get it and then once they finally get it, they get that confidence."

The training the 17th IA Div. is receiving from the Dragon Battalion will give them a capability they have been lacking, giving their commanders more options when confronted by an enemy force. Having competent, confident eyes and ears, with the ability to engage specific targets at distance, means the IA will be better able to provide for the safety and security of the Iraqi people.

## "DRAGON" BATTALION WORKS WITH IRAQI EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE DISPOSAL TEAMS



**S**gt. Christine Cammarota, with the 731st Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company, lays out ordnance to be destroyed during a combined operation with the 6th Iraqi Army Division's Bomb Disposal Company, Monday, April 11, 2011. The mission had the two units working as partners, rather than training, to destroy ordnance that was collected from throughout the Baghdad area. (U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jon Soucy)

**F**irst Lt. Ben Boettcher, left, with the 774th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company, lifts a crate of ordnance from the back of a truck with the help of an Iraqi Army Soldier from the 6th Iraqi Army Division's Bomb Disposal Company, during a combined operation between the two units to destroy the ordnance, Monday, April 11, 2011. The mission had the two units working as partners, rather than training, to destroy ordnance that was collected from throughout the Baghdad area. (U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jon Soucy)





# LTC MICHAEL HENDERSON "DRAGON 6"



Dragon Soldiers, Families, and Friends,

There are two holes in our formation where two great men once stood. We mourn for the loss of SFC Beattie and PFC Mora - but I ask you all to strive to fill the void they left behind inspired by the memories of how these heroes lived. PFC Mora could be counted on to accomplish his assigned tasks; no matter how big, small, easy or difficult. To him, failure was not an option. He never let his fellow Soldiers down and was always there ready to lend a helping hand. PFC Mora was a warrior and a patriot and he will be sorely missed. SFC Beattie was a selfless, loyal, charismatic leader who positively affected everyone around him, and although the world is a little less bright without him in it, the memory of him and who he was brings warmth and joy into the hearts of us all. I also ask you to remember, that though the pain is great, we must ensure that their sacrifice for our safety is honored and remain focused on the mission at hand. SFC Beattie and PFC Mora would expect nothing less.

We have surpassed the midway point in our deployment, and the Soldiers of the Dragon Battalion are continuing to adapt to the ever changing environment inherent to Operation New Dawn. Since the last time we talked, the Soldiers of Hell Hound, Bounty, and Cobra Companies have all said goodbye to the commanders who led them into Iraq, and welcomed new ones. In early March, Ace Company too experienced a significant change as they accomplished the herculean



task of moving from JSS Nasr Wa Salaam to Victory Base Complex.

In the midst of all of this change, Eagle Company has strived to provide some normalcy to our Soldiers with regular logistical patrols that provide our outlying stations with food, water, and all the supplies needed to complete daily activities.

As a whole, the battalion has begun to make leaps forward in our mission to advise, train, and assist our Iraqi counterparts. Battalion-wide, we are training our partners across multiple levels of command, facilitating everything from combined operations planning at the division and brigade-level, to combined troop leading procedures and mission preparation conducted at the Platoon level. Additionally, our extremely capable NCOs have been busy conducting squad leader and squad-designated marksmanship training.

Our attachments have conducted exciting new training over the

last two months as well. The explosive ordnance disposal teams, with help from our civilian law enforcement professionals, have conducted advanced instruction on crime scene investigation techniques with the 6th and 17th Iraqi Army. This training has led to a drastic increase in the effectiveness of criminal prosecution efforts and warranted arrests in our area. Not to be out done, the Route Clearance, or Reaper, Company attached to the Dragon Battalion has been keeping the roads safe for everyone to travel, while simultaneously conducting combined planning to ensure our Iraqi Security Force counterparts are ready to take over this important mission.

As we pass the halfway point of this deployment, I would like to offer these words of advice. Be resilient. Ensure you and your Soldiers have time to take care of yourselves, both physically and mentally. I encourage communication with your loved ones back home, and recommend that everyone take at least one hour per day to do something for themselves. Be vigilant. The enemy is still out there, and competing demands will continue to mount as we begin our responsible withdrawal from Iraq. Be safe. As the weather heats up, we as leaders must ensure that our Soldiers take their time and that safety standards are enforced.

Finally, I must ensure that our silent heroes do not go unnoticed. To our Families and friends back home, it is not lost on those of us over here how difficult your job truly is. We could not do what we do without you.

Seek, Strike, Destroy

**Dragon 6**



# LTC ANDREW GAINNEY "LIGHTNING 6"



Family, friends and fellow Dagger Brigade Soldiers: We hope that everyone is having a great summer as we cross the halfway mark of this deployment.

The 'First Lightning' Battalion has continued to do a tremendous job in our endeavors throughout Baghdad. It has been an absolute honor to lead and serve with the young men and women of 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment. They've been trained to conduct or support artillery operations, yet this deployment has required them to conduct a wide variety of missions outside of their normal duties and they've done better than myself or CSM Bauer could have ever imagined.

Alpha Battery continues to distinguish themselves in every one of their diverse operations. The Soldiers have set themselves apart in partnering with both the Iraqi Army and the 1st Iraqi Federal Police Division, as well as being entrusted to escort some of the highest-ranking military officers in country. In the midst of these operations, we've welcomed a new battery commander, CPT Brian Cotter, to the 'Black Knights.' I'm pleased to say that he has made a seamless and enthusiastic transition.

As our mission has evolved, the 'Raging Bulls' of Bravo Battery have continued to adapt to every situation. Their efforts in our partnership with the 1st IFP Div. have been absolutely essential to the force protection of everyone in eastern Baghdad. I admire the Soldiers of Bravo for the patience and tactical knowledge that is required in their daily operations with the 1st IFP. Despite the language barrier and differences in culture, the 'Raging Bulls' training and guidance has had a significant impact on the proficiency and effectiveness of the 1st IFP Div.

Our Golf Company 'Gunslingers' remain absolutely vital to our mission. Their distribution platoon sustains our forces with supplies, equipment and mail. The mayor cell maintains Joint Security Station Loyalty, ensuring that every Soldier has appropriate living conditions. Their maintenance section has kept our fleet of armored vehicles operational and ready for every mission. All of this would be more than enough, however the 'Gunslingers' have also joined in our partnership with the 1st IFP Div. to advise



them on proper maintenance procedures. The outstanding efforts of these Soldiers will allow the 1st IFP Div. to sustain operations long after we're gone.

The accomplishments of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery have been exceptional. Our 'Hellhounds' have the largest spectrum of duties in the battalion. Every day they are working hard to keep American forces across Baghdad safe; from the medics in the aid station to the Personal Security Detachment platoon, which escorts CSM Bauer and I around the battlefield, they have performed spectacularly. The route clearance platoon continues clearing routes for other convoys, while the radar platoon has done a phenomenal job of keeping their new systems functional and providing coverage for all the Soldiers in the brigade. Also, our sniper teams continue to provide over-watch to the JSS and are vital to the overall safety of more than 400



Soldiers.

Additionally, our staff sections continue to work hard to ensure all the support required for our Soldiers is provided on a daily basis. Our S-1 section provides the administrative support and has brought in MWR support for our Soldiers, including a visit from boxer Oscar De La Hoya. The S-2 section provides us with intelligence that keeps us keenly abreast of all activity in our battlespace, while the S-3 section provides the plans and guidance for operations—everything the battalion does starts with the Soldiers of the S-3 shop. Our S-4 section is the nexus for logistical support, which is critical for a battalion spread over such a wide swath of Baghdad. The S-6 section provides our communication capabilities, allowing us to communicate across the battlefield through an array of platforms. Finally, the S-7 section provides support through humanitarian operations and has been an integral piece in our partnership with the 1st Federal Police. These actions have been critical to the overall success of the battalion throughout the deployment thus far.

