



The Ironhorseman

Operation New Dawn



August-October 2011



What's Inside

- Muleskinner Soldiers pass into NCO rite of passage
- BSTB Soldiers raise GT scores
- GarryOwen Soldiers save Iraqi lives
- IHP and Ironhorse Soldiers make Iraq roads safer
- Stallions offer aid to Sudaryr
- Brothers in arms
- Stallion Mike
- Ironhorse Soldiers observe Hispanic Heritage Month
- Centurions honor fallen by walking
- Once, twice, four times a Dragon!
- Comanche change of command
- Stallions offer aid to local hospital
- Lancers assist IA in maintaining medical skills
- US Forces meet with shieks, Sons of Iraq
- Centurion recognition
- Ironhorse team tours Iraq-Iran border
- Lancers give Amir Bin Yaser School supplies
- Maj. Gen. Champoux presents CABs to Dragons
- Stallions work to secure local roads for drawdown
- COS Kalsu remembers 9/11
- Centurions re-enlist
- Seeing the AO through the eye of our counterparts

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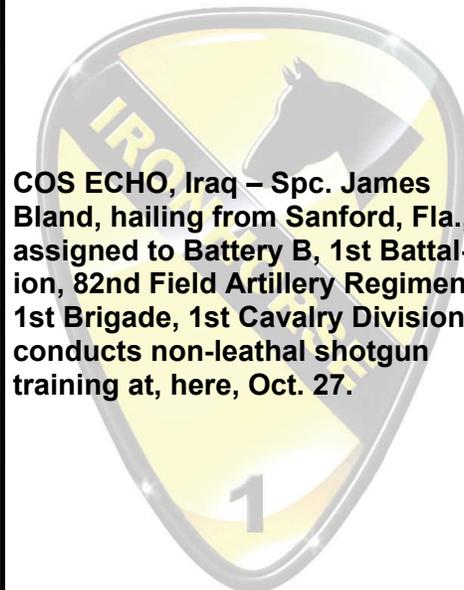
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Dragons conduct non-lethal training

Photos by Sgt. Gregory Snyder 1-82 FA UPAR



COS ECHO, Iraq – Spc. James Bland, hailing from Sanford, Fla., assigned to Battery B, 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, conducts non-lethal shotgun training at, here, Oct. 27.



COS ECHO, Iraq – Sgt. Kenneth Melton (left), hailing from Klamath Falls, Ore., is assisted by Spc. Payne (right), both assigned to the 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, is assisted to the decontamination station after being pepper sprayed as part of the Non-Lethal training conducted, here, Oct. 28th.



Muleskinner Soldiers pass into NCO rite of passage

**Story by Spc. Bailey Jester
1st Bde. Public Affairs**

COS KALSU, Iraq – “The goal of the corps of [Noncommissioned Officers], whose duty is the day-to-day business of running the Army so that the officer corps has time to command it, is to continue to improve our Army at every turn. We want to leave it better than we found it.”

These words about the NCO Corps were said by the fifth sergeant major of the Army, Sgt. Maj. of the Army William Bainbridge.

Every month Soldiers are promoted into the NCO ranks, and the 115th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division wanted to celebrate these Soldiers by holding a NCO Induction Board, here, Oct. 24.

The tradition of commemorating these Soldiers into the ranks of the Noncommissioned Officer can be traced to the Army of Fredrick the Great.

As the story of the original NCO inductions was read, the lights in the chapel dimmed.

Before a Soldier could be recognized in full status of an NCO he was required to stand four watches, one every four days. Each day a different Soldier would arrive to receive a gift from the NCO pulling guard.

Although the rites of passage have become less extensive, they have not lost their importance.

“Today we commemorate this rite of passage as a celebration of the newly promoted sergeants joining the ranks of a professional noncommissioned officer corps and further emphasize and build upon the pride we all share as members of such an elite corps,” the ceremony’s narrator explained.

The ceremony continued with guest speaker, Cape Coral, Fla. native, Command Sgt. Maj. Ray Devens.

“You are now part of an ‘elite’ group known as the ‘Backbone of the Army’,” said Devens, the command sergeant major of the 25th Infantry Division.

As the NCO Creed concludes, “I will not forget, nor will I allow my comrades to forget that we are



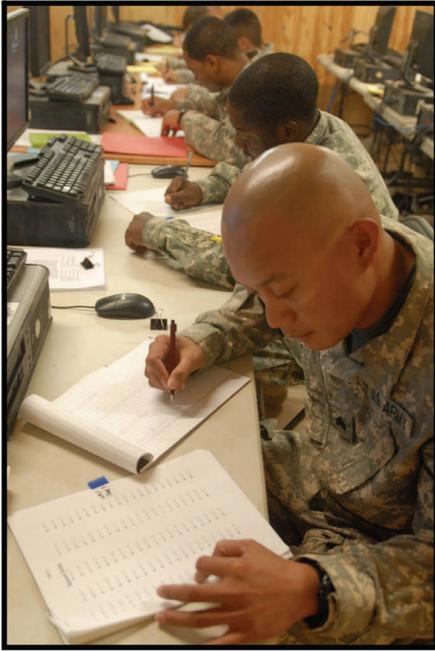
COS KALSU, Iraq – Pfc. Rice, assigned to the 115th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, starts the Noncommissioned Officer Induction Ceremony, here, Oct. 24. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Bailey Jester, 1st Bde., 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs)



COS KALSU, Iraq – Cape Coral, Fla. native, Command Sgt. Maj. Ray Devens, the most senior enlisted Soldier in the 25th Infantry Division, was the guest speaker at the Noncommissioned Officer Induction Ceremony held by the 115th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division. “You are now part of an ‘elite’ group known as the ‘Backbone of the Army’.” (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Bailey Jester, 1st Bde., 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs.)

professionals, Noncommissioned Officers... Leaders!”

“I am very proud of what I have done, and where I have gone,” Cpl. Derian Moore, assigned to Company A of the Muleskinner Battalion.



COS KALSU, Iraq – Soldiers assigned to the 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, study hard, during a class, here, Sept. 20. These Soldiers are attending this class during their personal time, to raise their General Technical, a score used by the Army that helps facilitate various administrative actions like military occupational specialty changes and special training schools.

1st BSTB Soldiers raise their general technical scores while deployed

Photos by Spc. Krystal Curl 1st BSTB UPAR

COS KALSU, Iraq – Soldiers assigned to the 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, take thorough notes during a class, here, Sept. 20. These Soldiers are attending this class during their personal time, to raise their General Technical score, a score used by the Army that helps facilitate various administrative actions like military occupational specialty changes and special training schools.



GarryOwen Soldiers save Iraqi lives

By Capt. Chris Weinrich
1-7 Cav. UPAR

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq - Soldiers from White Platoon, Troop C, 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, saved numerous Iraqi lives during a convoy, here, Sept. 28.

The Soldiers of Comanche Troop escorted civilian contracted vehicles that were hauling equipment and supplies from Joint Base Balad to the Victory Base Complex, outside of Baghdad.

During the mission, the Soldiers witnessed a violent

collision on the north bound lanes of Highway 1, just north of Taji, Iraq.

During the convoy, in the early evening, Sgt Darren Wing observed a brutal accident between a van and a four door sedan. Both vehicles spun violently into the center of the north bound lanes.

The Soldiers stopped their convoy, which was moving in the south bound lanes toward Taji, to provide immediate medical care for the wounded Iraqi nationals. The Soldiers were the first on the scene.

Acting on instinct, Staff Sgt. Justin Mansfield jumped from his vehicle to coordinate traffic control and treat the wounded.

With Mansfield providing traffic control and medical aid, Sgt. Andrew Knochelmann, Pfc. Bryan Lyons, Staff Sgt. Junior James, Staff Sgt. Denny Tajeron, Spc. Kevin Wineinger, and Sgt. Timothy Bennett raced



from their vehicles to help the wounded as well.

Tajeron used a tanker bar, normally used for maintenance, to open the doors of the two damaged vehicles.

After the Soldiers treated the wounded Iraqi nationals, the Iraqi Army arrived to provide further medical treatment.

Eight Iraqi's were injured in the accident, four of them critically.

The immediate actions of the Soldiers saved the lives of three Iraqi Nationals. The Soldiers have been hailed as heroes by the local population for their instinctive actions.



Lancers attend Shiek meeting

Photos by 2nd Lt. Thomas Morin 2-5 Cav. UPAR



BABIL, Iraq – Lt. Col. Jason Hayes (center), the commander of the 2nd Battalion 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, conducts a council meeting with local Iraqi leaders and Iraqi Security Forces, here, Oct. 5. The meeting addressed security concerns in the Babil Province, strengthening the partnership between United States Forces and ISF.



