



Photo by Staff Sgt. Suzanne M. Day

## Brothers in arms

1st Lt. Daniel Eakins, 2nd Battalion, 34th Armor, comforts an Iraqi Soldier shot by terrorists during Operation Kalfa Hal May 29, in Quryat Al Islatt, Iraq. The Iraqi Army-led mission was to find contraband and insurgents in and around Quryat Al Islatt. Nine suspects were arrested and several weapons from pistol to machine guns to surface-to-air missiles and illegally obtained Iraqi Army and police uniforms were confiscated in the mission.

# Iraqi foreign minister: trial of Saddam to boost security

By Donna Miles  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Saddam Hussein's upcoming trial is expected to help bolster the security situation in Iraq, and the sooner the proceedings begin, the better, Iraq's foreign minister said Monday, on CNN's "Late Edition."

Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoyshar Zebari said the evidence against the former dictator is staggering — from mass graves of those who opposed him to the laundry list of atrocities he inflicted against his own people.

"Every family has suffered from the rule of Saddam Hussein, so there is no lack of evidence whatsoever," Zebari said. "There is an abundance of evidence to try and prosecute him."

Iraqi officials are confident the prosecution will be ready to present its case within the next two months, he said.

"This government is very committed to putting Saddam and other members of his former regime on trial, and I personally think that this will impact the security situation," the foreign minister said.

"It is very important that we start — the sooner the better," he said. "That is the view of this government. It is a widely shared view across the country.

"He will be eligible for all the benefits of a free trial" and to choose his own defense team, Zebari said. "We will give him the same justice he has denied us for many years."

The final verdict, he said, "will speak for Iraqi justice."

As trial preparations continue, Zebari said progress is continuing on both the security and political fronts.

He called Operation Lightning an important step toward improving security in Baghdad, and said Iraq's security forces "have taken the offensive" and are "taking the fight to the insurgents and to the terrorists."

The recent spate of violence in Iraq — particularly attacks that target ordinary Iraqi citizens — represent "an act of desperation" in a campaign that's failing in its attempt "to undermine this government and show that it is weak," Zebari said.

"They are losing," he said of the terrorists.

Various intelligence sources appear to confirm that one of the terrorists' key leaders, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, was injured in a recent clash with Coalition troops, Zebari said. However, the extent of his injuries remains unknown.

See *SECURITY*, Page 2

## Inside

**Females join Iraqi police force** Page 4

**U.S. MPs train and supply Iraqi Highway Patrol** Page 10

**Deployed Marine starts own music label** Page 14

# Coalition foils 8 attacks in Iraq, detains 116 terrorists

## Cache, bunker system also found and destroyed

**INTERNATIONAL ZONE, BAGHDAD, Iraq** — Coalition Forces foiled eight planned attacks in Iraq last weekend, detained 116 suspected terrorists and killed three others even though additional insurgent attacks left six Iraqi civilians dead and one civilian injured.

One Task Force Liberty Soldier was killed Sunday when an improvised explosive device detonated near a vehicle patrol in Kirkuk province at about 4 p.m., military officials in Baghdad reported. The Soldier was taken to a Coalition medical facility, but died there.

An Iraqi civilian was killed and another was injured Monday in Mosul when terrorists fired mortar rounds at a neighborhood police station.

Five Iraqi civilians were killed, including two women and two children, during a separate mortar attack by terrorists in Tal Afar Sunday.

Iraqi Security Forces and Multi-National Forces killed two terrorists, seized a large weapons cache and detained six suspected terrorists during operations in Mosul Sunday.

Another terrorist was killed in Baghdad Saturday when a Task Force Baghdad sniper team observed several men wearing ski masks place a bomb near a highway. A sniper fired, killing one of the terrorists. The team found a 250-pound bomb upon searching the site.

Task Force Baghdad Soldiers took two suspected terrorists into custody for questioning Saturday following a checkpoint incident in which an approaching car refused to stop.

Soldiers in Baghdad identified and safely detonated five explosive devices Saturday.

"These terrorists use a variety of tactics, ... to kill innocent people," said Lt. Col. Clifford

Kent, a Task Force Baghdad spokesperson. "A lot of lives were saved today by Soldiers finding and disabling these bombs."

Raids Saturday in south Baghdad by Iraqi Army and U.S. Soldiers yielded 108 suspected terrorists, anti-Iraqi propaganda, fake passports and more than 50 weapons.

"The Iraqi Army has proven ... that they are capable of executing missions to find and destroy terrorists," said Maj. Web Wright, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division public affairs officer. "The number of tips received by the local populous shows that they have grown tired of terrorists living in their neighborhoods."

Elsewhere in Iraq Sunday, U.S. forces assigned to Regimental Combat Team 8 destroyed a large weapons cache and bunker system in Karmah, north of Fallujah. Iraqi and Coalition forces discovered the cache June 2. The site was an old rock quarry about 170

meters wide by 275 meters long that contained an underground bunker.

Within the facility's rooms were four furnished living spaces, a kitchen with fresh food, two shower facilities and a working air conditioner. More than 50 caches have been discovered in the last four days, officials said, including about a dozen within a five-mile radius of the quarry.

A joint Navy and Marine Corps explosive ordnance disposal team from Combat Logistics Battalion 8, 2nd Force Service Support Group, helped to inventory all the items found in the cache before destroying it, using roughly 300 pounds of plastic explosives. The bunker and weapons cache were destroyed simultaneously.

Large quantities of plastic explosives, mortar and artillery rounds were discovered in these cache sites. (Editor's note: Compiled by articles from American Forces Press Service and ARNEWS correspondent Carrie Davis).

## Company offers troops, families Father's Day deal

By American Forces Press Service

**WASHINGTON** — Cardstore.com announced June 1 that it is providing a Father's Day card service for troops and their families.

This service is free for forward-deployed U.S. troops serving in the Middle East, and costs 99 cents for those assigned elsewhere.

The company said it will make the process as easy as possible for U.S. military personnel and their families to remember Dad on his special day. They can visit the company's Web site and select greeting cards online, or create their own by uploading a photo, and then adding a personal note to the inside. To take advantage of the 99-cent offer, enter promotion code usdad99 at checkout. Cardstore.com will then print and mail the cards in time for Father's Day on June 19.

"Because of the many notes of appreciation we received from

the troops for our Mother's Day initiative, Cardstore.com decided to add the Father's Day promotion," said Al Hulvey, company chief executive officer.

"We are thrilled that Cardstore.com has joined the team and is supporting our military men and women in the Middle East," said Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Allison Barber. "We applaud them for helping troops stay in touch with their families back home through this unique opportunity."

The company is engaging in the Father's Day effort as part of its partnership with America Supports You, a nationwide Department of Defense program that showcases America's support for the men and women of the armed forces.

Since the launch of America Supports You program last November, more than 2 million Americans, including individual citizens, businesses and organizations, have logged onto its Web site. (Based on a Cardstore.com news release.)

## Iraq asks U.N. to extend MNF timetable

By Donna Miles  
American Forces Press Service

**WASHINGTON** — Iraq's foreign minister asked the United Nations May 31 to extend its authorization for Multi-National Force - Iraq to remain in the country.

Hoshya Zebari traveled to the world body's New York headquarters to formally request the continuation of the U.S.-led force, authorized by U.N. Resolution 1546.

The resolution, passed in June 2004, requires a review after 12 months, or at the request of the Iraqi transitional government. Its mandate continues through the election of Iraq's new government, scheduled for December.

Iraq's leaders, however, believe that's too soon.

"We believe to complete the transitional process and build on the political achievement to date, we need the MNF to continue providing its essential contributions to our security," Zebari told the U.N. Security Council.

Coalition troops still are needed as Iraq builds a new government while struggling against terrorists "whose sole agenda is to destroy the ongoing political process," Zebari said.

"We look forward to the day when our forces are able to

assume full responsibility for maintaining our national security — at which time there will be no need for the engagement of the MNF," the foreign minister said. "Until then, we need the continued presence of the MNF in Iraq."

In Baghdad, Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari reiterated May 31 to the Iraqi National Assembly his support for a U.N. extension of the timetable established in Resolution 1546. Also on May 31, Anne Patterson, acting U.S. representative to the United Nations, told the Security Council that events on the ground, not an artificial timetable, must drive decisions about the Multi-National Force's presence in Iraq.

"The MNF will not remain in Iraq any longer than necessary," Patterson said. "But nor, consistent with Iraqi requests, should it leave until the Iraqis can meet the serious security challenges they face."

Patterson said the Iraqi people are building a new future and that now is no time for the Multi-National Force to abandon them.

"The Iraqi people are in the midst of forging a new path - a free, democratic path and one that is chosen by the people," she said. "The Multi-National Force remains committed to working to create an environment that fosters such progress."

## Security

from Page 1

Zarqawi's arrest or death "would demoralize" his loyalists, Zebari said, but he said he has no illusions that it would bring an immediate end to terrorism in Iraq. "A certain level of violence" would continue.