We would be remiss if we did not thank the support of the Family Readiness Group and Families back at Fort Riley. The care, support and activities provided to help our Families deal with the deployment have been extraordinary. This phenomenal support to the Families from our FRG has allowed us to remain focused on completing our mission, knowing the Families are well taken care of. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to those volunteers that have made the FRG such a success.

Ultimately, CSM Bauer and I couldn't be more proud of the performance of the men and women we have the honor to serve with here in Iraq. Thank you for your continued support as we drive on into the last half of our deployment.

First Lightning!

**Lightning 6**  
LTC Andrew C. Gainney  
**Lightning 7**  
CSM William F. Bauer



# CSM WILLIAM BAUER "LIGHTNING 7"



# 1-7 FIELD ARTILLERY REGIMENT “LIGHTNING”



## ‘FIRST LIGHTNING’ BATTALION SOLDIERS HELP IRAQI FEDERAL POLICE FIND THEIR WAY WITH GPS DEVICES

Story by 2nd Lt. Donald Gillilan, *2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.*

Soldiers with 1st “First Lightning” Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division had the opportunity to showcase their knowledge of navigational technology during a training mission April 17 with members of the 1st Iraqi Federal Police Division at Joint Security Station Loyalty, Iraq.

Recently, the 1st IFP Div. was issued GPS devices to assist them on their patrolling and quick reaction force missions. In some cases before the training began, when the 1st IFP Div. would attempt to rush to a location, there was miscommunication on where exactly to

go. To alleviate some of the confusion that has arisen as a result of inexperience with the equipment, the First Lightning Battalion implemented a block of instruction on the GPS.

“Use of a GPS is something that both the Iraqis and U.S. forces identified as a necessary training focus for the 1st IFP Div.,” said Lt. Col. Jeffery Ramsey, Stability Transition Team chief with 1st Bn., 7th FA Regt. and a Pittsburgh native. “The training conducted today will also continue to foster our relationship and pave the way for future training with the 1st IFP Div.”

Soldiers with experience using a GPS volunteered to show and instruct the

Iraqis. The course covered how to plot a ten-digit grid coordinate, utilize terrain features and determine the best approach to a destination.

“The training was simple, something that we can take for granted because we are so accustomed to having this type of technology,” said Sgt. Matthew Overall, with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Bn., 7th FA Regt. and a Dexter, Mo., native.

The training began with simple instructions to show the 1st IFP Div. how to navigate through the device’s interface. The First Lightning Soldiers then moved onto a quick simulation to ensure that each IFP member understood how each

key functioned.

“My noncommissioned officers taught me that the ‘crawl, walk and run’ method to training was the best way to go,” said Spc. Justin Childers, with HHB, 1st Bn., 7th FA Regt. and a Morango, Iowa native. “So we focused first on what each key is used for and then went from there.”

Finally, a field exercise was conducted where a grid coordinate was announced, and the 1st IFP Div. police officers had to input the data and find their way to the location. Each location was no more than a half-mile away, but the point of the

course was to ensure the 1FP were trained to enter and read the data.

The First Lightning Soldiers are already planning a more rigorous training program for the next time they meet with the 1st IFP Div.

“When we were constructing the curriculum together, we wanted to make it simple and quick,” said Sgt. Ralph Sutton, a team leader with HHB, 1st Bn., 7th FA Regt. and an Arcadia, Fla., native. “Now that we have begun working with them, and they have expressed interest in continuing this training partnership, we

want to gradually increase the complexity of the field exercise to improve their performance.”

When the training session ended, IFP Maj. Abbass Hawi Knaleel, personal security detachment commander with the 1st IFP Div., thanked the First Lightning Soldiers and expressed his desire for future training.

“You are very good teachers,” Knaleel said. “Now I can take this knowledge back with me and train my officers so we can perform our duties more efficiently.”



*Pfc. Daniel R. Lukas, bottom, with Battery B, 1st “First Lightning” Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division and a Streetsboro, Ohio, native, gains the advantage on Pfc. William E. Price, with Btry. A, 1st Bn., 7th FA Regt. and a Springfield, Ohio, native, during the Combatives Academy at Joint Security Station Loyalty, Iraq, March 21, 2011. Combatives training provides a framework for individual Soldiers to defend themselves in hand-to-hand combat should the need arise.*



*Spc. Scott Salcedo, top, with Battery A, 1st “First Lightning” Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division and a Moreno Valley, Calif., native, gains the advantage on Spc. Matthew J. Thomas, with Btry. A, 1st Bn., 7th FA Regt. and a Deland, Fla., native, during the Combatives Academy at Joint Security Station Loyalty, Iraq, March 21, 2011. Combatives training provides a framework for individual Soldiers to defend themselves in hand-to-hand combat should the need arise.*



*Pfc. Craig A. Poon, top, with Battery A, 1st “First Lightning” Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division and a Suffolk, Va., native, gains the advantage on Pfc. Christopher D. Sutton with Btry. A, 1st Bn., 7th FA Regt. and a Groveport, Ohio, native, during the Combatives Academy at Joint Security Station Loyalty, Iraq, March 21, 2011. Combatives training provides a framework for individual Soldiers to defend themselves in hand-to-hand combat should the need arise.*

## “FIRST LIGHTNING” BATTALION SOLDIERS GRAPPLE DURING COMBATIVES ACADEMY

*Photos by Spc. Johnny Shelton, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.*

# 5-4 CAVALRY REGIMENT "LONGKNIFE"



Members of the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior's Oil Security Force unload concertina wire at the Dora Oil Refinery to be used to reinforce security April 11, 2011 in Baghdad. Soldiers with the 5th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division helped with the unloading and deployment of the wire during a visit to the refinery, aiding in the defense of a vital piece of Iraq's oil infrastructure.



## REFINING SECURITY

LONGKNIFE SQUADRON HELPS IRAQI SECURITY FORCE DEFEND VITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Story and photos by Sgt. Richardo Spence, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.

Troopers and leaders with 5th "Longknife" Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division recently met with the security forces at the Dora Oil Refinery in Baghdad to help distribute and deploy concertina wire and other defensive measures.

The visit was part of the squadron's ongoing

advising and assisting mission, and helped make a vital piece of Iraqi infrastructure more secure, enabling it to support the nation's economy.

The Dora refinery is like a city-within-a-city, with a number of investment firms located there, all partnered with the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior. In addition, 12 privately-funded fire departments are located in and around the refinery, due to the fire risks associated with petroleum-based products. The whole area is secured by its own

special police department, the Oil Security Force, whose sole mission is to protect and serve Iraq's oil refineries, including the one at Dora, and their resident workers.

"(Oil) will always be a big part of Iraq's infrastructure, therefore we have to provide the best security because it still is a target for those who want to destabilize our country," said Col. Ibrahim, commander of the Dora OSF. "This is done by preventing would-be attacks."



Part of deterring and disabling threats to the refinery is implementing defensive measures like concrete barriers, concertina wire, and checkpoints. The Longknife Squadron, during its

meeting with the OSF, used its expertise to help setup the concertina wire and other defenses.

“Anything that looks out of place will not be allowed though our gates and will be sent away and thoroughly investigated,” Ibrahim said, adding that he

was grateful for the Americans and their help with the defenses.