BABIL, Iraq – Lt. Col. Hayes (center), the commander of 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, conducts a council meeting with local Iraqi leaders and Iraqi Security Forces, here, Oct. 5. The meeting addressed security concerns in the Babil Province, strengthening the partnership between United States Forces and ISF.



BABIL, Iraq – Capt. Carl Danko (left), the commander of Company C, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, listens as his linguist translates the dialogue of a meeting, here, Oct. 5.



BABIL, Iraq – Lt. Col. Michael Brough (left) stands for a photo with Babil Sheiks and Maj. Gen. Fadhil (right), the Babil Provincial Chief of Police, during a meeting with local Sheiks, here, Oct. 5.

IHP and Ironhorse Soldiers make Iraq roads safer

**Story by Spc. Bailey Jester
1st Bde. Public Affairs**

COS ECHO, Iraq – As vehicles drove down Highway 1, they didn't expect to be required to cross the median onto the other side of the highway.

The Iraqi Highway Patrol posted their vehicle on the road to prevent the passing of cars, and to show a strong presence for the local populace.

Starting Sept. 15, the IHP and the 380th Engineer Support Company, started an 11-day route sanitation mission to clear the road of old concrete debris, dirt piles, trash debris at least 10-meters from the road.

“This allows [Coalition Forces and U.S. Forces] freedom of mobility on [Highway 1], and to deny the enemy emplacement opportunities,” explained 1st Lt. Elizabeth Fox, assigned to the 380th ESC, and the officer in charge of the route sanitation.

Clearing this area also prevents unwanted accidents for local Iraqi drivers.

The route sanitation mission took place in the Diwaniyah province, which is currently the 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division's area of operations.

“Providing mobility on [Highway 1] will help to make the road safe in the draw down process for both [Coalition and U.S forces],” Fox continued.

After arriving on the site, the crew downloaded the equipment and started clearing the road.

There were five different types of vehicles that were used to complete their mission; a track vehicle, the D7 Dozer, two scoop loaders, a 5-yard Scoop Loader and a High Mobility Engineer Excavator.

First, the track vehicle flattened the land next to the road, followed by the scoops which cleared the road of the dirt and debris that flowed onto the road.



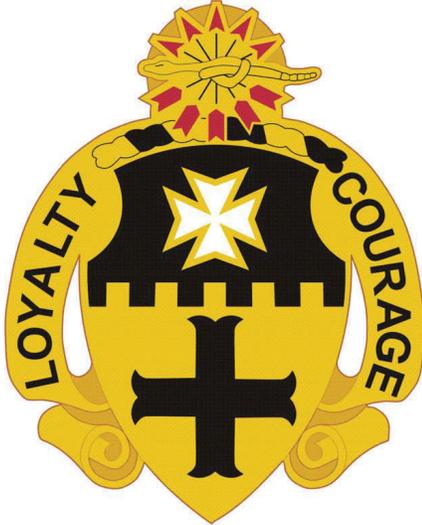
As the engineers cleared the road, the IHP dismounted their truck and began directing traffic. Using hand and arm signals, they kept the oncoming traffic on the parallel highway and out of the way.

They also stopped oncoming cars, showing a physical presence, and letting the local population know that they can pass only with IHP permission.

“The mission was a success,” Fox concluded. “We were able to clear a good amount of debris on both the southbound and northbound sides of the road in the entire Area of Operation for [the Stallions].”

Pegasus 9 patrols with Lancers

Photos by Sgt. John Couffer 1st Bde. Public Affairs



BABIL, Iraq – Command Sgt. Maj. Ricky Linton (left), speaks with Command Sgt. Maj. Isaia Vimoto, during a daytime patrol, here, Aug. 14.



BABIL, Iraq – Soldiers from the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2 Battalion, 5 Cavalry Division, keep constant vigil during a daytime patrol, here, Aug 14.

2-5 Cavalry



BABIL, Iraq – A soldier assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, conducts over watch during a daytime patrol, here, Aug. 14.

Ironhorse takes the reins

**By Sgt. John Couffer
1st Bde. Public Affairs**

COS KALSU, Iraq – For the fourth time in the history of the Ironhorse Brigade, the uncasing of colors once again takes center-stage in the blowing sands of Iraq.

The 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division trades roles with the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment during a Transfer of Authority ceremony held, here, Aug. 13.

The TOA signifies the beginning of a new chapter for the Ironhorse Brigade in Iraq, as it officially assumes responsibilities of its predecessors.

“You all have done an outstanding job and it certainly shows this

morning.” said the ceremony’s guest speaker, Maj. Gen. Eddy Spurgin, the commander of the United States Division South, “I’d expect no less from [cavalry troopers] of the Lone Star State.”

Spurgin gave memorial to 14 fallen Brave Rifles Soldiers and their personal sacrifice. He also attested to the endured hardships and impressive successes of the Brave Rifles command during its tenure in Iraq.

Ironhorse will maintain the mission of continued security in south-central Iraq and assist in the orderly withdrawal of U.S. troops.

“We have a monumental task ahead,” Col. Scott Efflandt, the Iron-



COS KALSU, Iraq – Col. Scott Efflandt (left), aids Command Sgt. Maj. Lance Lehr (right), in the uncasing of the colors during a transfer of authority ceremony, here, Aug 13. The ceremony marks the beginning of a new chapter for the Ironhorse Brigade in Iraq. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt John Couffer, 1st Bde., 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs)

horse Brigade commander, said during his speech at the ceremony, “to close the door on our nation’s investment in building a strong, stable, and democratic country of Iraq.”

Efflandt said he looks forward to facing the challenge of taking the responsibility in closing the final chapter of U.S. Forces in Iraq.

He said that such a role is a great fit for the Ironhorse Brigade.

During the last three deployments, Efflandt said the Ironhorse Brigade has made historic changes in the lives of the Iraqi people and this time will be no different. Although the road ahead

will be full of hard work, he said, “we will leave this place better than we found it.”

In his closing remarks, Efflandt said, “We will leave with our heads held high knowing that our impact throughout the last decade in Iraq will have forever changed history.”

“As potentially one of the last American units to leave Iraq, you will have unique role in Operation New Dawn that few others will share,” Spurgin said to Efflandt, “Whatever happens, I know that you and your Ironhorse troopers will make us proud.”



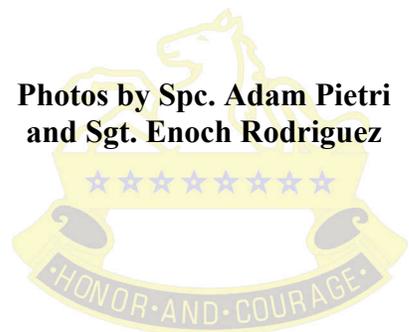
COS KALSU, Iraq – Col. Scott Efflandt (left), uses a saber to cut the cake with Command Sgt. Maj. Lance Lehr (right), after a transfer of authority ceremony, here, Aug 13. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. John Couffer, 1st Bde., 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs)

Stallions offer aid in Sudaryr



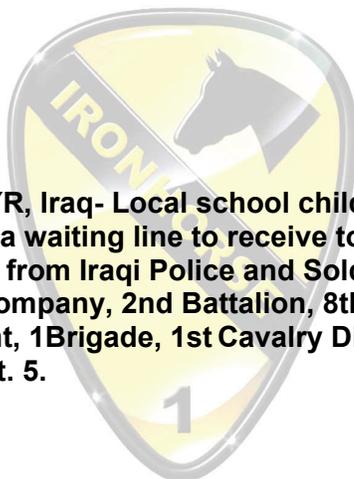
SUDARYR, Iraq - Spc. Adam Pietri, assigned to 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, stands with local children for a photo, here Oct. 6. Soldiers of Cobra Company deliver school supplies in support of Operation New Dawn.

SUDARYR, Iraq – 2nd Lt. Fischer of Company C, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1 Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, looks on as children of Sudaryr receive school supplies here, Oct. 5. The students receive the supplies from Soldiers and Iraqi Police counterparts.



Photos by Spc. Adam Pietri and Sgt. Enoch Rodriguez

SUDARYR, Iraq- Local school children stand in a waiting line to receive to school supplies from Iraqi Police and Soldiers of Cobra Company, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1 Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, here, Oct. 5.