One of the key ways to weaken the terrorism and build support for the new government is to continue political

progress, he said. He cited writing of the constitution as a key milestone in this effort.

Meanwhile, he said, the international community is demonstrating "a positive change in attitude" toward Iraq and an increased willingness to help it build its new government, increase security and strengthen the rule of law.

To help build on this momentum, Iraq has called a June 22 conference in Brussels, Belgium. Zebari said Iraq hopes to "re-engage" the international community and encourage other nations "to do more."

**MNF-I Commanding General**  
Gen. George Casey

**MNF-I PAO**  
Col. Dewey G. Ford

**Command Information Chief**  
Maj. Patricia C. Anderson  
patricia.anderson@iraq.centcom.mil

**Command Information NCOIC**  
Master Sgt. Michele R. Hammonds  
michele.hammonds@iraq.centcom.mil



**Editor**.....Staff Sgt. Brett B. McMillan  
brett.mcmillan@iraq.centcom.mil

**Assistant Editor**.....Sgt. Misha King  
misha.king@iraq.centcom.mil

**Staff**.....Staff Sgt. Timothy B. Lawn  
timothy.lawn@iraq.centcom.mil

**Staff**.....Sgt. W. Watson Martin  
william.martin@iraq.centcom.mil

**Staff**.....Pfc. Ferdinand Thomas  
ferdinand.thomas@iraq.centcom.mil

Scimitar welcomes columns, commentaries, articles and letters from readers. Send submissions to [scimitar@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:scimitar@iraq.centcom.mil)

We reserve the right to edit for propriety, clarity and space.

The Scimitar can also be viewed on the Web at [http://www.mnf-iraq.com/publications\\_theater.htm](http://www.mnf-iraq.com/publications_theater.htm)

The Scimitar is an authorized publication for members of the Department of Defense. Contents of this paper are not necessarily the official views of or endorsed by the U.S. Government or Department of Defense. The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the Public Affairs Office of the Multi-National Force - Iraq. Stars and Stripes newspaper is not affiliated with MNF-I and acts only as a distributing source for the Scimitar. Questions and comments should be directed to the editor at [scimitar@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:scimitar@iraq.centcom.mil).

PERSPECTIVES

# Iraqi citizen writes letter thanking TF 1-163 Infantry commander

**By Capt. Monte Hibbert**  
116th Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

**FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK, Iraq** — An Iraqi citizen from the 116 Brigade Combat Team's western area of operations in Kirkuk province, Iraq, recently wrote a letter of thanks to the Coalition commander in the area.

Lt. Col. John Walsh, commander of Task Force 1-163 Infantry, received the letter, which was addressed to "the Coalition Commander of Baggara (FOB McHenry)" and delivered to him.

"Best Greetings. We would like to express our regards to you personally and to your Soldiers who sacrifices their lives to bring freedom and democracy and put an end to the brutal regime and dictator and building a new and unite Iraq," reads the letter as written. "Thanks to your Soldiers who cross the oceans to come to the country of two rivers leaving their families and friends behind them for the sake of humanity in general and the Iraqi citizens in particular."

The letter, whose author Walsh requested remains anonymous, continued by praising the patriotism of Coalition Soldiers and asking for continued support of improvement projects in the area.

"[Y]ou are faithfully committed to your country and

Iraq," the letter continues. "You have contributed in developing many projects in Iraq in order to serve those people who suffered for 35 years under brutality and suppressing of their rights. We have been deprived of many services, we request you to help us as much as you can."

Walsh was so impressed with the letter's message he immediately shared it with his superiors and requested it be published to all 116th BCT Soldiers.

"It is nice to receive direct feedback from the community that they appreciate our efforts here," said Walsh. "Letters like this make it easy to see that what we are doing here is making a difference in peoples' lives."

Task Force 1-163 Infantry, as part of the 116th BCT, is helping establish a secure and prosperous environment in the provinces of Kirkuk and Sulaymaniyah, Iraq. The brigade's multi-faceted mission also includes training Iraqi security forces, aiding the Iraqi government, supporting economic development and facilitating communications.

The 116 BCT includes headquarters and staff sections, two armor battalions, a mechanized infantry battalion, a support battalion, a field artillery battalion, an engineer battalion and various intelligence, signal and specialized units. With component units from the states of Idaho, Ore., Mont., Utah, N.D., N.J. and Md., the 116th BCT is one of several Army National Guard units that is deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

## Missed a spot!



Photo by Lance Cpl. Dustin S. Schaefer

Lance Cpl. Matt Aronson from the HMM-264 (Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron) hoses off a CH-46E Sea Knight helicopter at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq.

## Scimitar Pulse

*How do you think the Iraqi people feel about the Coalition forces being here?*

"Overall, they probably feel cautiously optimistic."

**Army Capt. Pace Duckenfield**  
*Multi-National Force - Iraq*



"It depends on the Iraqi people you are talking to."

**Navy Lt. Karen Eifert**  
*Department of State*

"They feel OK."

**Mohamed Tawfik**  
*AEGIS*



"I think as a whole they feel it is necessary for us to be here for safety and security."

**Marine Col. Barrett Byrd**  
*Multi-National Force - Iraq*

"As of today, they feel very good."

**Emmett Foster**  
*Dyncorp Security*



"I don't have any idea. But if I did know, I would say they are ready for us to get out of here."

**Air Force 1st Lt. Aaron Taylor**  
*Multi National Security Transition Command - Iraq*

"Very glad we're here."

**Martin Risher**  
*Defense Contract Management Agency*



# Iraqi females: uncovered, joining police ranks

Story and photo by  
Pfc. Laura M. Bigenho  
42nd Military Police Brigade  
Public Affairs

**BAGHDAD, Iraq** — Since the fall of the old regime, Iraqi women have been breaking old traditions and taking advantage of new-found opportunities. For many Iraqi women, the capture of Saddam Hussein has restored the hope and assurance for a safer environment and added opportunities. One by one they are ready to create the Iraq of the future.

Female Iraqis are joining their male counterparts in fighting crime as a demonstration of their rights and movement toward a safer Iraq. Displaying equality in a society where women were once confined to their homes doesn't come easily, but to a growing number of Iraqi women, the accomplishments are well worth the costs.

Ma'ha, a 39-year-old Iraqi policewoman, comes from a well-educated, wealthy family where she used to work as an engineer. Today she works for the Karrada Patrol Headquarters as a statistician. Her credentials could land her a better-paying job with more prestige, but for Ma'ha, working with the Iraqi police force is a great honor and achievement.

Using a translator to communicate, Ma'ha, who withheld her last name for security reasons, said her initial motive for joining the Iraqi police was to get revenge on her abusive ex-husband. She graduated from the Dean of Police College nearly 18 months ago, shortly after the capture of Hussein, where she underwent the same training as male cadets.

"I was hurt by my husband so badly that I

wanted to get revenge on him," Ma'ha said. She divorced her husband before he was able to inflict serious damage, yet she took comfort in knowing she was trained on a weapon in case she would ever have to defend herself against him again. Although Ma'ha has escaped the danger and fear of her ex-husband, she has inherited new dangers and risks that all police must face.

Lohlia, 45, a police-woman working as a statistician at the Karrada Major Crimes Unit Headquarters in Baghdad, is another brave character wearing the police uniform. Prior to becoming a policewoman, Lohlia studied business at a local university. Forced to raise her three children alone after her husband died, Lohlia was unable to finish her education.

By the capture of Saddam Hussein, her children were grown and independent. Eager to take part in the wave of new opportunities, Lohlia enrolled in the Dean of Police College. She was among the first group of women to graduate from the course nearly



An Iraqi policewoman walks to the front of the class to accept her graduation certificate from the Baghdad Police Academy.

two years ago.

"I loved the very thought of being able to wear the Iraqi police uniform," Lohlia said. "For me, wearing the police uniform meant I would be helping people."

Both women wear their police uniforms with tremendous pride, but beneath the blue button-down, long-sleeved collared shirts are concerns about what their careers could mean for them, as well as for their families. Being a member of the Iraqi police force also means being a primary target for terrorists, who launch attacks on Iraqi

police daily.

Despite the attacks and countless threats, Ma'ha said she is choosing to stay with the Iraqi police because her job gives her a sense of accomplishment. She feels like she is contributing to making Iraq a safer place.

1st Lt. Margaret Snow, military intelligence officer, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 42nd Military Police Brigade, Fort Lewis, Wash., meets with the Iraqi police-

women on a weekly basis. She said they are very proud of their accomplishments at the police academy.

There is a lot of pressure from society, family and coworkers for women not to be there in the workplace, especially in the police force. They get a lot of comments from fellow policemen, who believe the women should be home raising children instead of out working, Snow said.