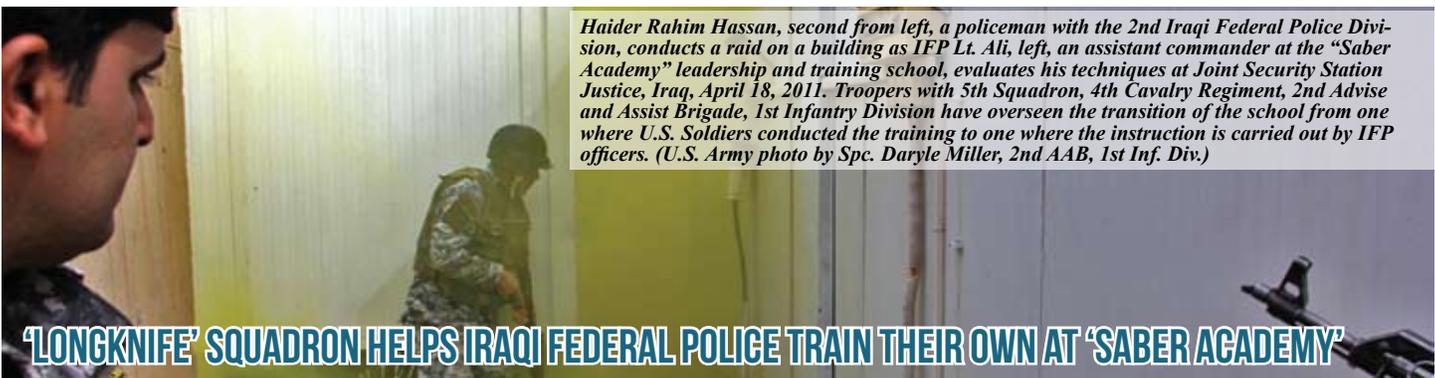
In a brainstorming session over chai

with Lt. Col. Matthew Moore, commander of 5th Sqdn., 4th Cav. Regt. and an Ophelia, Va., native, Ibrahim exchanged ideas on the best security, tactics and practices for his unit.

Ibrahim also thanked Moore and his Soldiers for the assistance in moving and placement of concertina wire at the refinery.

“You and your men are our partners and we are here to help, anytime,” Moore said. Ibrahim, in turn, told Moore that his Soldiers were likewise always welcome, though he maintained that his men were up to the task of protecting their piece of Iraq’s vital oil infrastructure.

“We will be sorry to see (the Americans) go,” he said. “But it is time and we are up to the task of taking care of our country.”



*Haider Rahim Hassan, second from left, a policeman with the 2nd Iraqi Federal Police Division, conducts a raid on a building as IFP Lt. Ali, left, an assistant commander at the “Saber Academy” leadership and training school, evaluates his techniques at Joint Security Station Justice, Iraq, April 18, 2011. Troopers with 5th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division have overseen the transition of the school from one where U.S. Soldiers conducted the training to one where the instruction is carried out by IFP officers. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Daryle Miller, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.)*

## ‘LONGKNIFE’ SQUADRON HELPS IRAQI FEDERAL POLICE TRAIN THEIR OWN AT ‘SABER ACADEMY’

Story by 2nd Lt. Devin Osburn, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.

Troopers with 5th “Longknife” Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division recently observed their Iraqi partners with the 2nd Iraqi Federal Police Division train their own personnel at the “Saber Academy,” a 15-day school designed to advance the skills of the 2nd IFP Div.’s leadership.

Each iteration of the academy is composed of approximately 30 students from various brigades within the 2nd IFP Div. These students are trained and tested on several skills and leadership tasks, such as drill and ceremony, physical fitness, vehicle and personnel searches and weapons training.

“Their training is ran much the same as the training we do back in the United States,” said Sgt. Andrew Hall, a cavalry scout with 5th Sqdn., 4th Cav. Regt. “They (learn) pretty

quick. The Iraqis were excited to learn the new training techniques.”

Five classes have graduated the Saber Academy, with more planned to follow. When it began, the training was led and instructed by U.S. forces. Today, the academy is taught by instructors with the IFP.

The intent from the beginning was to “train-the-trainer,” meaning the Longknife Squadron would train the Iraqi Security Forces and assist them as they instructed the training of other police officers.

Longknife Troopers still provide guidance where needed, advising and assisting the IFP trainers as they lead the academy. With the IFP training themselves, the language barrier is less of an issue and many are able to relate to their students better, which expedites the training.

After action reviews are a regular feature at the completion of each class, identifying problems with training methods and making

corrections where needed. As these classes continue, the instructors will carry on assessing their training methods to ensure progress is made for future classes.

“The IFP Soldiers are showing steady progress by taking over the training and have further progressed to coordinating for all their supplies and logistics,” said Capt. Adam Westbrook, a fire support officer with 5th Sqdn., 4th Cav. Regt. and a Godfrey, Ill., native.

“They order all of the meals needed for the trainees,” he said. “They also coordinate for all training supplies needed each day.”

With the steady progress and ability to conduct their training, the drawdown of U.S. forces should not hinder the academy’s progress. The hope is that the Saber Academy will continue to develop and train the IFP long after the Longknife Squadron and other U.S. forces depart from Iraq.



# LTC MATTHEW MOORE "LONGKNIFE 6"



Today, I hope everyone is well. Let me begin by saying thank you to the all of the Troopers and Soldiers of the 5th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment family. The incredible work you are doing here in Baghdad to support the Iraqis and prepare them to stand on their own makes us very proud.

Recently, I had the opportunity to tour the Dora Market and the surrounding neighborhoods with shurta, or policemen, of the 2nd Iraqi Federal Police Division. During my tour in 2007, I witnessed firsthand when this neighborhood was one of the most violent neighborhoods in Baghdad. This neighborhood especially brings back painful memories of four of my own Soldiers who paid the ultimate sacrifice. To see the Dora neighborhood turn into a place that has a thriving market, well kept streets, and storefronts is incredible. The local government is taking the responsibility of removing the T-wall concrete barriers



and repaving the streets. This is proof that our Iraqi Security Force partnered mission is providing a secure environment for the Iraqi people and allowing the Iraqis to take the reins of running their country. Our work here is far from over,

but there is light at the end of the tunnel. Dora is a big piece and one that we will continue to help the Iraqis with in other southern Baghdad neighborhoods.

We are quickly reaching our halfway point and looking forward to being back with loved ones. We will continue to serve with honor and integrity, ensuring the safety and security for Americans and Iraqis alike. I personally would like to thank all of the Families and friends back home for their support to the Soldiers.

PREPARED AND LOYAL!

**LTC Matthew R. Moore**  
**LONGKNIFE 6**

Fellow Soldiers, Families and friends of the Longknife Squadron. Let me begin by saying the commander and I are very proud of the Soldiers within the squadron. Your commitment to mission accomplishment and dedication to duty is remarkable. In the short time we've spent in Baghdad, the Troopers of 5-4 CAV have improved the living conditions at two outlying locations and the morale of everyone associated with the squadron at those places.

As we pass the halfway point and reduce the size of our footprint, we continue to progress toward a smooth transition with our Iraqi counterparts. We continue the training of our Soldiers and partnership training with the 2nd Iraqi Federal Police Division. We have built a solid bond with the leadership and our Soldiers have strengthened camaraderie with the Iraqi shurta.

"Warhorse" Troop has the tiring task of managing the life support on Combat Out-

post Falcon and securing the commands movement and engagements. A Troop, "Apache," is partnered with the 7th Brigade of the 2nd Federal Police Division and conducts combined training and missions with their specialty platoons. B Troop, "Blackfoot," is partnered with the 2nd IFP Div.'s 5th Brigade and also con-



ducts combined training and missions with the their strike platoon. C Troop, "Comanche," resides at Joint Security Station Justice and covers-down on the secure movement of the Stability Transition Team, which is partnered with the 2nd IFP Div. Headquarters and manages the life support for all personnel living at JSS Justice.