Brothers



COS KALSU, Iraq – Sgt. Steven Spurrell (left) and Sgt. Andrew Kintgen (right), both assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, are half brothers currently deployed in Iraq. (U.S. Army Photo by 2nd Lt. Thomas Morin, 2-5 Cav., 1Bde., 1st Cav. Div. UPAR)

**By 2nd Lt. Thomas Morin
2-5 Cav. UPAR**

COS KALSU, Iraq – The wind kicks up the sand and conceals the sun in what is a normal, overcast Iraqi day.

Two Soldiers step through the red and white painted headquarters door

of the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, and shake the dust from their hair.

Despite the small fact that they wear different nametags, there is no question the Roanoke, Va. natives, Sergeants Andrew Kintgen and Steven Spur-

rell are in fact half brothers.

Born three and a half years apart, the interaction between the two belies a closeness that only brothers can share.

A friendly competitive spirit between them etches - a mischievous grin on Kintgen's face as he explains -

in arms

- his faster promotion to sergeant although joining the Army about a year after his younger brother.

“I’m just more awesome,” Kintgen brags as his

brother laughs. The two were not always able to be so close due to rocky childhoods, and did not really get to know each other well into their early teens.

“We had different fathers so some say we are not technically brothers,” Spurrell explains. “But to us, we are real brothers.”

Without knowing they possess different last names, many people automatically assume they are related, due to their strong facial resemblances.

“We get mistaken for one another all the time,” Kintgen said, explaining the common mistake.

The younger of the two, Spurrell, age 24, was the first to enlist during the surge in 2006. After completing basic training he was stationed in Korea.

His older brother pulled him out of a foster home in order that they could join

together; unfortunately, extenuating circumstances delayed Kintgen from being able to enlist until a year later.

When his brother graduated basic training and received orders for Fort Hood, Texas Spurrell put in his permanent change of station request to join him there.

They ended up as Lancers, just in time for the 2009 deployment to Joint Security Station Sadr City.

“Originally we were in the same platoon until they found out we were brothers,” Kintgen said.

“Deploying together is cool,” Spurrell said, “but it can be scary at times.”

Spurrell recounted one particular incident during his deployment; he was in the Battalion Tactical Operations Center when his brother’s vehicle was hit by an explosive formed projectile resulting in the death of a Soldier.

“I was worried, to say the least,” Spurrell said in a gross understatement.

The two brothers, still serving with the Lancers,

are again deployed to Iraq but this time at Contingency Operating Station Kalsu, located in the Babil Province.

Spurrell is a team leader with Company A, while Kintgen is with the Headquarters and Headquarters Company scout platoon.

“We are always trying to outperform each other in everything we do,” Kintgen said. “It becomes part of our leadership style, too. I’m always trying to make my Soldiers better so that I can say my guys are better than his, and he does the same.”

Kintgen will be promotable soon, and wants to go to Drill Sergeant school at Fort Jackson. If Spurrell can, he wants to follow his brother.

Future plans for the brothers are to stay in the Army and try to stay together, they also both wish to be command sergeants major one day.

“Now those would be some competitive battalions,” laughs Kintgen.

Stallion mike

**By Spc. Adam Pietri
2-8 Cav. UPAR**

COS ECHO, Iraq - When a unit is deployed, some of the most important jobs are neither glamorous nor exciting. Such is the case for Spc. Joe Rojas, a radio operator assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, and works in the Tactical Operations Center.

The majority of the staff in the TOC is comprised of combat Soldiers who have prior deployment experience. They were selected for their experience, their professionalism, and intelligence; three qualities that Rojas embodies.

“He’s the best on the radio. He knows how to disseminate information and maintain composure in stressful situations. He plays a key role and without him there would be no TOC,” said Sgt. 1st Class Eddie Jones, the battle captain for the Stallions.

The job of a radio operator requires focus, patience, and considerable attention to detail. He must be ready to disseminate vital information to and accurately document information from all patrols within the Stallions’ area of operations. Having previously deployed between 2009 and 2010 with the Stallions, Rojas has the depth of knowledge and experience necessary for this job.

A tanker by trade, Rojas was initially brought to the Operations sections as a loader on the commander’s tank before becoming the Stallion radio operator.

“It’s a different kind of stress. Most combat soldiers have never seen this side of the army,” said Rojas.

The Stallion radio operator regularly interacts with field grade officers, Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Austin the Stallion command sergeant major, and Lt. Col. Robert Rodriguez, the Stallion commander. Spc. Rojas must be ready, at any time, to give an up-to-the-minute



COS ECHO, Iraq – Spc. Joe Rojas, a radio operator assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, stands in front of the Stallions’ t-wall, here October 2011. Rojas works in the Tactical Operations Center, and is responsible for tracking and recording radio traffic and information for continuous updates in the Stallions’ area of operations.

assessment of all activity within the Stallion area of operations.

Though Rojas admits he would rather return to his duties as a tanker, he understands the importance of his job.

“This is the army. They give you a job and you do your best at it,” Rojas concluded.

Promotions in Iraq watched from Fort Hood

SFC Nicholas Lien of Whitewater, Wisconsin, assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division and SFC Hugo Bazan Rio Grande Valley, Texas, assigned to Alpha Battery, 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, get promoted while soldiers and loved ones watch via video teleconference at Fort Hood.



Photos by Sgt. Gregory Snyder
1-82 FA UPAR



Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, watch a promotion ceremony while family from Fort Hood applauds for their loved ones via telephone conference.



1-82 FA Dragons



Staff Sgt. Wright from Alpha Battery, 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division stands tall for his promotion while his family looks on from Fort Hood.

Dragons host historical event

By Sgt. Snyder
1-82 FA UPAR

COS ECHO, Iraq – There was much to celebrate at Contingency Operating Station Echo, as the 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, hosted an Iftar for local security, political, and social leaders in the city of Diwaniyah.

The event proved historic, as it will be the last Iftar that United States Forces will share with the people of Diwaniyah.

A traditional Iraqi meal was served at the Echo dining facility as U.S. personnel and their Iraqi counterparts took part in the iftar.

“In a few short months, [the] Ironhorse Brigade will comply with the security agreement set forth by the Government of Iraq and make the journey back to the United States,” Lt. Col. Edmond Brown, the Dragon commander stated.

Brown continued by highlighting the end of U.S. presence in Diwaniyah.

“For the first time in eight years, we will not be backfilled by fresh American Soldiers, but by the men and women of Diwaniyah; Iraqi patriots focused on securing the city for their families and loved ones,” Brown continued.

Abed Muslim, the Deputy Governor of Diwaniyah, spoke highly of United States Forces



in Iraq and thanked all the Soldiers through the years for their sacrifice and support in the name of humanity and the Iraqi people.

For many, the Iftar signified that beginning of the end for U.S. Forces at Echo as they begin to transition the station to

the ISF.

“In the upcoming months until we depart--and I believe I can speak for all the Americans in the room when I say this--you have my word that we will do all in our power to support and enable local security efforts,” Brown concluded.

Lancers give Ad-Drebash school supplies

Photos by Spc. Bailey Jester 1st Bde. Public Affairs



AD-DREBASH, Iraq – McKinney, Texas native, Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Crawford, Military Police Platoon Sergeant assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company attached to the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, distributes bags full of essential school supplies, here, Oct. 17.

AD-DREBASH, Iraq – A young girl from the Ad-Drebash School proudly displays her gifts from the Military Police assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company attached to the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, here, Oct. 17.



2-5 Cavalry

AD-DREBASH, Iraq – An Iraqi Police officer from the local police station, passes school supplies out to children of the Ad-Drebash School, here, Oct. 17. The Military Police assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company attached to the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division assisted the local IPs in passing out the school supplies.



Ironhorse Soldiers observe



COS KALSU, Iraq – (left to right) Spc. David Valentin, Pvt. 1st Class Maricruz Ramirez-Balderas, Pvt. 1st Class Irma Resto, Spc. Daisy Reyes, Spc. Manuel Medrano, and Spc. Jonathan Coronado, all assigned to the 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, present the certificates they received by the Ironhorse command, here, Oct 14. The certificates were given in recognition of their contributions to the Ironhorse brigade.

**By Sgt. John Couffer
1st Bde. Public Affairs**

COS KALSU, Iraq – Six Soldiers sat at the position of attention, side by side, in front of peers and observers alike, waiting for their turn to speak. Their faces held the countenance of pride, which could be seen through a superficial veneer of nervousness.

Soldiers and leaders of the 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month during an obser-

vance in the Dining Facility, here, Oct 14.

“Latin-Americans Soldiers are found in every battalion, every brigade, and every unit of our military,” said Col. Scott Efflandt, the commander of 1st Brigade 1st Cavalry Division. “No matter what the background, a common set of values can be found in the Hispanic tradition that permeate our ranks and bring tremendous strength to our formation.”