"[Attending the academy] was such a change from anything they've done in their lives or what any other [Iraqi] women have done. It was the first time they were treated as equals and allowed to do things like work out and fire weapons," Snow added. "They were forced to meet the same standards as men, and they succeeded."

Although Iraqi women have made a lot of visible progress in a short time, Snow realizes it may be several more years, perhaps even decades, before the women are treated as equals, especially in the Iraqi security forces.

It may take a while, but eventually these women will create a society that doesn't know of a police force without women, Snow said.

"Now we are given chances that we were not given before. Thank goodness the money is good enough, but the security needs to get better," Ma'ha said. "I am hopeful the really good things will come for our kids."

Lohlia is also optimistic about Iraq's future, and believes she is taking the first step in making good things happen. "[My job] pushes me forward in life." Making reference to women making progress in Iraq's society, she added, "It's like I am seeing flowers bloom right before my eyes."



Staff Sgts. Clay Sigler and Robert Butler unload a robot from the back of a Humvee here. Two small robots can be loaded into the vehicle and taken on a call. The Airmen are 332nd Explosive Ordnance Disposal technicians.

## Robots, Airmen defuse unexploded ordnance

Story and photo by  
Senior Airman Shaun Emery  
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing  
Public Affairs

**BALAD AIR BASE, Iraq** — With the help of new, faster and more agile robots, explosive ordnance disposal Airmen here have an opportunity to keep their distance from bombs set to harm service members.

Teaming man and machine is giving Airmen of the EOD unit an upper hand in the seemingly never-ending battle against improvised explosive devices.

Staff Sgt. Brian Robert Butler, an EOD technician here, said he looks at the robots as the unit's best friend and cannot imagine doing his job here without them.

"It's a whole new game here in Iraq," he said. "Many senior noncommissioned officers have never come face-to-face with an IED. Now we're all facing them together. It's the real deal."

As Soldiers search along grids off base, EOD Airmen wait for the call. When unexploded ordnance or any other unidentified munitions are discovered, it is time to go to work.

The robots take the place of EOD Airmen in the field. Using a remote control, Airmen guide the robots to the location of the munitions. They use the robot's extending arm and cameras to fig-

ure out the type of ordnance and the best way to diffuse it.

The job can take Airmen through an array of terrains. Before new waves of technology put smaller, faster, better-equipped robots in the hands of EOD Airmen, large lumbering machines were used that needed to be put on trailers. The Airmen needed the smaller machines because it was becoming harder to get the large machines through back roads, where the ordnance is often located, Butler said.

"We can put two of these robots in one truck before we roll out," he said. "It's vital that we have more than one in case the first one breaks down. When it all comes down to it, the robots allow us to stay out of danger."

As newer generations of robots come into use, EOD Airmen will continually train to stay proficient at the controls. Younger Airmen are leading the way, Butler said.

"These young guys are the masters," he said. "They get the robot, the controls and put it to use."

Airman 1st Class Isaiah Schaff, an EOD technician, said he is well aware of the important role robots play in the war.

"If it's not a robot out there, then it's the team chief," he said. "One mistake and we lose the person with the most knowledge in the shop. It's OK to lose a robot — they're replaceable. We're not."

Collect evidence;



not souvenirs.



0086

IEDs KILL

# NIAC programs target Iraqi widows, children

By Sgt. Misha King  
Scimitar Assistant Editor

**INTERNATIONAL ZONE, BAGHDAD, Iraq** — Post-Saddam Iraq has undergone numerous positive changes: establishing a democratic government, improving and establishing sewage systems, and rebuilding much-needed schools are just a few examples. The National Iraqi Assistance Center, located at the Convention Center here, is playing a major part in helping reconstruct Iraq — not with bricks and mortar, but with specialized teams whose goals are to help Iraqi citizens get back on their feet. The Women's and Children's Issues Center is a section of the NIAC dedicated to helping the victims who were perhaps affected the most by years of instability: orphans, widows and their children.

"One of the biggest concerns at the NIAC is taking care of the widows because throughout the different wars of Iraq, many of the families have lost their fathers," said Maj. Maria Emery, supervisor and military counterpart for the WCIC. "So to us, that's a big concern — that they're not able to support themselves. Although a lot of good things have happened in Iraq, it just still seems this group has been neglected and needs economic help."

The WCIC was established August 2004 during the 350th Civil Affairs' rotation, said Emery, who is part of the 353rd CA, the unit that replaced the 350th. Emery said her team comprises herself, her Iraqi counterpart and three additional people. The team is responsible for keeping the nongovernment organizations and the military organizations informed about the needs of the citizens they encounter in order to keep the aid coming and programs going. Ultimately, the programs



Photo by Azhar Jasim

**An Iraqi boy sits on a wheelchair given to him by the WCIC. His and other wheelchairs were donated by 1st Cav. Div. through nongovernment organizations and given to the WCIC for distribution.**

and the donations through the NGOs are what give the Iraqi women and children what they desperately need.

"We have a variety of programs," Emery said. "One of them is the sewing machine program, where we try to focus on widows who support their families, or have no other option but to be the main source of support. So we gave them sewing machines so they can work for themselves."

"When we donated sewing machines to some women, one lady cried," said Azhar Jasim, WCIC Iraqi supervisor, who is Emery's counterpart and also the coordinator between national and international NGOs. "[She cried] not because she was sad, but because she was happy — happy that people came to Iraq to give them their freedom and help them get back on their feet at the same time. She cried because she really appreciated what we are doing."

The sewing machine program not only helps families economically, it also helps stitch back together other rips created by the former regime.

"This program also helps keep their children off the streets because [after losing their fathers], some of them have been out there working to help support their families," said Emery. "This will help force the children back in school and the mothers to help keep them there."

Besides sewing machines, the WCIC has arranged for other donations to help make life a little easier for Iraqi citizens.

"NGOs have donated things such wheelchairs and computers to schools," Jasim said. "We also donated humanitarian aid to orphanages and for poor families in general. It has made a big difference in their lives."

Every week, Emery and her team attend two meetings to exchange information with the NGOs, said team member "Tina" (name withheld for security), Iraqi assisting manager. Here, the WCIC staff informs the NGOs on issues like the progress of the programs in place and any outstanding issues the recipients may have. However, tangible benefits are not the only results sought at these meetings.

"We are trying to modify some things in the constitution in regards to women and children," Tina said. "For example, right now, there are only five women in ministry positions. We are trying to increase the number of women working in the ministries. Also, in the last constitution, there was a clause about divorce. If a man divorces his wife, this clause prevents her from marrying again for a certain period of time. We are trying to remove this clause from the constitution."

As the old saying goes, "You reap what you sow."

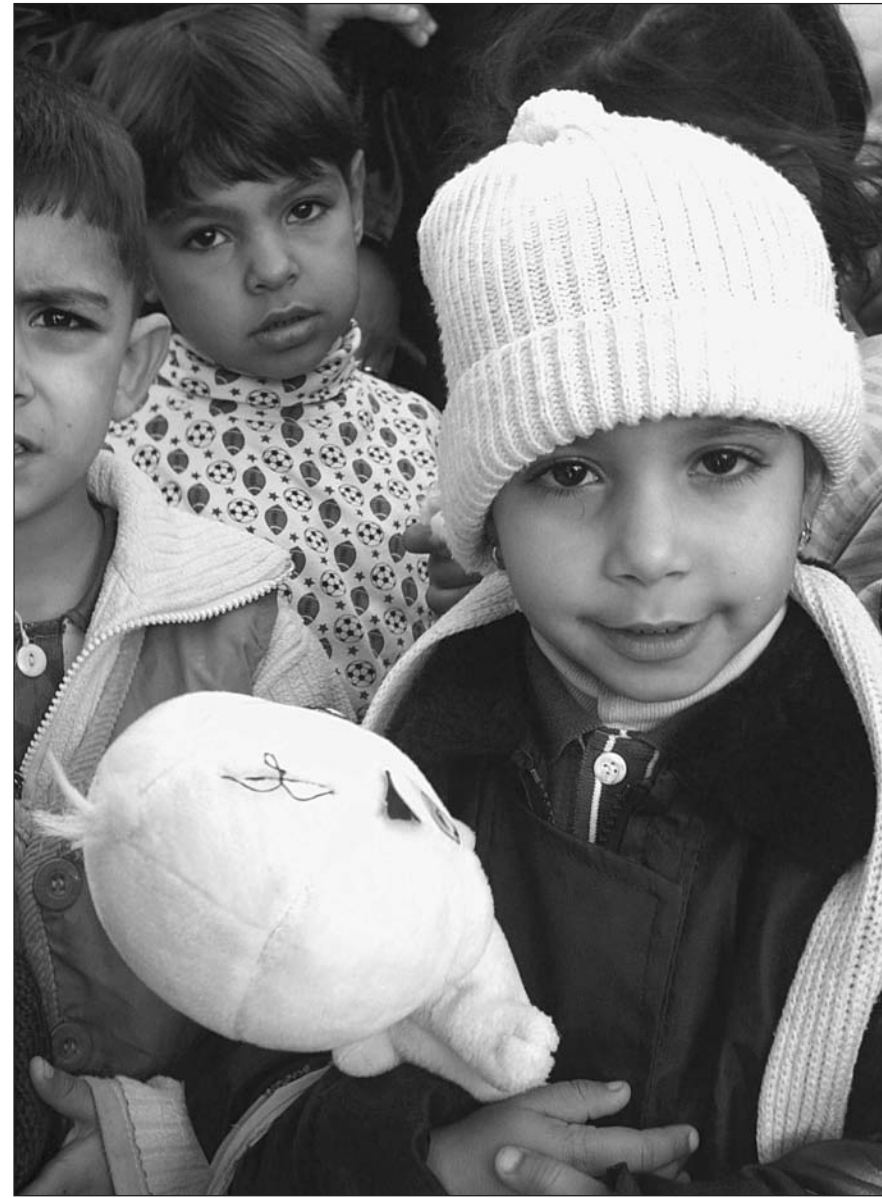


Photo by Azhar Jasim

**The WCIC staff distributed toys and other items donated by American citizens to 40 Iraqi kindergarten children in Baghdad.**