I personally would like to thank all of the Families and friends back home for their support to the Soldiers. For those that have been on R&R, I hope that you and your love ones enjoyed the time and did something special.

Once again, thanks to all the Soldiers for your sacrifices and for the many things that you do on a daily basis. For the Families and friends of the Squadron, thank you for the continued support.

Prepared and Loyal!

**CSM Robert Tompkins**  
**Longknife 7**



# CSM ROBERT TOMPKINS "LONGKNIFE 7"



# LTC CAMERON CANTLON

## "SABER 6"



To the Saber Family, Friends, and Troopers,

First and foremost, I would like to start off by stating how proud I am of the Saber Soldiers. Over these past three months we have faced many challenges and the formations within Saber Squadron continue to complete any task thrown their way at the high standard we've come to expect. We definitely would not be where we are without the dedication of disciplined Soldiers from the most recent arrival to the seasoned veteran leaders.

The troopers have had the privilege to work with *shurta* of the 4th Iraqi Federal Police Division by conducting numerous combined patrols. Additionally, we have provided our Iraqi partners with several training programs on different skills such as combat lifesaver, map reading, driver's training, generator maintenance, and vehicle maintenance. The cooperation between our squadron and the 4th Federal Police has been tremendous and we continue to learn from each other every



day. It has been an honor and a privilege working with the 4th IFP Div. and I, and the rest of Saber Squadron, look forward to our continued partnership.

For our families and friends back home, thank you for your continued support through your constant emails, phone

calls, and care packages. The Saber Town Hall was a blast and we will do it again! Hearing your voices and reading your words keeps us close to home as the amount of time we have been deployed grows larger. Fortunately, R&R leave has begun and you will be getting some much needed time together with your loved one soon! As the summer months approach and the school year ends, we wish you all the best and hope that you get the chance enjoy the summer.

And finally, to the Saber Soldiers, keep up the hard work! It will be easy to fall into complacent routines these coming weeks and months, but I encourage you to always stay vigilant and active. Continue to challenge yourself and take pride in your mission. You are what makes this squadron great!

**We Can, We Will! Sabers Never Quit!**

To the Saber Soldiers,

Your months of preparation back home and in Kuwait for this deployment are finally paying off. In these first three months, your leaders and I constantly see the successes of your hard work and preparation in our ability to effectively perform our mission every day. It may be hard for you to see some days, but you are playing a pivotal role in an important mission.

We have the unique privilege of working with the 4th Federal Police in the mission of providing security to the Iraqi people. While we might not be leading the fight, our role of advising, training, and assisting our Iraqi partners is equally as important. From providing life-saving medical training, welding operations, generator maintenance, map reading, to conducting joint patrols with the 4th Federal Police, you have provided needed assistance that will make the Iraqi Security Forces a stronger presence. Your actions in these training programs and joint patrols have well rep-

resented Saber Squadron and you should be proud of your accomplishments.

While it could be easy to rest in our laurels and become complacent, remember to stay vigilant. Keep your eye on the target always. I want, and you should desire as well, that every soldier goes back home in top mental, emotional and



physical health. We have only begun in our mission and we need to focus on maintaining good routines to finish out this deployment in the right way.

And finally, remember to stay connected with your families and loved ones back home. They look forward to every chance they communicate with you. Just as much as a care package can make your day, a chance to talk with you will highlight their day as well.

You should be proud of what you have accomplished thus far in our mission. You are doing an excellent job and playing a pivotal in an important mission. I look forward to the coming months we have together and successfully finishing out this deployment.

**We Can, We Will! Sabers Never Quit!**

# SGM RICHARD BURNETTE

## "SABER 9"



# 6-9 CAVALRY REGIMENT "SABER"



*Iraqi Federal Police Maj. Gen. Baha'a, left, commander of the 4th Iraqi Federal Police Division, hands a bag containing humanitarian aid to a family in need in one of Baghdad's poorest neighborhoods, March 28, 2011. Baha'a went door-to-door to ensure the broadest possible distribution of aid to those who most needed it.*

Story and photos by Sgt. Daniel Stoutamire, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.

Soldiers with 6th "Saber" Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division provided advice and assistance as the 4th Iraqi Federal Police Division took the lead in distributing humanitarian assistance recently in some of Baghdad's most downtrodden mahallahs, or neighborhoods.

IFP Maj. Gen. Baha'a, commander of the 4th IFP Div., went door-to-door and personally handed each eligible resident their bag of aid, taking great care to ensure that no family in need was overlooked.

"Their senior leadership is out here doing it," said Lt. Col. Cameron Cantlon, commander of the 6th Sqdn., 9th Cav. Regt., who accompanied

Baha'a on the aid mission. "They are picking families, not by name or by asking, but by how they live, so the families that are the most in need are the ones getting the humanitarian assistance."

Cantlon said the mahallahs in which the aid was distributed are known to be some of the poorest in Baghdad.

"These are the most needy neighborhoods inside the 4th IFP's area of operations," he said. "These are also mahallahs that are mixed Shiite and Sunni, and Staff Maj. Gen. Baha'a goes out of his way to make sure that

he is non-sectarian."

To ensure the aid was distributed as widely and effectively as possible, the 4th IFP Div. leaders

*An Iraqi woman prepares to press her thumb in ink and thus record that she received humanitarian aid during a humanitarian aid distribution mission to some of Baghdad's poorest neighborhoods, March 28, 2011. The 4th Iraqi Federal Police Division, partnered with 6th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, took the lead in the planning and execution of the humanitarian aid distribution, which targeted several downtrodden Baghdad neighborhoods.*





*A member of the 4th Iraqi Federal Police Division, right, tosses a bag filled with humanitarian aid to a comrade during a humanitarian aid distribution mission in one of Baghdad's poorest neighborhoods, March 28, 2011. The 4th IFP Div., partnered with 6th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, took the lead in the planning and execution of the mission, which targeted several down-trodden Baghdad neighborhoods.*

devised a system whereby families presented a piece of paper proving their eligibility, and then gave their thumbprint before receiving their aid.

Cantlon said that having the ISF out in the mahallahs, interacting with the people, and showing that they will provide for their welfare is significant.

“[Humanitarian assistance] is another tool in the kit of the Iraqis as we transition out of the country,” Cantlon said. “I think the Iraqi [civilians] see us standing overwatch, and being available and talking to them, but not directing anything. That emboldens the ISF and shows the people that we are not the ones calling the shots.”

Several local media outlets, at the invitation of Baha’a, sent news

**BAHA’A WENT DOOR-TO-DOOR AND PERSONALLY HANDED EACH ELIGIBLE RESIDENT THEIR BAG OF AID, TAKING GREAT CARE TO ENSURE THAT NO FAMILY IN NEED WAS OVERLOOKED.**

teams to the mahallahs to cover the aid distribution.

“They wanted to be here to see the ISF work with the Iraqi people,” Cantlon said.

Everywhere the Soldiers of the “Saber” Squadron and 4th IFP went, they were followed by a

group of interested onlookers, especially young children.

“I enjoy (being out here). It’s nice to see all smiles on their faces,” said 2nd Lt. Kyle Lee, the personal security detail platoon leader with 6th Sqdn., 9th Cav. Regt. and a New Providence, N.J., native.

“The 4th IFP Div. are the ones handing out the aid, so the people can see that the ISF are here to help them, and improve their lives.”

Though the “Saber” Squadron has only been deployed for a short time, it has already forged a strong relationship with the 4th IFP Div., and through events like humanitarian aid distribution, both Cantlon and Lee said they hope to make

base, Lee said.