This month is an

opportunity to recognize the contributions and accomplishments of Hispanic Americans, not only in the Army, but all over the United States.

Efflandt reflects on the power of cultural enrichment and Hispanic contributions to America as he talks about a small town called Silvis, in Ill. He said that part of his inspiration to join the military was due to the local Hispanics and the values they exhibited while in this town.

The Hispanics

moved to Silvis during the 1930s and worked hard despite the deplorable conditions under which they toiled and lived. Their goal was to provide a better life for their families. It so happened, many of the Hispanics answered the nation’s call during the onset of World War II. As often happens in war, some Service Members paid the ultimate price. In turn, the stretch of road on which they lived became locally known as “Hero Street.”

Hispanic Heritage Month

“There is no greater example anywhere in our country of the determined resolve to overcome adversity and the resolute love of country than can be found in the small Mexican-American community on Hero Street,” Efflandt said.

Hispanic Heritage Month gets its roots under the administration of President Lyndon Johnson in 1968, and was originally only one week long. The observance was expanded to 30 days, to span the dates of Sept. 15 to Nov. 15, in 1988, under the administration of President Ronald Reagan. It was enacted into law 17 Aug., 1988, following the approval of Public Law 100-402.

“I’m proud of course” said Caguas, Puerto Rico native, Spc. David Valentin, a signal support specialist assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division. “I had the chance to participate, to talk a little about Hispanics and to show people what [Hispanics] do and hopefully people will learn something too.”

Valentin explained that Hispanics, in general, hold a lot of pride in working hard. He said Hispanics are people who don’t work for recognition. They work because it is in their blood. He said he is proud to serve and show what the Hispanic culture has to offer the Army and the world.

“I think this observance went well with the help of the young [Soldiers] that participated today,” said Valdosta, Ga. native, Sgt. 1st Class Antwone Copeland, the equal opportunity advisor for the 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division.

Copeland said he wanted to break from the normalcy of observances by making it as informal, as simple, and as meaningful as possible. He chose a route of requesting Hispanic-American Soldiers who can stand up and talk about their culture. Soldiers who could convey the Hispanic heritage in a way that people were in awe as well as the speakers, knowing they could stand up and be prideful of who they are.

“I feel observances affect the soldiers that are not a part of the heritage the feeling of what the [observed] heritage is all about,” said Copeland. “Observances are about education, it is about celebrating and having a good time, but what is impor-

tant is the education piece.”

Copeland said that if someone can go to an ob-



servance, listen, and retain previously unknown information about the heritage being observed, the mission has been accomplished. He said if people walking out said “Wow, I didn’t know that,” we have done our job.

All six Soldiers who participated received certificates recognizing their willingness to stand for their heritage and educate people on their culture and contributions to the Ironhorse brigade.

“Today, I am truly proud to stand before you, Ironhorse Soldiers of the Hispanic tradition, and I personally thank you for your sacrifices and for truly adding a flair that strengthens our organization,” Efflandt said, concluding the observance.

Centurions honor fallen by walking

Photos by Spc. Bailey Jester
1st Bde. Public Affairs

COS KALSU, Iraq – Pfc. Currant (right), assigned to the 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, signs in a participant for the Thunder Walk or Run, here, Sept. 9. Every mile walked represented a fallen person from the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks



The *Only* Special Troops Battalion

COS KALSU, Iraq – Master Sgt. Einstein Blaize, the brigade food service manager for the 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, begins his walk for the fallen person from the Twin Towers, on Sept. 11, 2001. Blaize participated in the Thunder Walk or Run, here, Sept. 9.

COS KALSU, Iraq – Bolingbrook, Ill., native, 1st Sgt. Jason Smith, first sergeant of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, provides a safety brief for the participants of the Thunder Walk or Run, here, Sept. 9. Every mile walked represented a fallen person from the attack on the Twin Towers on Sept. 11, 2001.



Ironhorse Soldier achieves unknown dream

By Spc. Bailey Jester
1st Bde. Public Affairs

COS KALSU, Iraq – When enlisting in the United States Army as a private in 1992, David Weising never imagined rising to the level of major.

Now, the Findlay, Ohio native, stands in front of a crowded room and is pinned as the newest field grade officer in the 1st Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, here, Aug. 1.

“I made field grade officer, which is something that as a private I would have never imagined me doing,” admitted Weising, the Chief of Operations for the Ironhorse Brigade.

Weising completed his enlistment in 2002, and after graduating college and working for a city group, he realized that he didn’t enjoy it. So, he sat down and took a good look at his resume. He noticed the majority of his skills were acquired from his previous military experience.

The next day he was driving down the road and spotted a recruiter. Weising pulled over and stopped to talk. A week later he enlisted for Officer Candidate School.

Since his journey as an officer began, all of his promotions have been while deployed.

“It makes me feel proud, and kind of puts a spotlight on serving our country,” said Weising.

“It’s that moment where you can think about it and reflect on what you are really doing, and the reasons as to why you came into the military.”

Weising has a family history in the military and he

believes that it is where he belonged as well.

Weising wasn’t the only one proud of his accomplishment.

“It is always a great day when you get to promote somebody,” said Ironhorse Commander, Col. Scott Efflandt. “I believe that he is going to do great stuff for us here in Iraq, and I am glad to see him empowered with the rank that will allow him to exercise his expertise.”

“This kind of played the role of a milestone,” said Weising. “It’s a more of a challenge to reach major than captain, going from company grade to field grade,” With his new promotion, Weising’s goal is to “make sure that I do my duties the best I can.”



COS KALSU, Iraq – Findlay, Ohio native, Maj. David Weising, receives his certificate of promotion from the Ironhorse Commander, here, August 1.

Once, twice, four

**Story by Sgt. Gregory Snyder
1-82 FA UPAR**

COS ECHO, Iraq— As the U.S. presence in Iraq draws down and the number of troops decrease to a small percentage of what they were only three years ago, the changes are evident looking through the eyes of the Iraqi people.

Areas of smaller cities are still rebuilding from bomb blasts that rocked their city streets over the years. Concrete barriers bare scars of mortar attacks and Iraqi buildings and homes have bullet holes, which serve as a reminder of engagements that took place.

Likewise, the observer can now see the positive labors of the U.S. effort as well.

Farmers have the resources needed to renovate and expand their farms and the local business owners have rebuilt their corner stores into flourishing enterprises.

There is a strong partnership between the American Forces and Iraqi Security Forces, serving as a reminder of how eight years of war can spawn growth, both physically and mentally.

Soldiers from different sides of the globe are working in unison for a common purpose: a free, stable and safe Iraq.

Few have spent as much time being a part of these changes as a select group of Soldiers assigned to the 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division.

The Dragons first deployed to Iraq in 2004 during Operation Iraqi Freedom II, and fittingly they will be one of the last United States Forces to withdraw by the end of 2011, in accordance with the Security Forces Agreement.

During those eight years, a handful of Dragon Soldiers have been mainstays with the battalion through four combat tours of duty: 1st Sgt. Johnny Escamilla, Sgt. 1st Class Nicholas Lien, Sgt. 1st Class Hugo Bazan, Sgt. 1st Class Robert Mills, Staff Sgt. William Cannon, Sgt. Donald Grahl, Sgt. Joel Jimenez, and Spc. Liuneta Ioane.

Task Force Dragons includes Company A, of the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, who also harbor a few four-time veterans with the Ironhorse

Brigade: Staff Sgt. Juan Pablo Vargas and Staff Sgt. Heriberto Fuentes.

Looking at the men's faces, there lays an unruffled demeanor beneath the surface. There is not much that these warriors have not seen or experienced in Iraq.

The familiarity with the culture, terrain and environment pays dividends in the hearts of newer Soldiers who look to them for leadership or stories from a past tour.

Stories are always in great demand and there is never a shortage. These men have grown up as Dragons or Lancers.

Jimenez, once an inexperienced private, is now a sergeant and squad leader, serving as a team leader with Battery G, and reflects on his time with the Dragons and commented, "I wouldn't change anything."

"Being with the same Battalion from start to finish is prestigious, and something not everyone gets the chance to do," Jimenez continued.

At the time of his first deployment Escamilla was a platoon sergeant. He has now earned the rank of first sergeant, and serves in that position for Battery A.

"Not many Soldiers can say that they were a part of the same unit through four deployments in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn," Escamilla explained.

"During my tenure with the [Dragons] I have seen many Soldiers and leaders come and go. I have been privileged to have mentored many young Soldiers, [noncommissioned officers] and officers and watch them grow to be great warriors and leaders. This battalion has been a part of my life and for the past ten years I have been fortunate to have been mentored by the best that the Army has to offer," he continued in a reminiscing manner.