Ultimately, every change made now will affect everyone's future — for better or worse — especially the children of Iraq.

"The Iraqi children are smart — they understand and see the difference from before," Tina said. "[My niece] thinks her future will be a good one. She hears about the car bombs and the kidnappings, but she still has hope for the future. She is a happy child."

Mathematically, happy children equal happy future, not just for Iraqi children, but for American children as well.

"We have another program where we try to put Iraqi children in touch with American children," said Jasim, smiling. "My vision is if these children develop friendships now, 16 years from now, they'll find they grew up with a friend from a different culture, and it will be a bridge between two countries. These children are future directors, lawyers and government officials. They are the future."

## Locals visit cemetery, shrine on FOB

116th Brigade Combat Team  
Public Affairs

**FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, Iraq** — Coalition religious and governmental officials allowed visits by family members and worshipers to a cemetery and newly-renovated shrine located on FOB Warrior recently.

Approximately 15 Iraqis with family members buried at the cemetery visited the shrine here, dedicated to Imam Sultan Saqy, a direct descendent of the prophet Mohammed. Chaplain (Lt. Col.) John Worster, 116th Brigade Combat Team chaplain, and Air Force Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Toney Vick, 506th Air Expeditionary Group

chaplain, were among Coalition religious leaders who accompanied the group during the visit.

Community members requested permission to enter the FOB to visit the site through Lt. Col. Anthony Wickham, 116th BCT local government liaison, while he was at the Kirkuk Government Building recently. The FOB houses the headquarters of both the 116th BCT and the 506th AEG.

"We felt it would be very appropriate to allow these individuals access to the graves of their loved ones," said Wickham. "Saddam forbade them to visit this cemetery when he seized the surrounding area for the airfield. This is the first time many of them have been allowed to visit the graves of their fathers and grandfathers for over 20 years."



Photo by Tech Sgt. Christopher Gish

**An Iraqi man prays at the grave of a relative outside of the shrine to Imam Sultan Saqy located on FOB Warrior.**

## NEWS IN BRIEF

**FAST training available at Camp Victory**

The First Assistance Support Team training will be tomorrow in the TMC classroom at Camp Victory. The training will show how to properly package a patient for MEDEVAC through proper techniques for strapping patients to a litter, securing the IVs and properly loading the patients into ambulances and helicopters.

The next training event will be a full Combat Lifesaver recertification program, and will be held June 25 at 1 p.m. in the TMC classroom.

**USACE 1,000th reconstruction project completed**

**BAGHDAD, Iraq** — The public spotlight recently shone on an unassuming, eight-classroom school in the town of Zakho, Iraq, and for good reason. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region Division, responsible for oversight of reconstruction in Iraq, announced it had identified Betas School as its 1,000th completed reconstruction project.

The Betas School, located amid rolling hills on the outskirts of the town of Zahko, in the northern-most province of Dahuk, is home to headmaster Ibraheem Nuri, 60 students, and seven classroom teachers.

When asked for his reaction to the school's renovations, Headmaster Nuri was visibly pleased and proud.

"I have been the headmaster at Betas School for many years," he said, "but I never imagined it could be such a wonderful school. I am very happy for the teachers and students."

Nuri and his students took part in the school's ribbon cutting ceremony. The children presented flowers and refreshments to all invited guests, including local government and tribal representatives.

Col. Kurt Ubellohde, district engineer, Gulf Region Northern District, and numerous Corps staff members, as well as members from Washington Group International, the company that performed the renovations, also attended the ceremony and local Kurdish television and U.S. military media chronicled the event.

Renovations to the school included the replacement of water tanks, water piping and sewer pipes; installation of toilets, lavatories and sinks; the laying of a concrete floor and terrazzo tiles; installation of ceiling fans, interior and exterior lights and a school bell. Additionally, in the interest of both student and staff well-being, repairs were made to the school safety wall.

While GRD identified Betas School as the 1,000th project, the pristine schoolhouse also serves as a symbol of the 840 planned school projects throughout the country. To date, 171 of these projects are ongoing and 580 school projects are completed. (By Denise Calabria, U.S. Corps of Engineers)

**Soldier's wife wins Mustang from AAFES, Burger King**

**DALLAS** — One lucky military spouse has claimed a 2006 Ford Mustang courtesy of the Army & Air Force Exchange Service and Burger King. Peggy Clark, winner of the "Dog Tagg Drill Call" Game, collected all four game pieces of the four AAFES Burger King characters "The Grill Instructor," "Major Money," the "Grill Instructor's Mom," and the Grill Instructor's dog, "Tagg."

Clark and her husband, Staff Sgt. Lyn Clark, were on their way to Normandy and Paris from their home in Germany to celebrate his recent return from Iraq when they collected all four of the game pieces needed to win.

"We went through the Burger King drive thru for breakfast, then pulled over to eat," Lyn said. Before breakfast was over, they had won a 2006 Ford Mustang. "We got all four pieces at that moment and couldn't believe it!" she exclaimed.

**Air Force sergeant wins Vanguard Award for heroism in Iraq**

**RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas** — Staff Sgt. Keith Stevens is the Air Force's 2005 recipient of the annual Vanguard Award for heroic action.

Stevens is a vehicle operator dispatcher currently assigned to Osan Air Base, South Korea.

The award, sponsored by the Noncommissioned Officers Association, recognizes a NCO from each military service who has performed a heroic act, on or off duty, which resulted in saving lives or the prevention of serious injury.

Stevens displayed decisive action and bravery that directly resulted in his convoy completing its mission to the Baghdad International Airport, Iraq, supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

During an aggressive terrorist assault, Stevens' unwavering effort drove the enemy to retreat, which permitted evacuation of convoy troops, witnesses said. During the peak of the battle, he directed convoy forces to retrieve body armor and assume defensive positions.

Stevens' nomination for the award states he evacuated a Soldier from direct hostile fire, kept him calm and located shrapnel wounds in the Soldier's right arm. He immobilized him and applied pressure to reduce the bleeding, which resulted in saving his arm.

He then responded to loud cries from another injured Soldier about 30 feet away. Stevens identified the second Soldier with shrapnel in his left torso, applied pressure to reduce the loss of blood, then quickly sealed and dressed the wound. His decisive actions made the difference between life and death, preventing the wounded Soldier from going into shock.

Then he saw a third Soldier lying face down and immediately took action. He quickly assessed the situation, treated the area around the object protruding in the Soldier's lower extremities. He was able to stabilize and keep him still to prevent further penetration of the shrapnel.

Stevens' total disregard for his own safety epitomizes selflessness, officials said. His quick response in treating critically wounded Soldiers while under fire directly resulted in the saving of three lives.

The award will be presented to Stevens by the NCOA. (Courtesy of Air Force Personnel Center News Service)

**Soldiers can change out damaged issued items in Iraq**

**LOGISTICAL SUPPORT AREA ANACONDA, BALAD, Iraq** — Soldiers can now exchange their torn-up trousers and worn-out boots at the recently established Central Issuing Facility in Anaconda, Iraq.

The CIF is currently the only issuing facility in Iraq, and it is open to all military units to provide issue and exchange services for authorized individuals in Iraq. The facility currently holds a total of 400 items ranging from boots to aviation clothing, according to Gregory Johnson, CIF warehouse manager, Kellogg Brown and Root Incorporated.

"We are in the process of holding a review board to discuss adding more than 100 more aviation lines" Johnson said.

The facility allocates many different items, but it mainly distributes the Interceptable Body Armor and the protective plate inserts for it. "The IBA and the [plate inserts] play a major role in ensuring our Soldiers return home," Johnson said.