“We’re going to continue to work with the 4th IFP Div. on a weekly basis,” Lee said. “They always seem very happy to see us and work with us and we are happy to work with them and train them in any way we can help.”

*Lt. Col. Cameron Cantlon, second from right, commander of 6th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division and an Ettrick, Wis., native, speaks with Iraqi Federal Police Maj. Gen. Baha’a, commander of the 4th Iraqi Federal Police Division, during a humanitarian aid distribution mission to some of Baghdad’s poorest neighborhoods, March 28, 2011. The 4th IFP Div. took the lead in the planning and execution of the mission, which targeted several down-trodden Baghdad neighborhoods.*



that relationship even stronger.

Indeed, on the day of the aid distribution, the command sergeants major of the two units were working with their respective medical personnel on combat lifesaver training back at Joint Security Station Jihad, the 4th IFP’s main

# 299TH BRIGADE SUPPORT BATTALION “LIFELINE”



## ‘LIFELINE’ BATTALION SOLDIERS TRAIN IRAQI ARMY MEDICAL FIELD UNIT ON PHYSICAL THERAPY, PHARMACY OPS

Story and photos by Sgt. Daniel Stoutamire, 2nd  
AAB, 1st Inf. Div.

Soldiers with the 2nd “Dagger” Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division recently trained six Soldiers with the 6th Iraqi Army Division’s Medical Field Unit on physical therapy and pharmacy operations at Riva Ridge Troop Medical Clinic at Camp Liberty, Iraq.

The training was intended to help increase the knowledge base and experience level of the 6th IA Div. MFU’s personnel, as well as help encourage a greater dialogue between U.S. and Iraqi medical Soldiers.

“[This training] helps build enduring capabilities in the IA as U.S. forces start to draw down under the security agreement outlined by the two governments and we lose a lot of our direct partnerships,” said Lt. Col. William Johnson, deputy Stability Transition Team leader attached to 1st Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div., who works with the 6th IA Div. on a daily basis. “So I think it helps to maximize our opportunities right now, while we’re here, to do partnership training, to show some of the techniques, the way we do things, (and learn from) the way (the IA) are already doing things, especially in the (MFU).”

Increasing the knowledge each army’s medical personnel have of the capabilities of the other side is crucial as well.

“By getting the two sides together, we break the barrier between the two sides,” said IA

Capt. Mohammed, the doctor in charge of the 6th IA Div. MFU. “The American medics often do not know the capabilities of Iraqi medical staff, and vice versa.

Mohammed said this sort of training is the way to solve that, and also emphasized the importance of having skilled enlisted personnel in his formation.

“We have to depend on them,” Mohammed said. “They are a very important part, and we rely on them very much, in addition to the officers.”



Sgt. Michelle Mendoza, right, a pharmacy specialist with C Company, 299th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division and a Jersey City, N.J., native, explains pharmacy operations to an Iraqi Army Soldier with the 6th IA Division at Riva Ridge Troop Medical Clinic at Camp Liberty, Iraq, March 18, 2011.

The six Soldiers present at the training were broken up into two groups – four went with Capt. Sarah Baker, physical therapist with C Company, 299th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div., to augment their knowledge of physical therapy. Two others went to learn more about pharmacy operations with Sgt. Michelle Mendoza, a pharmacy specialist also with C Co. and a Jersey City, N.J., native.

“They already know things, they have a pharmacy [at their base], but they didn’t know how we run our pharmacy,” Mendoza said.

She took the two Soldiers on a tour of the pharmacy at Riva Ridge, explaining the daily operations of a U.S. pharmacy, its layout, and also how to treat trauma patients.

Mendoza said the IA Soldiers were intrigued by the logistics of maintaining proper amounts of prescription drugs in stock.

Baker showed the four Soldiers in the physical therapy training session stretchers, rehabilitation equipment such as balance balls, and monitoring technologies, used to check on a patient’s progress.

The MFU Soldiers were well-equipped and trained even before the training, Johnson said.

“[The MFU] is a well-organized, well-staffed, fully-functional clinic, but it never hurts to do partnership training

and joint training with other organizations just to broaden your expertise and broaden your knowledge base,” he said.

Mohammed said he was happy with the instruction given by the Dagger medical personnel.

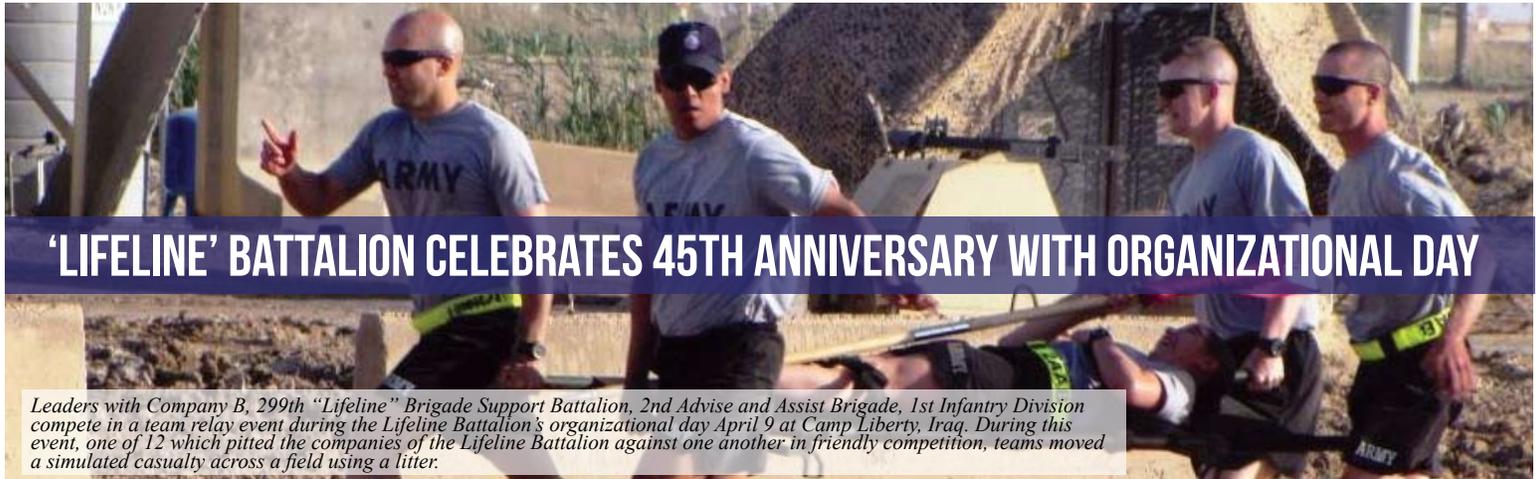
“I asked Lt. Col. Johnson to prepare for such training, because this is a new expe-

rience for my men, to come in here and look at the new advances in pharmacy and physical therapy (techniques) and to add to their experience, that they already have, to have a look at how things are going on at American hospitals or American clinics,” he said. “I am very satisfied at what is going on.”

Looking forward, plans are already in

the works for future engagements of this kind, Johnson said.

“This definitely won’t be the last partnership training we do,” he said. “There are a number of them set up, and I think the training will only strengthen the capabilities of both sides.”



## ‘LIFELINE’ BATTALION CELEBRATES 45TH ANNIVERSARY WITH ORGANIZATIONAL DAY

Leaders with Company B, 299th “Lifeline” Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division compete in a team relay event during the Lifeline Battalion’s organizational day April 9 at Camp Liberty, Iraq. During this event, one of 12 which pitted the companies of the Lifeline Battalion against one another in friendly competition, teams moved a simulated casualty across a field using a litter.