Each man has his own unique story of how he came to Iraq. Whether in his early twenties or mid-thirties, they drove into Iraq with determination on their faces and the drive to make a difference in the war on terror.

Now each can write the final chapter of how he was there to drive out in the end. How each

times a Dragon!

Soldier saw the fighting diminish, troop numbers reduce and eight years worth of equipment turned in and shipped home.

The war has changed through the years, unquestionably, and the years of war have changed them as a result.

In today's Army, Soldiers are typically moved from unit to unit having little time for stabilization.

Lien first saw the perils of war as a young man.

As the journey from sergeant to sergeant first class took him through four deployments, Lien has been through more than most Artillerymen.

Serving in nearly every leadership role through the eight-year war, Lien is a true warrior; attaining his bachelors and masters degree while climbing the Army ranks ahead of his peers.

Few have accomplished the feats that Lien has, which is why his demeanor demands respect from his peers.

"Throughout the beginning of OIF II, up to the withdraw of American Forces across Iraq," Lien began. "I have seen days of sorrow and sadness for the loss of friends, days of victory and triumph over an aggressive enemy, and satisfaction that lies in the effort of rebuilding a war torn nation; full effort is full victory."

"As I reflect on how the war has changed me as a person and how my life will never be the same, I am proud to say, what I have done from the time when I was a junior Soldier and through the times now as a seasoned senior noncommissioned officer has changed the lives of many...I am pleased that I have been able to influence that transformation through my knowledge and mentorship to the Iraqi people as well as American and Coalition Forces," Lien concluded.

During his Army career, Mills, the Dragon Battalion's Maintenance Control Sergeant, has spent more time overseas than he has at home.

Reflecting back on troubling times during the 2004 campaign, Mills recalls losing friends and battle buddies.

He remembers the perils that have been overcome and what a great impact American and Coali-

tion Forces have had in rebuilding Iraq.

"Now during the fourth deployment we look back and reflect on how our small pieces of the big puzzle have improved the lives of so many over here" says Mills.

One would think that Soldiers might have a few negative emotions about a constant deployment rotation.

"Being overseas for part of every year since 2002 has been tough and has taken its toll, but if given the chance to do it all over, I wouldn't change a thing," Mills said, explaining his feelings on multiple rotations.

This type of vision and reflection from a veteran NCO is exactly why this rare group of Soldiers who are very special and essential to the Dragon Battalion.

While serving in the Dragon Battalion since 2004, many missions and tasks have been achieved.

These phenomenal individuals have shown perseverance and determination like no other, if you had asked these Soldiers in 2004 where they saw themselves going in eight years, the answer you would have received would not have included "with the Dragons".

"Our country is only as good as those who protect it," said Dragon commander, Lt. Col. Edmond Brown, who is a returning veteran for the third time since 1999. "Any combat deployment is critical to national security. To serve four consecutive deployments with the same combat unit is to 'Live the Legend'. Their personal example of commitment, leadership, and sacrifice is what 'Army Strong' is all about. When the stories of this war are told, it must be about those who answered the call of their country - again, and again, and again - until the mission is complete."

Truer words could not be spoken about the phenomenal achievements of the Dragon Battalion and those who helped define it.

This group of heroes, as accomplished as they have been in the past and sure to be in the future, remains true to form and humble as always of their amazing accomplishments.

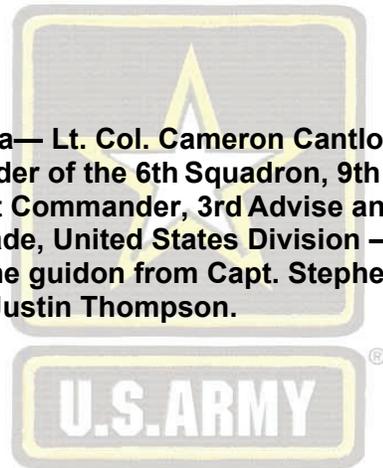
Comanche change of command

Photos by 2nd Lt. Stuart White 6-9 Cav. UPAR

COB Delta— Lt. Col. Cameron Cantlon (center), the commander of the 6th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Advise and Assist Brigade, United States Division – South, stands between Capt. Stephen Prater (left), the outgoing Comanche Troop Commander, and Capt. Justin Thompson (right), the incoming Comanche Troop Commander.



COB Delta— Lt. Col. Cameron Cantlon, the Commander of the 6th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment Commander, 3rd Advise and Assist Brigade, United States Division – South passes the guidon from Capt. Stephen Prater to Capt. Justin Thompson.



COB Delta— Having just received his first troop command, Capt. Justin Thompson cuts the cake with 1st Sgt. Kenneth Bach, Comanche 1st. Sgt., 6th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Advise and Assist Brigade, United States Division - States.



Stallions aid local hospital

Story by 2nd Lt. Brittany Myatt
2-8 Cav. UPAR

DUHGARAH, Iraq – The Duhgarah clinic is overcrowded and in desperate need of help. The clinic lacks the needed resources to fully tend to the medical needs of its patients.

The Soldiers of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, answer the call by providing security for Iraqi Police as they deliver aid.

Bandog Soldiers take their positions in securing the perimeter of Duhgarah health clinic. Each Soldier is paying close attention to their surroundings, awaiting anything which could be detrimental to the success of this needed mission.

Soldiers are ready for the unthinkable, but there are no gunshots, blasts, or cries from any angry mob of locals, rather the mood is joyous as IP's link up with United States Forces and health care professionals of the Duhgarah clinic. The greeting among USF, Iraqi Police, and doctors of Duhgarah is peaceful as IP's provide relief to the clinic.



The smiles of gratitude and appreciation extended past the IP's and Duhagrah clinic, reaching the faces of local children, whose smiles could light up the darkest of places. They looked on; watching the partnership between USF and the IPs prosper with the giving of health supplies to their local clinic. From their smiles, it seemed they were just as elated as the Duhgarah health care professionals to see the Bandog Soldiers. Many people eagerly stood by and wanted to take photos with the Soldiers

“Today's mission is one of unique circumstance. It's humbling to be able to witness the growth of the Iraqi Police as they are able to care for their own people,” said Capt. Ries Korstjens, the commander of the Company B, when asked about the mission.

Missions like this are frequent for the Soldiers of the 2-8 Cavalry. It takes a strong individual to see past themselves and push to make the lives of someone else better.

“It is by far the best part of my job, seeing a kids face light up because you are doing the right thing by helping them, it is an honor in itself,” said Spc. Daniel Shockley, a radio transmitter operator assigned to Bandog Company.

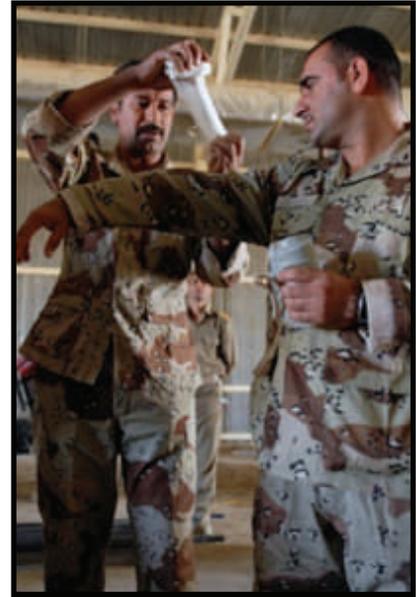


Lancers assist local IA in maintaining medical skills

Photos by Spc. Bailey Jester 1st Bde. Public Affairs



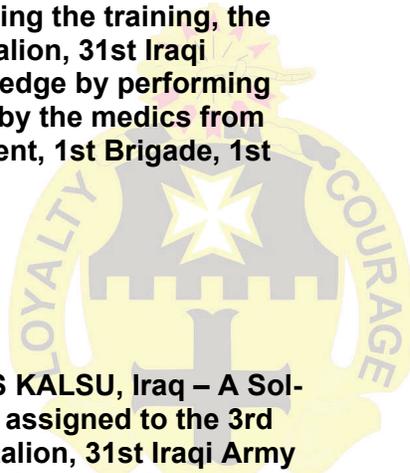
COS KALSU, Iraq – After completing the training, the Soldiers assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 31st Iraqi Army Division, tested their knowledge by performing the basic tasks supplied to them by the medics from 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, here, Oct. 23.



COS KALSU, Iraq – A Soldier, assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 31st Iraqi Army Division, locks up a walk kit after the medics walk them through it, here, Oct. 23. Medics from the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, help the IA maintain their medical readiness.