From May 2004 to May 2005 the facility has fielded more than 286,473 items to more than 45,900 troops. More than 20,000 exchange and issue items are processed each month, Johnson said.

"Most of the items we carry support the Army side of the armed forces, but we do carry other items that are specifically requested for other branches," he added.

Soldiers come from all areas of Iraq to take advantage of the facility. Military policeman Sgt. Rolando Souffrain, 313th Military Police Detachment, Las Vegas and Sgt. Montize Carroll, 411th MP Company, Fort Hood Texas, both stationed in Baghdad, recently exchanged items for their units.

"I think this facility is an asset for us. We were able to complete the fitting of our Soldiers who were unable to get everything they needed before we left," Carroll said. "[CIF] supporting the Soldiers here has helped us a great deal."

The facility also has a night crew that stocks the hundreds of items and is willing to help troops in emergency situations, if needed, said Nelson Vargas, CIF foreman.

*Continued on next page*

**Tiger Brigade uncases colors in Baghdad**

**By Maj. Russell Goemaere**  
2nd Brigade Combat Team  
Public Affairs

**BAGHDAD, Iraq** — Iraqi Army Soldiers from 2nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, uncased their colors at the former Ministry of Defense complex June 1.

The ceremony celebrated Tiger Brigade moving into their new headquarters at the former MOD site.

The unit, which was previously headquartered at Baghdad International Airport, will assume responsibility this summer for security operations in Rusafa, the eastern half of Baghdad.

"We are dedicated to defeating the insurgents and securing Rusafa," said Brig. Gen. Jawad Romee Aldine, 2nd Bde. commander. "Congratulations to 2nd Brigade and all its officers."

The ceremony featured an Iraqi Army band, marching troops and a motorcade of military vehicles.

An official from the Ministry of Defense spoke at the ceremony, as well as Brig. Gen. Karl Horst, 3rd Infantry Division, Assistant Division Commander (Maneuver).

"Tiger Brigade was formed five months ago with many young Soldiers," said Command Sgt. Maj. Namair Mohammed Azzawi, 2nd Brigade command sergeant major. "With the experience of our leaders and help from Coalition Forces, we've made many good Soldiers."

Azzawi described the training his Soldiers completed and said he is proud of them. "We train like we fight, and we place special importance on developing our [noncommissioned officers]," he said. "The Tiger Brigade is now ready for anything."



Photo by Spc. Ben Brody

**In a traditional way of expressing happiness, a woman throws confetti as an Iraqi Army motorcade passes by. Tiger Brigade, 6th IA Division unfurled its colors in Baghdad.**

NEWS IN BRIEF

CIF plays a major role in helping to ensure the Soldiers in the Operation Iraqi Freedom theater maintain a combat ready posture. "We have the product readily available for the Soldiers; if their items are mission essential, there is no wait for their replacement of that item," said Johnson.

CIF is open 7 days a week from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. For emergency purposes they will open anytime at night to assist the Soldiers' needs. (By Spc. Mary Rose, Multi-National Corps - Iraq Public Affairs)

**U.S. Soldiers nab former Saddam cohort**

**BAGHDAD, Iraq** — Soldiers from the 256th Brigade Combat Team rounded up four suspected terrorists in a series of raids beginning around midnight May 30.

One of the men captured by Soldiers from Charlie Company, 3/156th Battalion, attached to 1st Battalion, 156th Armor, worked in Saddam Hussein's secret service under the old regime. Now the man is believed to be a major financier of several terrorist groups in the Ghazaliyah district of west Baghdad. He is also thought to be the cameraman for a terrorist group.

Earlier, a middle-of-the-night raid conducted by Soldiers from Task Force 1-156 netted another targeted member of a Abu Younes terrorist cell.

In other combat operations, Soldiers from Task Force 1-69

arrested two more terror suspects during a cordon and search conducted at the home of a suspected leader of a terrorist battalion. The terrorists shot at the Soldiers conducting the operation, and the task force returned fire, seriously wounding one of the attackers.

When the Soldiers entered the house they seized the targeted terror cell leader and the wounded terrorist. The Soldiers brought the wounded terrorist to a military medical treatment center. The targeted terror cell leader was taken into custody for questioning.

"Our operations continue to disrupt AIF terrorist cells and reduce the number of attacks on Iraqi and Coalition Forces. We are picking up a lot of bad guys daily, which gives the Iraqi people more hope each day. Every day, these brave people approach Iraqi and Coalition Force patrols with more and more valuable information," said Maj. Christopher Cerniauskas, 1-69th plans officer.

**Iraqi Army, Coalition arrest 81 terror suspects**

**BAGHDAD, Iraq** — Iraqi Army Soldiers and Coalition Forces, working together and independently, arrested 81 terror suspects in operations all over the capital May 30.

Iraqi Soldiers led the largest operation of the day, conducting a series of raids and house searches around midnight in the southwest Baghdad district of Jihad. The Iraqi

Army Soldiers captured a total of 47 suspected terrorists and took them into custody for questioning.

"Throughout Baghdad, Iraqi Security Forces are taking the lead in these types of operations," said Lt. Col. Clifford Kent, a Task Force Baghdad spokesperson. "Today there are more Iraqis in security positions than there are Americans guarding Baghdad. They're shouldering more and more of the responsibility for achieving stability and security in Baghdad."

Later in the day, Task Force Baghdad Soldiers seized 19 more terror suspects during three early-morning raids on targets in and around the Ameriyah district of central Baghdad.

In another large operation, Soldiers from the 4-64 Armor Battalion raided a safehouse thought to harbor members of a terror cell in the Karradah district. Less than an hour later, 12 suspected terrorists were rounded up and taken into custody for questioning.

Shortly after noon, a Task Force Baghdad patrol stopped a suspicious local national vehicle with two occupants in northwest Baghdad. When the Soldiers searched the vehicle, they found three pipe bombs and two pistols. The Soldiers seized the weapons and arrested the two men.

Later in east Baghdad, Soldiers from the 1-64 Armor Battalion found a weapons cache containing 20 mines and 100 blasting caps. An explosive ordnance team was called to the site to dispose of the munitions.

**Iraqi Army raid yields ancient artifacts**

**BAGHDAD, Iraq** — Iraqi and U.S. Soldiers conducted a joint early-morning raid June 3 at a location on the Kharkh Peninsula.

During the raid, Iraqi Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division detained five suspected terrorists and discovered a treasure chest of Iraqi historical significance.

More than 30 artifacts looted from the Baghdad Museum during the initial liberation of Iraq in 2003 were recovered from the raid. Units from the same Iraqi brigade recovered similar artifacts two nights ago. The artifacts have been turned over to Iraqi authorities for safekeeping.

Do you see what I see?



Photo by Sgt. Arthur Hamilton

Doctors from the Mongolian military examine X-rays belonging to Iraqi civilians during a humanitarian aid mission in the town of Al Hillah, Iraq.

**Frequencies**

Al Asad	93.3 FM
Ar Ramadi	107.3 FM
Baghdad	92.3 FM
	and 107.7 FM
Balad	107.3 FM
Camp Taji	102.5 FM
Fallujah	105.1 FM
Kirkuk	107.3 FM
Mosul	105.1 FM
Q-West	93.3 FM
Ridgeway	107.1 FM
Sinjar	107.9 FM
Talil AB	107.3 FM
Tikrit	93.3 FM
Taji	107.7 FM



**Worship and Prayer Schedule for the International Zone**

**Sunday**

- 9:30 a.m. — Choir Rehearsal
- 10 a.m. — Catholic Mass (3rd BTC)
- 10:30 a.m. — General Christian
- Noon — Episcopal/Lutheran/Anglican
- 2 p.m. — Latter Day Saints
- 4 p.m. — Catholic Confession
- 4:30 p.m. — Catholic Mass
- 6 p.m. — Contemporary Protestant

**Monday-Friday**

- Noon — Catholic Mass (Mon.-Thurs.)
- Noon — Catholic Communion Service (Tues.)
- 5:30 p.m. — Catholic Mass (Fri. at Camp Steel Dragon)
- 6 p.m. — Jewish Shabbat Services (Fri.)
- 7:30 p.m. — Prayer Service (Tue.)
- 8 p.m. — Bible Study (Thurs. at Senior Advisors Conf. Rm.)
- 8:30 p.m. — Bible Study (Wed. at Ambassadors Conf. Rm.)

**Saturday**

- 11:30 a.m. — Catholic Mass (Camp Headhunter)
- 12:30 p.m. — Buddhist Worship
- 4 p.m. — Catholic Confession
- 4:30 p.m. — Catholic Mass

**Daily Islamic Prayer**

For more information, call DSN 318-239-8659.

# Apache pilot lives out life-long dream

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Nick Minecci  
214th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

**CAMP TAJI, Iraq** — Standing next to an AH-64 Apache helicopter here, Seattle, Wash., native Warrant Officer Joseph Walker said all he ever wanted to do was be a military pilot.