Story by By Capt. Kemetta R. Gary and Capt. Tracy B. Leon, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.

Soldiers of the 299th “Lifeline” Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division commemorated their battalion’s 45th anniversary with a unit organizational day, a full day of events and company-versus-company competitions designed to build unit cohesion and increase morale April 9 at Camp Liberty, Iraq.

The day began with heated competition, as each company broke into teams to strive for victory in the first two events—basketball and kickball. The competition grew even more intense when one of the battalion’s forward support companies, Company D, accepted an invitation to join in.

“(The) organizational day provided our unit an opportunity to break up the monotony of day-to-day missions,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Franklin Jordan, command sergeant major of 299th BSB and an Alapaha, Ga., native. “Soldiers had fun, but it was also challenging. The competitiveness of the Soldiers and the leaders was evident and as the teams played, it built camaraderie and esprit de corps among the companies.”

More than half the battalion watched the basketball competition, as the teams battled it out on the court. The basketball tournament was half-court and single-elimination, meaning a single loss would mean elimination. While

Headquarters and Headquarters Company put up a valiant effort, Company B won the final by a narrow margin.

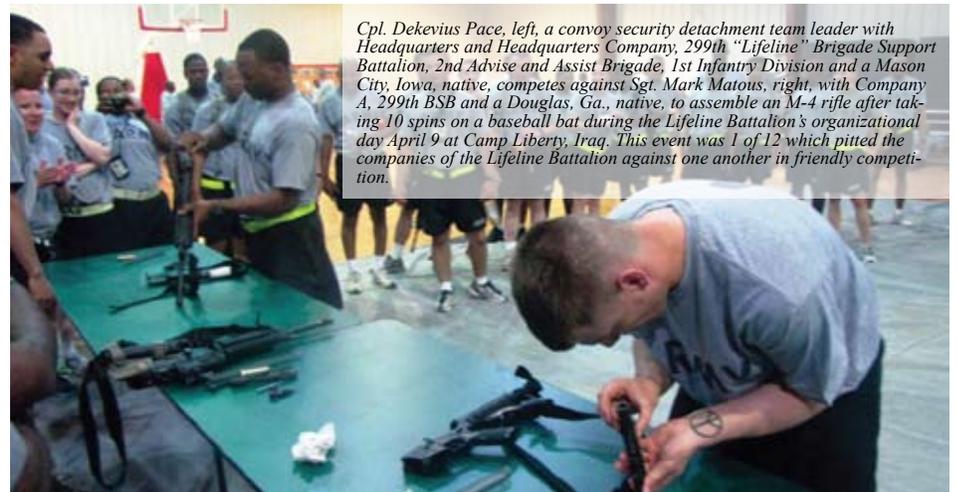
However, HHC redeemed themselves with a victory in the kickball tournament. They also won the volleyball and rifle-disassembly-and-reassembly events, putting them at the top of the leader board.

Company B won the 3-legged race and the horseshoes competition and Company A quickly caught up with HHC, earning victories in dominos, spades, flag football and a grueling tug-of-war contest.

The “Commander’s Cup” trophy was awarded to the company with the most collective points out of the 12 events, with the winner not being decided until

after the last event, a multi-stage obstacle course testing various Soldier and athletic skills. When the event was over, it was the “Headhunters” of HHC erupting in sounds of jubilation. They had won, earning the right to take with them the 20-pound trophy—handcrafted by Lifeline Battalion’s Service and Recovery section Soldiers.

“(This event was) exhilarating, fulfilling one of the goals we set as the incoming command team (of HHC) in July 2010,” said 1st Sgt. David Giddens, first sergeant of HHC, 299th BSB and a Dekalb, Texas, native. “It was great to see Soldiers do their best.”



Cpl. Dekevious Pace, left, a convoy security detachment team leader with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 299th “Lifeline” Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division and a Mason City, Iowa, native, competes against Sgt. Mark Matous, right, with Company A, 299th BSB and a Douglas, Ga., native, to assemble an M-4 rifle after taking 10 spins on a baseball bat during the Lifeline Battalion’s organizational day April 9 at Camp Liberty, Iraq. This event was 1 of 12 which pitted the companies of the Lifeline Battalion against one another in friendly competition.



# LTC DALE FARRAND “LIFELINE 6”



It has been a busy time in Lifeline Land. June marks our eighth month deployed and the Lifeline Soldiers continue to sustain all forces in Baghdad – the Daggers among them, of course. The Headquarters and Headquarters Company, “Headhunters,” continue to secure Combat Logistics Patrols throughout Baghdad – a few months back, the 100th CLP – covering over 24,000 miles. Over 32 million gallons of fuel; 1 million rounds of ammunition; 7800 pallets, MILVANs and multipacks (Company A, “Atlas”); 1600 work orders (Company B, “Bandits”); and 5000 patients (Company C, “Cobras”) have passed through Lifeline Land since Dec. 3.

The Lifeline Battalion celebrated a birthday on March 23, 2011. In 1966, the battalion was activated as part of the buildup of forces deploying to the Republic of Vietnam. Forty-five years later, the battalion is deployed for its fourth time to Iraq, and the Lifeline Soldiers serving today are responsible for adding more streamers to the colors than any group before them. In order to ensure the sacrifices both the Families and Soldiers make on a daily basis securing the freedom of the United States and Iraq, the battalion recalled its history with a re-streamer ceremony. Of course, no Army birthday is complete without an organizational day. Thanks to CPT Tracy Leon and SSG(P) Nelson Cruz-Bianchi, a series of contests determined who would win the 2011 Commander’s Cup – forged by the able hands of WO1 Terrance Tutt, SGT Nathan House, SGT Jason Sisk, SGT Norman Smith, PFC Daniel Martin, and PFC Phillip Turner. Competition was tight, but the winner was Headhunter Company.

Since we took some time to reflect on Lifeline Soldiers’ accomplishments, both on the job and on the field, let’s talk about personal achievements and goals both Soldiers and Families can accomplish during this year apart. Operation



New Dawn provides a unique opportunity for Lifeline Soldiers to improve both professionally and personally. Although a year is a year, here are a few ways you can make yourself – whether you are in Iraq, Fort Riley, or your hometown – stronger.

**Physical** – Victory Base is packed with fitness facilities and hosts organized runs nearly weekly. Find a buddy, set a realistic goal, and work together to reach it during this deployment. Creating and maintaining a healthy routine is essential to your overall well-being. Back home, you can grab a friend and go to local fitness classes together or train for an upcoming race. Maybe start a nightly routine of talking a walk with your children in the neighborhood. Set a date after the deployment to run in a road race or perform a physical challenge together or as a family.

**Emotional** – Everyone has a hobby, no matter what it is, that serves as a stress reliever. It is important that you find time in your day-to-day schedule to maintain your hobby. Taking time for yourself will give you an emotional release and make you stronger.

**Social** – Get involved in events occurring in your area. At Victory Base, the MWR offers a variety of activities

and entertainers throughout the week. Check out flyers and posters in the DFAC, near the MWR, gyms, and in your work areas. At Fort Riley, try to attend events being hosted on the installation and in the local community. As the weather gets nicer, you may want to grab some friends and plan a day trip to Milford Lake, walk around the museums and mansions in Abilene, or play at one of the many parks on Fort Riley and in Manhattan. Use your ‘battle buddies’ to make yourself stronger throughout this deployment – you don’t have to go through this year alone.

**Family** – Ironically, the deployment may be the best time to rebuild your relationship with your family. The distance and time difference makes words even more important. Take the time to remember important dates with cards and handwritten letters. Don’t just rely on the phone or Skype – make memories that will last forever.