COS KALSU, Iraq – A Soldier assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 31st Iraqi Army Division, practices dressing a “wound” with bandages in order to maintain medical readiness. The training was held by the medics assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division.



الله أكبر



Sheiks meet to discuss future of Iraq

By 1st Lt. Kelly McManus
1st Bde. Public Affairs

AL KUT, Iraq – The sound of clicking prayer beads filled the room as nearly 60 sheiks from across Iraq gathered Thursday afternoon in the home of Emir Rabi'a Mohammad al-Habib al-Rabi'a, Prince of the Rabia'a Confederation.

Al-Rabi'a addressed the attendees, welcoming the sheiks and members of U.S. Forces to his home to discuss the future political and military situation in Iraq.

"The United States is the most powerful and most developed country in this world, and when they came to Iraq, we thought they would be able to change the Iraqis' life and give us freedom and democracy," stated al-Rabi'a, speaking from a prepared script. "After the U.S. in-

vaded Germany and Japan, they became one of the best and richest countries in the world. Why not Iraq?"

In turn, Maj. Gen. Bernard Champoux, commander of U.S. Forces in central and southern Iraq, spoke to the sheiks, encouraging them to use their influence to make Iraq a more stable and peaceful nation.

"Iraq is at a critical juncture on its path to democracy and tribes have and will continue to play a very important role in Iraq's political future," said Champoux. "Tribes have an enormous impact on economic enterprises and economic development in Iraq by supporting business start-up and development, assisting with security and stability, and fostering a climate that allows for effective foreign investment and international development in Iraq."

Despite their realm of influence and direct connection with the Iraqi populace, the sheiks currently do not play a large role in the politics of Iraq,

"The council of sheiks believe that they can greatly improve the security situation in Iraq if the government allows them to engage the issues," said Col. Scott Efflandt, commander of 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division. "They are very aware of the needs of the Iraqi people, and their views on the provincial economy and security are valuable."

The majority of Iraqis are



members of Arab tribes and often-times, Iraqis will feel a stronger allegiance to their tribe than the Government of Iraq, empowering the sheiks whom fulfill the role of tribal leaders.

Two members from the State Department were also in attendance to make initial introductions with the sheiks and further develop the productive relationship the Army established. Their presence shows that Dec. 31 does not mark an end point, but rather a transition of authority from military to civilian.

Efflandt expects to continue discussions with the sheiks to cement a long-term partnership beyond the departure of U.S. Forces from Iraq.



Centurion recognition

Photos by Spc. Krystal Curl 1st BSTB UPAR



COS KALSU, Iraq – Pfc. Major (center), a Brighton, Colorado native, kneels with members of her company during an awards ceremony, here, Oct 5. Pfc. Major saved the army over 2 million dollars in intelligence assets by identifying contaminated aviation fuel; she notified the proper authorities and began the de-fueling procedures.

Soldier recognized for leadership



COS KALSU, Iraq – Spc. Hawman (left), a Durango, Colorado native, stands with his company commander, Capt. Peterson during an awards ceremony, here, Oct 1. Spc. Hawman set himself apart from peers by training and mentoring three newly arrived military police Soldiers, and serving as a gunner, driver and dismount. He has been recognized by his leadership all the way up to the Battalion Commander for his flawless devotion to squad readiness and mission accomplishment.

IPs and Lancers supply local students with school gear

By Spc. Bailey Jester
1st Bde. Public Affairs

TUNOIS, Iraq – Soldiers assigned to Company C, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, helped distribute school supplies, here, with the Tunois Iraqi Policemen to strengthen the bond between the ISF and the Iraqi populace before U.S. Forces permanently leave Iraq at the year's end.

Late morning Oct. 3, Company C Soldiers of the Lancer Battalion, pulled up to the Tunois Iraqi Police Station and linked up with the IPs before visiting the students of Tunois Primary School next door.

“Our goal was to build good will with the people and children around here before we head out,” explained Powell, Wy. native, Capt. Carl Dank, the Crazyhorse Commander. “Especially to the kids, to show them we are not here to harm them or to be in the way.”

The supplies presented to the students of Tunois Primary School did just the trick.

“It was more than what was needed, but it will help resupply them throughout the school year as well,” Danko said. “The faculty and staff were very appreciative of our gift.”

There were enough supplies for about 1,200 students.

While this wasn't the first time U.S. Soldiers have provided the Tunois School District with



school supplies, it was the first set of supplies since the beginning of the this school year, which began the week before.

“The supplies were great,” said the Principle of the Tunois Primary School. “The children and families are very grateful for everything these Soldiers have done for us.”

The supplies were provided by an organization known as People to People: Operation International Children, founded in early 2004.

The organization is committed to their work in Iraq, and has expanded its mission in sending school supplies to Afghanistan and other nations where American troops are distributing them to children in need.

“Every time a box of school supplies is delivered by our troops it will be another small victory for them in helping win hearts and minds,” said Gary Sinise, founder of Operation International Children. “It is a beautiful way to begin a relationship with the future leaders of Iraq, Afghanistan and other war-torn nations.”

Each student received a packet with two notebooks, pocket-folders, pens, pencils, and a pencil case. Several students also received a backpack and a blanket.

Crazyhorse plans on returning to the surrounding village to drop off food, blankets and similar supplies to the families.



Ironhorse team tours Iraq-Iran border

Photos by Sgt. Jenifer Dolsen 1st Bde. Public Affairs

ZURBATIYAH, Iraq - Col. Scott Eflandt, the commander of the 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, talks with Iraqi Brig. Gen. Sami Rubajaal, Director of the Zurbatiyah Point of Entry, here, Oct 8. The ZPOE is the main entry point between Iraq and Iran.



ZURBATIYAH, Iraq - Lt. Col. Jason Kidder, the executive officer for the 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, tours the Zurbatiyah Point of Entry, at the border of Iraq and Iran, here, Oct 8. Everyday, thousands of people and tons of cargo and goods pass from one country to the other.

US Forces meet with sheiks, Sons of Iraq

By 1st Lt. Kelly McManus
1st Bde. Public Affairs

BAGHDAD, Iraq - In an ornate room once used for Saddam Hussein's meetings with Ba'ath party members, nearly 20 sheiks from Iraq's central and southern provinces met with members of the State Department and Col. Scott Efflandt, the commander of 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division on Wednesday to discuss the future of Iraq.

The sheiks main concern: What will happen after U.S. Forces leave Iraq?

"It's really important for me that you know I'm committed to Iraq through [Dec. 31] and beyond," Efflandt announced in his welcoming speech. "I won't waste your time today with silly promises, but I will address the problems within the scope of my power and authority."

A few members of the State Department sat among the sheiks and engaged in the talks to continue cementing their delicate relationship that will become more important as the deadline for U.S. Forces to depart Iraq draws nearer.

"The embassy is simply a smaller presence than the U.S. military," said Josh Archibald, a member of the State Department, as he addressed the group of sheiks. "And one of the areas we place an immense amount of value on is continuing conversation and interactions with you."

The issues of security for sheiks who have recently become targets of assassinations is a growing concern for the sheiks, as well as the safety of Sons of Iraq members who have loyally supported U.S. Forces since 2003.

Efflandt assured the sheiks and members of the Sons of Iraq that U.S.



Forces continue to make their safety a priority.

"I want to connect the threat of your safety with the forces that can protect it," said Efflandt. "I will work with the people I trust to protect it."

But it is more than just security that the sheiks fear losing.

The relationship between the tribal sheiks and the Government of Iraq is fragile, and when U.S. Forces depart Iraq, the sheiks believe they will no longer have the support they require to influence the political discourse of Iraq.

"We will help you, but the relationship between the U.S. and Iraq is fundamentally changed now," said Archibald to the sheiks. "Moving ahead, we will try to find areas we can influence the government"

Despite the effort by the State Department to solidify their authority in Iraq as U.S. Forces leave, the sheiks are wary.

"We started together in the same boat with the U.S. Forces," said Nafa

Khesara Meher Al Ziyadi, a member of the Sons of Iraq. "We hope that the U.S. Forces will not be the first to leave this boat because then we will not shake hands with them again."

Efflandt, drawing from his experiences in Iraq during a prior deployment, pointed out that the power base the sheiks and the Sons of Iraq are capable of attaining on their own.

"It was the sheiks and the Sons of Iraq that took the power away from the militia and al Qaeda in 2007. It was people wanting to do the right thing," said Efflandt. "The same spirit can solve the problems of today."

Efflandt plans to continue talks with the sheiks and the State Department despite the pending departure of U.S. Forces from Iraq in less than 75 days.