Now the youngest Apache pilot in his battalion, the 22-year-old, assigned to Company C, 1st Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment (Attack Helicopter), 3rd Infantry Division, said he never counted on how much fun his journey would be.

“I knew staying home I wasn’t going to go anywhere in civilian life. I was on a fast track to being a house painter, not saying there is anything wrong with that, but it’s not for me,” he said.

So using a program called “high school to flight school” Walker joined the Army and went straight to basic training in Fort Sill, Okla., which he said was “cold — very, very cold.” Graduation from basic training meant more training, this time at Fort Rucker, Ala., not as a private, but as a Warrant Officer Cadet.

He said being a cadet, commonly called a WOC, was an experience in discipline and attention to detail, where cadets were quickly overwhelmed with the tasks assigned by instructors.

“We figured it out one day. From the time we had to shower to get to formation, including making the bed, arranging the desk the way we were supposed to and all the things we had to get done, it was a 40-step process, and we had seven minutes to get it done,” he said.

He said almost no one made it in the seven minutes for the first few weeks, but as graduation closed in, it was amazing to see the WOCs not only had completed the tasks, but they had time to spare.

“That was a great feeling. In the end everything they did was very strong on attention to detail, and once I got in the cockpit and started flying, it all made sense,” he said.

Fulfilling his dream to fly helicopters in the Army turned to outright elation when he found out he was the only person in his class selected to train as an Apache pilot.

“I found out on a Friday I was going to fly Apaches, and yeah, it was party time,” he said, a grin stretching across his face.

The enthusiasm and energy Walker brings to work every day is something the older pilots notice, and something they feed off of, said Chief Warrant Officer Jerry Frye, a veteran Apache

pilot with 19 years in the Army, assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Bn., 3rd Aviation Regt. (Attack Helicopter).

“I was assigned as an instructor-pilot at Fort Rucker, and we used to talk in the cadre about the kids coming through the class and say, ‘That guy was not even born when I graduated from high school,’” said the 41 year-old pilot.

“But I am glad to see we are still getting people like [Walker], people who are patriotic and who think coming in the Army to fly helicopters is a good way to spend part of their life. Their energy really keeps me going,” the Wooster, Ohio, native said.

After graduating from flight school, Walker joined the 3rd Infantry Division at Fort Stewart, Ga., where he learned real fast about being an Apache pilot, he said. “I had only flown three or four [missions] at Stewart when we went to [the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, La.] and were right in the middle of missions.”

Adding to the learning curve a new pilot normally has to adjust to, Walker said the Apache crews were also shifting their training, no longer concentrating on deep attacks against enemy formations but assisting ground troops with cordon and search operations and searching for improvised explosive devices.

“It was a really good experience because we were out in the field, and I mean the field!” he said. “We flew in bad weather and under a lot of stressful conditions. It gave me a really good idea of what I wanted to do as a [pilot].”

When the Soldiers of the 3rd Infantry Division began deploying, Walker said he was excited, and when he arrived in theater he was surprised by the sparseness of the area.

“We got to Udari Range in Kuwait and started flying, and I have never seen anything like it,” he said. “You can fly for 50 kilometers and all you will see is a guy with a herd of goats. I mean, it is amazing, and then you have to wonder, how do they get water and survive? It is so different from Seattle.

“Then when we flew [to Iraq], I was flying with a pilot who had been in the invasion, and he was showing me landmarks, you know, like, ‘Yeah, and that was where we blew up a bunch of tanks’ and sure enough there were tanks with holes from Hellfires sitting there,” he said.

By far, the most satisfying aspect of flying the Apache is



Warrant Officer Joseph Walker stands next to an AH-64 Apache helicopter.

the work he has done with ground troops, according to Walker.

That work with ground troops led to a big score for the Apache pilots recently when they helped ground troops take down a terrorist rocket launcher.

“We were in a two-ship formation, I was in one helicopter and [Walker] was in another, and we were providing security for ground troops after an IED exploded,” Frye said.

“We happened to look over and saw something about 150 meters from where the IED was, but were not sure what it was, so we flew around it and got a [grid coordinate], and let the ground guys know where it was. They got to it and it was a rocket launcher with a rocket in the tube,” Frye said.

“We suspect [the terrorists] were going to use it against the troops who were just hit by the IED, but didn’t because we were there,” he said.

Walker said nights like that are worth the long hours and hard work, especially when he meets the ground troops he supports.

“We will be in the dining facility and the guys will come up and say ‘Were you flying last night? Thanks so much.’ It is a great feeling,” he said.

Walker said the good feelings are also felt from the Iraqi people. “I would say 95 percent of the people we fly over wave and follow us, and they are thankful we are here, because they know with us in the air, the bad guys won’t do anything. That’s what we are here for.”

## Troop mechanics service Anaconda’s armor

Story and photo by  
Spc. Jerome Bishop  
1st Corps Support Command  
Public Affairs

**LOGISTICS SUPPORT AREA ANACONDA, BALAD, Iraq** — The roads leading in and out of LSA Anaconda are host to many convoys, and unfortunately just as many improvised explosive devices. The Bradley fighting vehicles of Troop A, 57th Battalion, 1st Unit of Action, 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) keep troops safe, but the toll taken by the unit’s armored vehicles must be met with the best of attention.

The troop’s maintenance shop ensures the vehicles going out on the road are in top order to make for a safer convoy.

“We maintain nine Bradleys, and our Bradleys run three missions a day at 80 to 100 miles a day,” said Sgt. Jeremi Timb, Troop A’s maintenance shop noncommissioned officer in charge. “Without [the mechanics], all these vehicles would be completely gone.”

The rough desert road conditions and



Spc. Markus Bennett removes the weapon breech from the turret on a Bradley fighting vehicle being serviced.

increasing hot weather weighs heavy on the 25-ton vehicles regularly and complicates engine operations and track quality, Timb said.

Preventive maintenance checks and services on the Bradleys consist of more tasks than an average Soldier might encounter on a routine

mechanics to make sure everything is in working order, but less common services are also required from time to time. Such work sometimes calls for removal of the main 25 mm Bushmaster cannon and extraction of the 600-horsepower diesel engine, Timb said.

Humvee PMCS.

“We do quality control for every vehicle dispatched, and we go to the operators to make sure they’re doing proper PMCS,” said Sgt. Christopher Inman Sr., recovery NCOIC from Troop A.

Maintenance takes place in the form of PMCS operations conducted by both the operators and the

“You bring it to us broken — 10 minutes later we could have it fixed, or 10 hours later we could have it fixed,” Timb said. “We work until the mission is complete; we’re not a unit regulated by time.”

Aside from the duties of any maintenance shop, the mechanics are also on call in the event a field recovery must be conducted with one or both of the M88 Hercules recovery vehicles in the troop’s arsenal, which is also maintained by the troops’ mechanics.

“We’re on call 24/7 for maintenance (and recovery) — all day, all night,” Timb said.

“If we don’t have [the Bradleys] out there, [the terrorists] will spread the insurgency to our sector around Anaconda and neighboring sectors,” Inman said.

Track vehicle mechanics of Troop A’s maintenance shop agree they share a heavy deal of hardship. But at the end of the day when a convoy makes it to its destination safely, they also agree they feel better knowing they did their part making the roads safe for travel, whether they went on patrol with the Bradleys or not.



# TOUGH TEXANS GUARDING TIKRIT

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Timothy Lawn  
Scimitar Staff

**FORWARD OPERATING BASE DANGER, TIKRIT, Iraq** — Blistering heat, rain and blowing sand does not prevent the Texans from the 3rd Battalion, 133rd Artillery Regiment, 36th Infantry Division, Texas Army National Guard, from keeping FOB Danger safe from terrorist attacks.

They are assigned the critical mission of protecting the perimeter and inside of FOB Danger. "We control all entry points, most of the towers and perimeter security. Our secondary mission is convoy escort and force protection for FOBs Speicher and Midland," said Command Sgt. Maj. Leonard Ruiz.

From field artillery to FOB security, the Texans have tackled perimeter security challenges with ease. Many of the Soldiers already had most of the skills that would be critical for security duty. Ruiz said.

"We have a lot of civilian prison security guards," said Ruiz. Some of the benefits they bring are their law enforcement background, which really helps out on the main gates.

"We are an artillery unit. Many of the troops are trained forward observers," he said. "I consider ourselves experts at writing and sending up detailed reports. They are good at this stuff," Ruiz said.

Lt. Col. Robert J. Crow from Round Rock, Texas, is the battalion commander. Crow described the climate change as not being a huge factor. "This battalion is used to the

desert. The Soldiers grew accustomed to desert duty when they were called up to monitor the border in 2002," said Crow. The battalion headquarters is in El Paso, and they train at Fort Bliss, Texas.

Crow and Ruiz believe that their unit's continued success comes from their men and how the unit conducts its mission.