**Spiritual** – Victory Base is also packed with chapels. Whatever your religious beliefs are, there are plenty of opportunities to practice your faith on the base. You can attend services, join the choir, or attend a bible study. Likewise, at home, you can find a service in the community to attend, volunteer at a local charity, or join a religious meeting group on post. Again, make a pact to become more spiritual apart and practice together when you reunite.

The Soldiers and Families reading this are part of a great generation – an all-volunteer force that continues to renew its commitment to defending the nation both from home and afar. We could not be prouder of every Soldier and Family Member in this battalion.

## Lifeline 6



# LTC SHILISA GETER "GRIFFIN 6"



Hello Griffin Nation,

**W**hew! Can you believe it? We have successfully completed half of the deployment with great endurance and support from our Family and friends of the Griffin Battalion. We know this has not been an easy task, but our strong support system has held it together and we truly thank you for everything. We were able to receive almost 200 candy-stuffed eggs from pre-school students out of Houston, TX. We had a great volunteer Griffin scavenger egg hunt in which the Soldiers received great rewards. They really enjoyed themselves as they searched for eggs at the Battalion Headquarters just like little kids. What a great time had by all who participated!

The Soldiers of this battalion continue to do great things and it shows in the progress we have made since our arrival. We have completed over 200 combined missions in support of the Baghdad Provincial Reconstruction Team, Iraqi High Tribunal, Police Transition Teams, and the Law and Order detachment. We have bid farewell to the 94th Military Police Company out of Londonderry, NH and welcomed 212th Military Police Company out of Fort Bliss, TX. We have also said our good-bye's to CPT Klara Wright as she conducted a change of command with CPT Jason F. Cano, A Company "Titans." We continue to be flexible in our mission and support to the brigade, as only the Special Troops Battalion can do.

Our military police Soldiers continue to excel as they transition again to directly support the brigade's advise, train, and assist mission with the Iraqi police. They are more than ready to take on another challenge. The MPs have continued to go above and beyond, and we ask them to remain vigilant and fluid while preparing for the ultimate transition to the Department of State. They will work closely with our Iraqi Police partners and provide them with the best



support in police professionalism, K9 sustainment training, and advanced Iraqi Police courses to enhance Baghdad's Iraqi Police force.

Alpha Company continues to provide the best intelligence support to the Brigade as we reposture our forces in preparation for the draw down and redeployment. The Titan Soldiers are relentless in their work ethic and analytical knowledge and skills. They are praised daily for their efforts in providing the best Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance in the United States Division-Center. Our awesome Signalers of Bravo Company continue to surpass all expectations in allowing the Brigade to effectively communicate. We



*Griffin Soldiers show appreciation for pictures and cards from the students of St. Bernadette Preschool on Easter Sunday*

have roughed some tough sand storms lately, but our persistent "Pheonix" Soldiers have stood the test and continue to assess, repair, and reconnect all the Soldiers in the Dagger operating environment within hours. Now that's customer service at its finest! In "Hellraiser" country, these Soldiers have remained attentive and consistent in providing direct support to the battalion and brigade headquarters. Whether it's in personnel actions, maintenance support, training and operations support, or food services, our HHC STB Soldiers have proudly answered the call. They are often behind the scenes, but their support is always there and heard through their actions.

We also had the awesome opportunity to spend time with some of the platoons of C Company "Venom." They prepare and conducted military operations urban terrain drills at Camp Taji. Each platoon was able to demonstrate their ability to plan and execute the best tactics and techniques involved in handling demolitions safely and efficiently in a stressful environment. They also demonstrated this capability in support of an infantry squad. This training was a hit and extremely successful and beneficial to all.

Command Sergeant Major Washington and I often continuously see our Soldiers putting forth heroic efforts daily. We are proud to be your leaders as we know a part of what makes us strong are the Soldiers, NCOs and Officers of this great battalion. Continue to be safe and strong in your support of our Soldiers and we will remain strong in our support of our Family and friends.

**GRIFFINS! POINT OF THE DAGGER!**

**No Mission Too Difficult! No Sacrifice Too Great!**

**LTC GETER**

**CSM WASHINGTON**

# 2-1 SPECIAL TROOPS BN. "GRIFFINS"



## "VENOM" COMPANY, 9TH IRAQI ARMY DIVISION SOLDIERS CONDUCT ROUTE CLEARANCE IN BAGHDAD



Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Jonathan S. DeLong, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.

The mission is simple, yet extremely dangerous. For the Soldiers of 3rd Platoon, Company C "Venom," Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, they must clear the main roads in and around Baghdad of improvised explosive devices with the Field Engineer Regiment of the 9th Iraqi Army Division.

Utilizing IEDs against the Iraqi populace and coalition forces has been a staple of insurgent tactics throughout the eight years of Operations Iraqi Freedom and New Dawn. Combating this tactic, American, and now Iraqi, engineers patrol the roads searching for IEDs.

As American forces continue to draw down under the Status of Forces Agreement, ensuring the Iraqi engineers are able to complete route clearance to protect the people of Iraq is a priority for U.S. forces.

The Soldiers of Venom Company have seen the progression of the 9th FER firsthand. During their deployment in Iraq in support of Operation New Dawn, they have worked side-by-side with their Iraqi counterparts in all aspects.

"We did an initial evaluation on the 9th FER's

capabilities and gave recommendations on effective ways to accomplish the mission," said 1st Lt. Logan Prestonback, a platoon leader with Company C, STB and a Mellville, La., native. "The Iraqi engineers have been very receptive to the suggestions made by us and the partnership with them."

To prepare for their deployment, members of the platoon conducted route clearance and route reconnaissance training at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. Additionally, they completed demolition ranges and numerous field exercises at their home base of Fort Riley, Kan.

For the Soldiers of the platoon, conducting this mission and working with the 9th FER has been both challenging and rewarding.

Sgt. Caleb Cates, a "Buffalo" mine-resistant vehicle gunner with Company C, STB and a Hillsboro, Ore., native, is in the middle of his second deployment with the brigade conducting route clearance missions. He appreciates the need for the mission, and said he knows that though it can be hazardous, it is necessary that the roads be cleared.

"Working with the newer Soldiers and the Iraqi engineers has been a good experience for me," Cates said. "Giving engineer-related classes, such as demolitions emplacement and other tasks which refine our abilities has really helped strengthen the relationship between us and our Iraqi counterparts."

Spc. Zachary Zandonai, a driver with Company C, STB and a Rockford, Ill., native, is on his first deployment. When he initially enlisted as a combat engineer, he knew there was a likelihood of conducting route clearance missions while deployed.

"This mission is an important mission and someone has to do it, so why not me?" he said.

Prestonback is confident in the abilities of his Iraqi counterparts with the 9th FER to continue the mission after his platoon has redeployed.