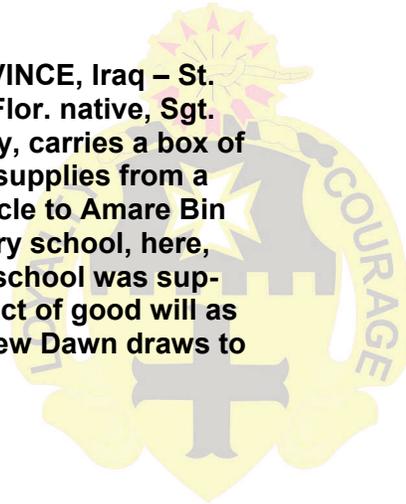
The 40,000 U.S. troops that are currently in Iraq are set to depart by the deadline set forth in the 2008 Security Agreement at which the U.S. embassy in Baghdad will assume authority from the U.S. military.

Lancers give Amare Bin Yaser school supplies

Photos by Sgt. John Couffer 1st Bde. Public Affairs



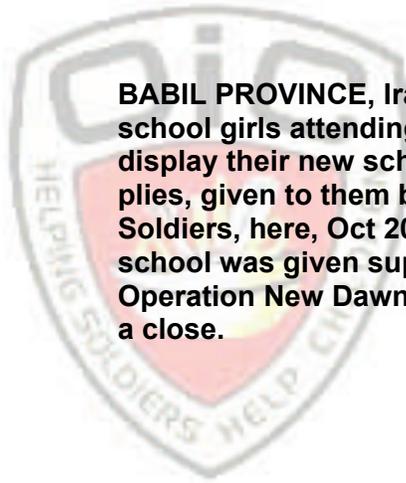
BABIL PROVINCE, Iraq – St. Petersburg Flor. native, Sgt. Jeffrey Crady, carries a box of new school supplies from a military vehicle to Amare Bin Yaser Primary school, here, Oct 20. The school was supplied as an act of good will as Operation New Dawn draws to a close.



BABIL PROVINCE, Iraq – Plano, Tx. native, Pfc. Matthew Morgan, hands out school supplies to local school girls attending class as an instructor looks on, here, Oct 20. The Amare Bin Yaser Primary school was given school supplies as an act of good faith as Operation New Dawn draws to a close.



BABIL PROVINCE, Iraq – Local school girls attending class display their new school supplies, given to them by Lancer Soldiers, here, Oct 20. The school was given supplies as Operation New Dawn draws to a close.



Maj. Gen. Champoux presents CABs to Dragons



**By Sgt. Gregory Snyder
1-82 FA UPAR**

COS ECHO, Iraq— While deployed in a warzone, Soldiers of today’s Army have learned to embrace the phrase, “if it can happen, it probably will happen”.

Roadside bombs, mortars, and small arms fire have become commonplace. Though no one wants to see these things occur, they are the realities that Soldiers face on a daily basis.

Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, were awarded Combat Action Badges at Contingency Operating Station Echo by Maj. Gen. Champoux, the commander of the 25th Infantry Division, Oct. 12.

As stated in Army Regulation 670-1, “Soldier must be personally present and actively engaging or being engaged by the enemy, and performing satisfactorily in accordance with the prescribed rules of engagement” in order to receive a combat action badge.

In front of a small crowd at COS Echo, each Soldier was presented with his Combat

Action Badge and the right to proudly wear it upon return to Fort Hood.

Champoux flew to COS Echo specifically for this event, which serves as a testament to what this badge means around the Army.

On separate occasions during the last three months, RKG-3 attacks, and roadside bombs were used against American and Coalition patrols. Luckily, no serious injuries were sustained during these attacks.

“Each of you now has an obligation to tell the story of how you earned that badge. An obligation to both your battle buddies and to honor our fallen heroes,” explained Command Sgt. Maj. Devens, the command sergeant major for the 25th Infantry Division.

To earn the Combat Action Badge means you have survived a direct engagement with the enemy, and to wear the badge is a tool used to tell that story. For the 15 individuals from the Dragon Battalion who received the award, they join a select group of men and women who can proudly wear the Combat Action Badge.



CENTAUR 6

**By Lt. Col. John Faria
Stability Transition Team Cdr.**

Hello to all Ironhorse Centaur family and friends!

Since our last Newsletter, our team continues to set the conditions striving for a seamless transition between U.S. and Iraqi Security Forces. In accordance with the Iraq-U.S. Security Agreement, all U.S. military personnel will be out of Iraq by 31 Dec 2011.

Although it is exciting to think about coming home, we still have some major work ahead of us in an ever-changing environment. Departing Iraq responsibly comes with major challenges. These major challenges include equipment and service drawdown. This will directly affect the Soldiers' living conditions and services we have relied on during the deployment, and our ability to communicate with you back home. Some of our Soldiers will transition to Kuwait and will not be as affected. I ask for your continued patience and understanding.

On a positive note, two members of the STT were able to spend 15 days of leave with their families stateside. These two Soldiers traveled to Las Vegas and Washington, D.C.; two great places with plenty to see and do. Congratulations to LTC Geoff Schmalz who ran the Army ten-miler while on leave and placed in the top 5% out of over 30,000 runners.

The next couple of months are filled with uncertainty and anticipation. Despite the uncertainty of our next mission, there is a sense of accomplishment across the Brigade and the STT. The ISF leaders in their respective areas have accepted security roles and responsibilities in preparation for the departure of US forces in Iraq by the end of this year.

Again, I can't thank each and every STT family member enough for your continued support throughout this deployment.

Centaur..... Ironhorse.....Never Quits!

Command Sgt. Maj. Allen visits Ironhorse Soldiers



COS ECHO, Iraq – Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph Allen, the most senior enlisted Soldier of the United States Forces – Iraq, addresses Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment and 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, both battalions of the 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, here, Oct. 18. Ironhorse Soldiers gathered to receive a coin for their outstanding performance in support of Operation New Dawn. (U.S. Army Photo by Spc. Adam Pietri, 2-8 Cav., 1st Bde., 1st Cav. Div. UPAR)

Stallion Soldier receives award

COS ECHO, Iraq – Brantly, Ala. native, Cpl. Michael Mitchell (center) of Company C, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, receives an Army Achievement Medal, here, Oct. 18. Mitchell was chosen as the Stallion of the week for his outstanding performance as the Company C's supply sergeant. (U.S. Army Photo by Spc. Adam Pietri, 2-8 Cav., 1st Bde. 1st Cav. Div. UPAR)



Stallions work to secure local roads for drawdown

**By Spc. Bailey Jester
1st. Bde. Public Affairs**

COS ECHO, Iraq – With the Dec. 31 timeline rapidly approaching, and U.S. Forces moving out of Iraq, the threat of enemy involvement is rising.

“It’s always more dangerous when leaving,” said Rockville, Md. native, Capt. Michael Novello, a plans officer for the 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division. “We are securing [Highway 1] in order to allow friendly forces to move south and out of Iraq.”

The current mission for the Stallions is to secure and safeguard Highway 1 for all passing units. To include: route clearance of routes in the Stallion Area of operations, convoys positioned to deter enemy involvement and to guide units in the right direction.

“Through overwhelming force secure [Highway 1] to ensure everyone passes through safely,” Novello explained.

Within the past couple weeks multiple vehicle accidents, roadside bombs and other unfortunate events have occurred across the country. In that time, the Stallions have cleared three explosively formed projectiles and a command wire impro-



vised explosive device.

“If these obstacles had not been found it could have easily affected the mission of the units passing through,” Stallion commander, Lt. Col. Robert Rodriguez, native to Santa Fe, N.M., commented on his battalion’s success. “Or they would have been delayed.”

Not only have the Stallions worked at physically controlling the area, but they have been working at winning the hearts and minds of the local people, government and leaders.

“Everything our Soldiers have done up until now, has been preparing us for this event,” Rodriguez said.

“The [key leader engagements] and joint patrols with the Iraqi Army and Police - to name a few,” he continued.

By the completion of the Ironhorse’s Operation New Dawn rotation, there will be more than 30 units traveling through the Stallion’s AO in order to arrive in Kuwait.

“Our Soldiers are doing a great job,” Rodriguez praised. “They may not see what they are doing, but they are contributing a lot to the mission.”



HONOR AND COURAGE

Initiative to improve Soldier's well-being

**By Sgt. John Couffer
1st Bde. Public Affairs**

COS KALSU, Iraq – The mind, body and spirit are of the utmost importance to the overall well-being of Soldiers in combat today.

A group of specialists have banded together to address just that.