"We took the ball and kept running," said Crow. He described his troops as thorough and professional. "They have been very flexible; we didn't know we were coming here to do this mission until we got to Kuwait. We continuously assess our operations every day to decide if we need to make changes."

Throughout FOB Danger, from the perimeter walls to the base camp interior, Texan Soldiers can be found being diligent in their duties.

Spc. Andrew Hallo from Woodville, Texas, and Sgt. Myron Woods from Houston, stood guard duty in Tower Charlie 6, with their weapons loaded and ready as they scanned the horizon looking for intruders.

"We monitor and report any suspicious activity," said Hallo as he scanned the bustling city outside the wall.

Moving from the wall to the FOB interior the Texans were hard at work. Spc. Randy Kyte from Beaumont, Texas, strung wire for a digital non-secure voice terminal to a nearby truck parking lot. "They keep all the 18-wheelers, all commercial trucks here that haven't been

cleared," said Staff Sgt. Jesus Saenz, from El Paso, Texas.

The Soldiers mirror the professionalism and dedication their commander and command sergeant major attributed to them.

Ruiz and Crow summed up their feelings for their Soldiers. "The Soldiers have a lot of pride and spirit, and they operate on teamwork," Ruiz said. "The mission has not come without cost. Three Soldiers have been awarded the Purple Heart. One Soldier is still home recuperating.

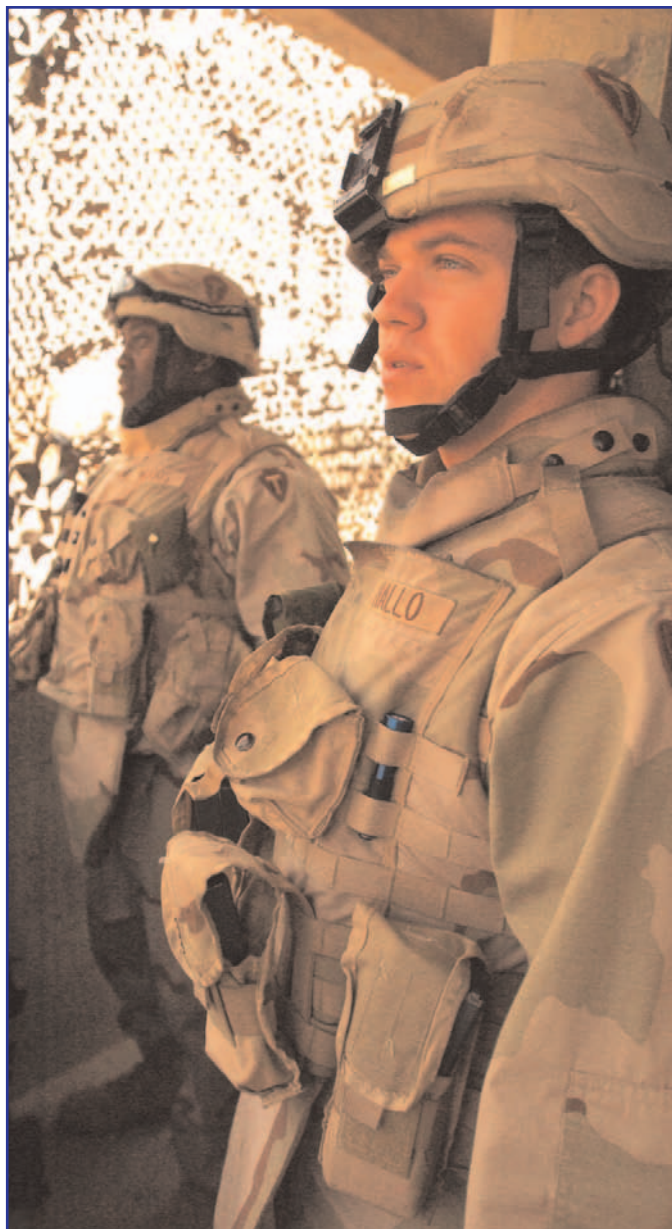
"We continue to improve, and so far, we have denied the terrorists the opportunity to attack," said Crow. "There hasn't been a direct attack on the FOB yet. The only true measure of our success at keeping FOB Danger, Tikrit, safe will be at the end of our tour here."

*"The Soldiers have a lot of pride and spirit, and they operate on teamwork."*

Command Sgt. Maj. Leonard Ruiz  
3rd Battalion,  
133rd Artillery Regiment



Spc. Randy Kyte from Beaumont, Texas, strings wire for a digital non-secure voice terminal to a nearby truck park in Tikrit. Staff Sgt. Louis Mitchell (left) from Austin, Texas, and Staff Sgt. Jesus Saenz (right) from El Paso, Texas, stand by to assist him.



Sgt. Myron Woods (left) from Houston, and Spc. Andrew Hallo from Woodville, Texas, stand sentry duty at perimeter tower Charlie 6 in Tikrit.



Spc. Nestor Vargas mans the .50-caliber machine gun on a M113 personnel carrier while guarding the main entry control at Forward Operating Base Danger, Tikrit, Iraq.

# Military police supply, train Iraqi Highway Patrol

Story and photo by Spc. Jeremy D. Crisp  
Multi-National Corps - Iraq Public Affairs

**UMM QASSR, Iraq** — As Coalition Forces work to secure the country of Iraq, the U.S. Army's military police are working to make sure the Iraqi Highway Patrol has the tools it needs to help in the security effort.

Soldiers from the 503rd Military Police Battalion, Fort Bragg, N.C., and the 18th MP Brigade, Mannheim, Germany, are supporting the IHP in all facets, including what they need most — vehicles.

A May 19 convoy showed the diligence of the MPs, as the IHP took home 110 blue and white Chevrolet pickups. The four-door trucks were outfitted with blue and red lights, radio systems and spotlights.

Capt. Robert J. Baker of the 503rd said the idea of the Iraqi Highway Patrol is a new concept to Iraq, and his unit is tasked with doing everything it can to ensure its success.

"Our main effort is logistically supplying these people," Baker said. "We're taking primary responsibility in getting the IHP vehicles and weapons and other logistical supplies they need in order to operate."

Baker, from Rochester, N.Y., said getting the IHP new vehicles is a key to both forces' success because "without them, the IHP can't do their job."

"These vehicles to the IHPs are just like a [Humvee] to an MP," Baker said.

"We get them the vehicles, and we get them out on the road," said Baker, who is the civil-military operations officer for the 503rd. "The more vehicles we get them, the more apt they are to do their job effectively. The more Iraqi highway patrolmen we can have out on the roads, the bigger impact they are going to make."

According to Baker this is just the beginning of new vehicles for the IHP. The 503rd is responsible for six IHP stations, with six more coming under their command by September, and Baker said that each IHP station is to be fielded with 35 vehicles.

"There are going to be a projected 35 IHP stations throughout Iraq, and we're only talking about six — soon to be 12 — falling under us," Baker said.



An Iraqi Highway Patrol Vehicle sits interlaced between the Humvees of the 18th Military Police Brigade as they prepare to head out on a convoy to pick up new trucks for the IHP from Umm Qasr, Iraq.

Through the use of trucks previously fielded to the IHP, they have been able to take some of the burden off of U.S. forces.

"They're out there finding [improvised explosive devices], they're finding [anti-Iraqi forces], and they are making a significant contribution by doing their job in the field," Baker said.

Maj. Muhammad (first name withheld for security), a platoon leader with the Iraqi Police, said with the help from Baker and Maj. Andy T. Johnson of the 18th MP Bde., the IHP is able to do its job and work toward relieving Coalition Forces.

"These trucks are going to help out a lot," said Muhammad, a 15-year veteran of the Iraqi police force. "Before the war, we had junk vehicles sent to us by the Saddam regime, and there was no way we could get this number of vehicles before the war under Saddam. These vehicles are going to do a great job in different provinces around Iraq."

Muhammad, who acts as a liaison for Johnson and Baker, said that through the training and support received, "The American government is trying to make it happen for us. They

support our forces so we can take the responsibility from our friends the Coalition Forces. That way we can reach our goal — the Iraqi government goal — of controlling our country with our own forces."

Along with supplying the force, the 18th and 503rd are responsible for ensuring the policemen of the IHP have the knowledge and skills at their disposal to accomplish their missions.

"We have a training academy that puts out roughly between 150 to 250 Iraqi Highway Patrol officers a month," Baker said. "It is a 21-day period of instruction for them, and it's not a monitoring relationship. It's more a working hand-in-hand relationship."

"We go out on joint patrols with them, and we deal with every facet as far as their operations to make sure they will be set up for success when we start pulling out," he said.

Future operations for the MPs include a new class of recruits beginning the academy, acquiring more trucks to complete the IHP fleet and the completion of the six new IHP stations.