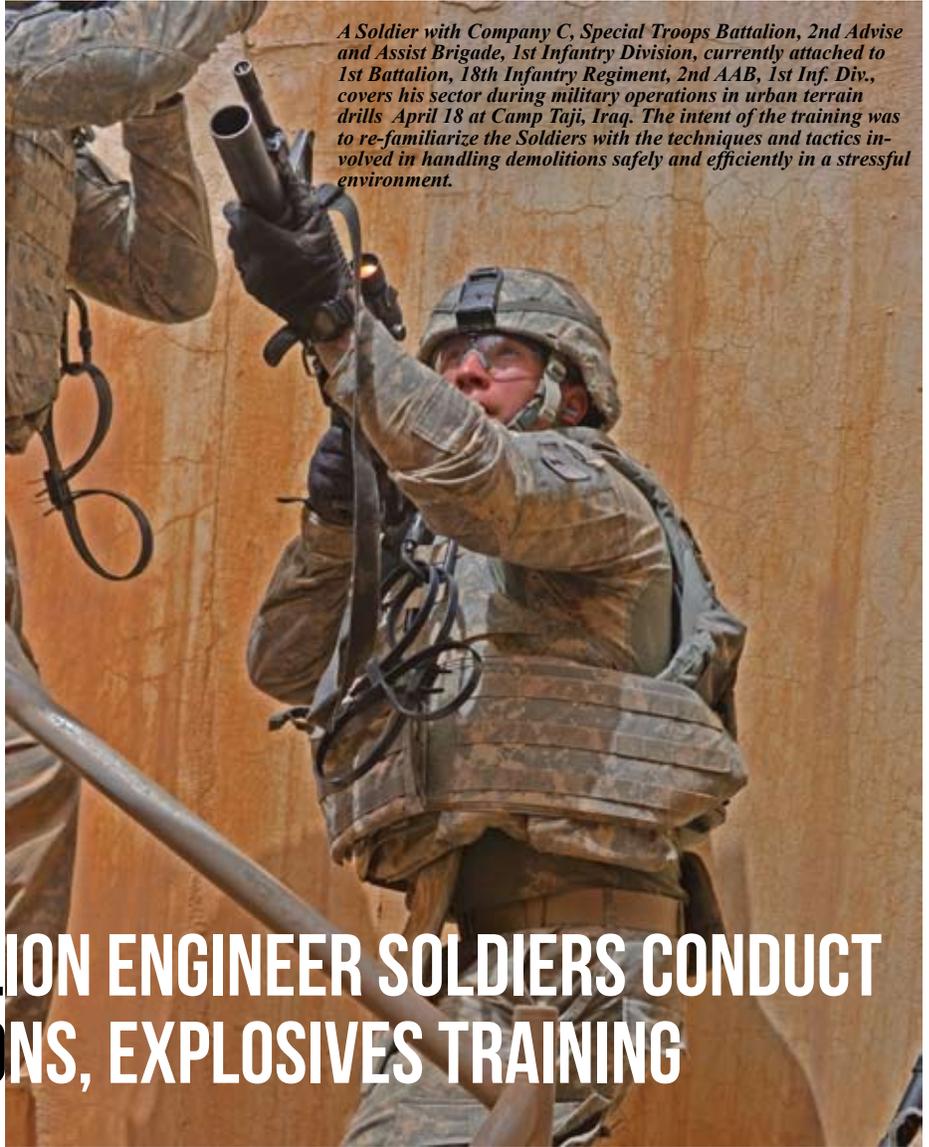
"The 9th FER have begun to take ownership of the mission and take the lead in our joint operations," Prestonback said. "The Iraqi engineers have a better knowledge of the area and have the appropriate skills to complete the mission without the presence of American engineers."



*A Soldier with Company C, Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, currently attached to 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div., wires a target with explosives during a training demolition range April 18 at Camp Taji, Iraq. The intent of the range was to re-familiarize the Soldiers with the techniques and tactics involved in handling demolitions safely and efficiently in a stressful environment.*



*A Soldier with Company C, Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, currently attached to 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div., covers his sector during military operations in urban terrain drills April 18 at Camp Taji, Iraq. The intent of the training was to re-familiarize the Soldiers with the techniques and tactics involved in handling demolitions safely and efficiently in a stressful environment.*



## **'GRIFFIN' BATTALION ENGINEER SOLDIERS CONDUCT URBAN OPERATIONS, EXPLOSIVES TRAINING**

*A team of engineers with Company C, Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, currently attached to 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div., conduct military operations in urban terrain drills to clear a building during a training exercise April 18 at Camp Taji, Iraq.*



# AROUND THE BRIGADE...



## CJCS VISITS USD-C, DAGGERS

Adm. Mike Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, addresses Soldiers with the 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division and other Soldiers with United States Division – Center at Camp Liberty, Iraq, April 22. Mullen talked about many of the issues facing the military, including pay concerns and deployment schedules, and answered Soldiers' questions on other topics. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Daniel Stoutamire, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.)



## OPERATION PROPER EXIT

Command Sgt. Maj. Rodney R. Lewis (left), senior enlisted adviser with 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, and a Lynchburg, Ohio, native, gives a token of appreciation to Sgt. 1st Class Brian Mancini, a Soldier wounded in Iraq and a member of the 1st Inf. Div., April 29 at Camp Liberty, Iraq. Mancini and other wounded warriors participated in "Operation Proper Exit," a program that allows service members injured in Iraq a chance to share their experiences and seek closure to a difficult period in their lives. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Christopher Roberts, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.)

Staff Sgt. Jason Moen, a cavalry scout with the 5th "Longknife" Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div., received an Army Commendation Medal, with Valor, in a ceremony at Joint Security Station Falcon, Iraq, April 2, 2011. Moen, a Superior, Wis., native, earned the award for selflessly placing the safety of his Soldiers and the squadron commander before his own. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Richardo Spence, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.)

## LONGKNIFE NCO EARNS ARCOM WITH VALOR



## USD-C HEROES RUN

Chief Warrant Officer Diane Cutright, black shirt, brigade mobility officer and a King William, Va., native, and Spc. Angelika Amaya, front, early warning system operator and a Tucson, Ariz., native, both with 2nd "Dagger" Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, run in the 10-kilometer Fallen Hero Run May 22, 2011 at Camp Liberty, Iraq. Cutright ran in honor of Col. Paul Kelly and Staff Sgt. Darryl Booker, and Amaya ran in honor of Pfc. Tyler J. Smith. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Christopher J. Roberts, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.)





## DAGGER SOLDIERS RECIEVE CABS, CIBS, PURPLE HEART

*Soldiers with the 2nd "Dagger" Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, stand in formation after some were awarded the Combat Infantryman and others, the Combat Action Badge at Camp Liberty, Iraq, March 27, 2011. The CIB provides recognition to infantry Soldiers who personally engage enemy forces in combat or are engaged by an enemy force, while the CAB does the same for non-infantry Soldiers. Insurgent forces used an anti-armor hand grenade to attack a convoy in which the Soldiers were riding in early March. (U.S. Army photos by Chief Warrant Officer 2 James Smotherman, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.)*



*Col. Paul Calvert, left, commander of the 2nd "Dagger" Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division and an Athens, Ga., native, pins the Purple Heart on the uniform of Pfc. Travis Jenkins, a personal security detachment medic with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div. and a Titusville, Fla., native, March 27, 2011, at Camp Liberty, Iraq.*



## DAGGER 6 RE-ENLISTS SOLDIERS AT CAMP LIBERTY

*Col. Paul Calvert, center, commander of the 2nd "Dagger" Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, administers the oath of re-enlistment to Soldiers with the brigade April 10 at Camp Liberty, Iraq. (U.S. Army photos by Sgt. Daniel Stoutamire, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.)*



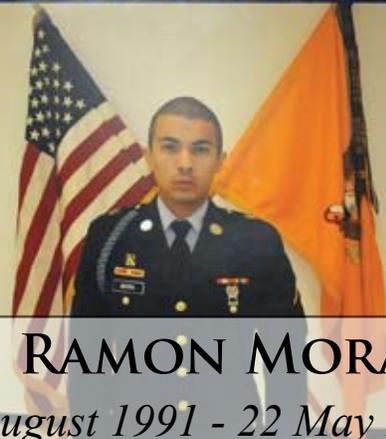


# THE DAGGER EDGE

*In Memoriam*



**SFC CLIFFORD E. BEATTIE**  
*3 January 1974 - 22 May 2011*



**PFC RAMON MORA JR.**  
*20 August 1991 - 22 May 2011*

*Rest in Peace*