The Comprehensive Care Initiative is operated and maintained by Capt. Matthew Rensberry, the surgeon for the 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division. It is designed for deployed and garrison environments, to improve and sustain the morale and productivity of all Soldiers.

“The ultimate goal is being able to address the overall health of the brigade,” explains Rensberry. “To be able to see us accurately, where we should be and reflect that appropriately so we can take steps to avoid situations where soldiers could get hurt when they shouldn't have been.”

Rensberry said the CCI will focus on the areas of personal health, behavioral health, spiritual enlightenment, legal representation and overall safety.

Maj. David Stoner is the Chaplain for the Ironhorse Brigade, and heads the religious aspect of the CCI.

“We play the part of keeping a pulse on some of the counseling issues that come in,” Stoner said. “We get to see some of the issues that Soldiers are dealing with that they don't want to talk to [their leadership] about, but may have them down.”

Stoner explained that religion is an anchor for the lives of many, and that it allows them concentrate on tasks needed to be done.

Stoner said that Soldiers usually perform better if they take care of themselves in the religious aspect.



“It helps us to see if something that is systemic or is there something that is going on with individuals,” Stoner said. “Then we can help address the issue with the chain of command or with the individuals so we can let the commander know.”

Rensberry explained that the overall effectiveness of the Soldier's mission is directly linked to their readiness as a whole.

“This is one of many tools we can use,” Rensberry said. “To identify big picture trends so we can address them sooner and avoid catastrophic issues. It also gives us a handle as to the effectiveness of the tools we have in place and are providing to soldiers, such as the Resiliency Center we have here.”

“With this tool, we can provide Soldiers with the appropriate resources required for them to take care of what they need to as well as for their units,” Rensberry said.

“My goal is for this is to have it be a useful gathering of people who see their own section of the brigade's health,” Rensberry concluded. “To be able to come up with a practical, feasible options to help guide the commander in his decision making process as the where to invest resources [for the Soldiers].”

COS Kalsu remembers 9/11

**By Sgt. John Couffer
1st Bde. Public Affairs**

COS KALSU, Iraq – Tears welled in the eyes, as emotions unsaid, overwhelmed many who attended, prayed, and remembered those who sacrificed everything.

In remembrance of those who gave of themselves for many, Soldiers assigned to Contingency Operating Station Kalsu held a memorial for the September 11th attacks, at the COS Chapel, here.

The Chapel was darkened within, lit only by fluorescent lights in the back of the Sanctuary. An American flag, haloed by a small amber glow, our emblem of strength and unity, glared with pride behind the pulpit. On either side of the flag, were video screens, depicting images of that day the enemy thought would bring us to our knees, but instead, made our country one.

In front of the pulpit, standing tall, were two white candles, symbolizing the Twin Towers. Their flames burned with the ferocity of enduring freedom. Alone, they conveyed unspoken words of the never ending memories of that day, of the brave New York Firefighters, the valiant New York Police Officers, and countless others who selflessly acted to aid others in need.

The events which transpired on that day forever changed the world, the lives of the families who lost loved ones, and will never be forgotten. For many, they can remember where they were when America was tested to the core.

Maj. David Stoner, the Chaplain for 1st Brigade (Ironhorse), 1st Cavalry Division, led the memorial.

Stoner spoke of that day, with memories of how the events had taken hold of everyone, everywhere he went. He said many tuned to the live-feed on television monitors, which gave a front-line view of unfolding acts of terrorism. He attested to the fact it seemed there was a renewed sense of Humanity and Country, even though the acts were malevolent.



Images of that day were shown in a slide-show format to the song “Where were you (when the world stopped turning)”, by the country artist, Alan Jackson. Soldiers watched and reacted in various ways to the photographs shown. Some Soldiers sat back in reverence, some had placed their hands on their chin; others closed their eyes to unspoken horrors, and others shed tears of pain.

During the memorial, prayers were offered for America, the families who have endured, and our military forces who continue to safeguard this nation.

Stoner said he reflects how, it was evident, the country became stronger, more unified; and how an effect of determination, resolution, and a greater state of patriotism overcame most.

Stoner attested to the fact, an act meant to cripple this nation, actually propelled it forward. An act of terrorism seemed to move others to be free and be victorious.

Stoner said, “for wherever there was a flat surface, so too was a sticker of an American flag.”

The memorial, a small fraction of what we can do to honor those on that day, was concluded with a candle lighting ceremony.

“They sought to extinguish the light of all America stands for,” said Stoner. “The lives that were lost are never forgotten nor were they in vain for they have helped change this world.”

A day in Muleskinner HQs

Photos courtesy of 115th BSB



COS KALSU, Iraq – Spc. Vincent Parker (right) and Spc. Nadia Quick, both of whom work in the Muleskinner intelligence shop are working hard, here, October 2011. They review the latest intelligence notes to ensure the safety of those assigned to the 115th Brigade Support Battalion.



COS KALSU, Iraq – Pfc. Kenneth Chatigny, a radio operator, assigned to the 115th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, reads over notes for the day, here, October 2011. He reads the notes to ensure he stays ahead of all the operations taking place with the Muleskinner Area of Responsibility.



COS KALSU, Iraq – Ssg. Remala Baijanath, Pfc. Aubernette Rice, Sergeant 1st Class Edward Huffine and Sergeant 1st. Class Taotafa Kirifi pose with 1st. Sgt. Teresa Salmon in front of the newly painted Headquarters and Headquarters Company sign, here, October 2011. The mural is painted on a t-wall, which is displayed in front of the Muleskinner Headquarters.

Centurions re-enlist



COB DELTA, Iraq – Goldsboro, N. Carolina native, Sgt. William R. Batson, a combat engineer assigned to Company C, 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, recites the enlistment oath, lead by Capt. Erik Seholm, the company commander, at his Re-enlistment Ceremony, here, Oct. 9. Sgt. Batson has already contributed more than three years of honorable service to the Army and has dedicated himself to an additional three years.

Photos by Spc. Krystal Curl 1st BSTB UPAR

COS KALSU, Iraq – Sanford, Flor. native, Spc. Roselyn Hughes, a Human Intelligence Collector, in Company A, 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, recites the enlistment oath, here, Oct. 11. Spc. Hughes has already contributed more than four years of honorable service to Active Army and has dedicated herself to an additional three years.



Seeing the area of operations through the eyes of our counterparts

**By 2nd Lt. Thomas Morin
2-5 Cav. UPAR**

COS KALSU, Iraq—“Al Salaam wa’alaikum,” says the young noncommissioned officer. He is wearing a brown shirt, reminiscent of the Army Combat Shirt, and a patrol cap. We were ‘waiting in the wings’ as it were, as our respective leaders met to discuss the combined route security plans in the Babil Province.

“Wa’alaikum Salaam,” I reply, nearly exhausting my knowledge of Arabic with just a few words.

We begin some semblance of conversation after asking about the unit patch he wears on his shoulder.

“Cobra,” he says, giving me a thumbs-up, “Cobra good.” In no time at all, we are trading stories and sharing pictures of home. By the time our leaders finish the meeting we are nearing a friendship.

Even as our Soldiers are getting to know our Area of Operations (AO) and the people within it, we as a force, are preparing for the transition out of Iraq. This makes it easy to deny the importance of really getting to know our local counterparts. Why make the effort?

Despite our plans to leave soon, the relationship between the United States and Iraq will undoubtedly continue, and build upon not only the relationships we have created over the last eight years, but also the manner in which we leave.

Maj. Matthew CuvIELLO, the operations officer for the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, had this to say about the

drawdown, “31 December will be a significant milestone for US-Iraq relations, but it is a transition point—not an end. Our commitment to the effort in Iraq will remain, even as the nature of our involvement in this country evolves.”

As the Army’s situation in Iraq continues to evolve, it will become more and more important to be able to see our AO through the eyes of our Iraqi counterparts. The drawdown of forces inevitably means a reduction in intelligence capabilities. As this trend continues, the significance of the relationships that 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, forms with local officials and the people will become even more pronounced.

Capt. Donelson, the intelligence officer for 2-5 CAV, commented “Our relationship with the Iraqi Army will definitely be beneficial in aiding our targeting process in the coming months.”

Whatever happens, the relationships that we forge now with our Iraqi counterparts will have a profound effect on the Babil Province in the years to come, even after we are gone. These relationships will also be a large factor in how effectively we are able to collect and analyze intelligence, and even how we are able to communicate our intent with the local populace. In this counter-insurgency environment, being able to view the AO from different perspectives may be the most important asset our military can have.

LIVE THE LEGEND!!



**IRONHORSE NEVER
QUITS!!**