## Iraqis learn new trades at Zaytun Vocational Center

Story and photo by  
Pfc. Ferdinand Thomas  
Scimitar Staff

**CAMP ZAYTUN, IRBIL, Iraq** — Reconstruction is the name of the game in this stage of Operation Iraqi Freedom III. Republic of Korea service members at Camp Zaytun are doing their part to help with the overall mission success.

Where does the reconstruction start? If one asks a ROK service member this question, his or her answer will be with the people, said ROK Army Maj. Byongseok Oh, civil affairs support officer in charge of the Zaytun Vocational Training Center. The ZVTC project was established to assist the Iraqi people.

"The main reason behind ZVTC is to teach the Iraqi people how to fish rather than giving them fish," Oh added. "They learn a trade. After they complete the courses, they can go out and make an honest living."

The ROK Army has a few humanitarian projects going on in its base camp and in various parts of Irbil. This is one of the few that really

stands out, Oh said. The military has put an enormous amount of work and money into this project. The Soldiers also hold the courses in the camp.

"The ROK division pays everything for the students, including taxes and lunch. They get \$60 monthly for commuting fare and \$50 monthly for lunch. Their only job while they are here is to attend class and learn as much as possible."



A Korean instructor goes over a few basic English and Korean phrases with Iraqi students at the ZVTC.

Seven different courses are taught at the ZVTC: cooking, computer training, home appliance maintenance, heavy equipment operator, vehicle maintenance, farm machine maintenance and heavy machinery repair. Along with the vocational classes, the ROK Soldiers teach Korean and English languages. A little of the languages is taught during each class when there is extra time. The classes are four hours per day over an eight-week period. The program, which started in February, graduated its first class of 127 students May 1.

With support from the Kurdish Regional Government, the Soldiers have been able to help the local Iraqi people with this education and finding a job, Oh said. "The classes have been a great success. After the class hours, some of the students stay back sometimes and get extra help from the instructors. So far, 70 of the graduates are employed."

Education and discipline are the keys to success, Oh said. The instructors and

interpreters are also a big reason for the success of the ZVTC. Their years of education and language training have helped tremendously.

"The Korean instructors are experts in their respective fields," Oh added. "The [Iraqi] instructors are experienced in their fields, and they are qualified to teach. They have also been recommended by the K.R.G. to be employed here as instructors."

Winning the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people is the goal, he said. The atmosphere here is very disciplined but fun and educational. ROK Soldiers seem to like what they are doing, and it shows in the smiles of the students and interpreters.

"I enjoy my job because I get to teach from time to time. I am also learning different things in the class myself. It is great," said Noor Youfif, an interpreter in the cooking class.

The attitudes and initiative of everyone involved in this program has been the real success, said Byungchang Ryu, ZVTC liaison officer. "Helping the Iraqi people become a more educated, unified community is one of our main goals. We don't like to see the fighting. The different programs we offer, including the ZVTC, are helping the efforts all across Iraq."

# Memorial Day observed by troops in Iraq

Story and photo by Cpl. C. Alex Herron  
2nd Marine Aircraft Wing

**ALASAD, Iraq** — Memorial Day may be known as a time when Americans have an opportunity to enjoy a day off and spend time with friends and family around the barbecue. But the real meaning of the holiday was celebrated by service members here who took part in a ceremony to commemorate this day of remembrance: to honor all service members who have paid the ultimate sacrifice.

The service was highlighted by scripture readings, guest speakers and patriotic classics.

“Having a day set aside to remember our fallen comrades means a lot,” said Sgt. James Elrod, administration noncommissioned officer in charge with Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 2. “Having a service here with our fellow service members is a great experience. I think we all have more of an understanding of what this holiday means than the average guy on the street back home. A lot of us have lost brothers, friends and mentors because of wars and a time to sit and reflect on their sacrifice is a good reminder of what is important.”

After the scripture readings, heralds from each military service spoke their thoughts of Memorial Day.

“We are here to remember the warriors who gave their lives for freedom,” said Air Force Lt. Col. Andrew McDonald, one of the four guest speakers. “They all died trying to make the world



**Members of the Al Asad joint service color guard post the colors during Memorial Day services May 30. The service included guest speakers representing every service on the base.**

a better place, not just for us, but for the freedom of people all over the globe.”

“Many soldiers have made the ultimate sacrifice for what was right,” said Army Maj. Terry Jones, the adjutant with the 561st Command Service Group. “Each loss was felt by a family, a community and a nation. Losing a fellow soldier is the hardest thing to overcome, but it is important to remember they died for a great cause — freedom.”

The end of the ceremony was marked by a patriotic medley of music. Together the musicians sang and played songs that gave attendees a moment to reflect on the Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors and Marines who died before them in the name of freedom.

Memorial Day was officially proclaimed for the first time in 1868 by Gen. John Logan, the national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic. That year flowers were placed on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery.

# Witnesses react to rocket attack at Camp Liberty PX

By Sgt. W. Watson Martin  
Scimitar Staff

**INTERNATIONAL ZONE, BAGHDAD, Iraq** — A terrorist rocket hit the Camp Liberty post exchange outdoor plaza, landing near a gazebo, killing one Soldier and wounding 26 civilians and service members May 31. People came out of the woodwork to help the wounded, said Sgt. Brady Clower.

“I fought the crowd back in [to the PX] and picked up a bunch of basically anything I could get,” said Clower. “Tape, gauze, cotton balls, Band-Aids, hydrogen peroxide, grabbed some shirts off the racks and headed back out and gave it to some of the guys who were helping out.” Some people were running to bunkers and others were helping out in whatever way they could.

“I could see the Soldiers had taken control outside ... but I was very proud of how our [Army and Air Force Exchange Service] associates took control inside,” said Catherine Jones, manager of the Baghdad AAFES. In less than two minutes, the associates had the building’s occupants evacuated into bunkers behind and beside the PX.

An Armed Forces Network – Iraq broadcaster, Spc. Daniel Sullivan with the 209th Broadcast Operations Detachment, visited the site the next day gathering information on what happened. His story aired Tuesday on the Pentagon channel showing footage from

a security camera inside the PX.

“Imagery from the security camera just moments before the attack shows a large number of personnel inside the PX,” Sullivan said. “When the rocket landed outside, those inside the store heard the blast and felt the impact; shelves collapsed and instincts took over.”

“It was probably the loudest thing I have ever [heard],” said Clower. “As soon as it hit, 90 percent of the store hit the ground; everybody was lying on the ground.”

When the rocket hit, it shook the “double-wide circus tent” PX so much that clouds of dust showered over the shoppers who were shown scattering, stooping in shock or hitting the deck. Eyes scanned left and right until they realized everything was relatively safe. Several people continued shopping for a couple of minutes until the employees told everyone to clear out. “The tape revealed how people react to an attack of this magnitude,” Sullivan said.

The PX delayed opening the next day by two hours but was fully operational. As a result of the attack security postures may become elevated in and around post exchanges, said Dan Tomkins, vice president of AAFES Iraq. Regular events held on the plaza grounds, such as movie night, will be curtailed for a while, he said.

Despite the tragedy of losing a Soldier, Tompkins said he was impressed with how the service members in and around the exchange reacted to protect one another and assist those in need.

# 91W: Soldier-medics transform in step with Army

By Staff Sgt. Christopher Williams  
27th Public Affairs Detachment

**LOGISTICS SUPPORT AREA ANACONDA, BALAD, Iraq** — Today’s Army is in the middle of a transformation and that comes down to changes. One of those changes involves transforming the Army’s combat medics and practical nurses into better served, more diversified medical professionals.

To employ a more universal medic, the Army Medical Department implemented a program in 2001 designed to transition all 91B (medic) and 91C (practical nurse) Soldiers into a 91W military occupational specialty.

To help facilitate the transition, noncommissioned officers from the Combat Medical Training Center, 44th Medical Command at Logistics Support Area Anaconda, successfully transitioned several medics during a ceremony at the LSA Anaconda Education Center auditorium May 28.

Soldiers from various units across Iraq came to LSA Anaconda to complete the 91W MOS Transition Course offered by the CMTC, 44th MEDCOM.

Eight Soldiers completed the 23-day transition course, which challenged them with grueling coursework and hands-on practical applications. The Soldiers were given 15 examinations over the course of the program, which included modules in basic life support, the National Registry for Emergency Medical Technicians, Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support and Trauma AIMS (Advanced airway, Intravenous therapy, Medications and pharmacology and Shock management).

Under the AMEDD’s new program, medics and practical nurses must complete the 91W transition by 2007, said Col. Dennis Driscoll, program director for CMTC, 44th MEDCOM. Those who fail to complete the transition will be considered non-MOS-qualified and forced to reclassify at the needs of the Army, he added.

The 91W transition program is a long and comprehensive series of training blocks that gives medics and practical nurses the necessary skills to function on and off the battlefield.

“There weren’t enough medics to fill combat positions, and there weren’t enough nurses to fill the clinical positions,” said Staff Sgt. Randall L. Scales, lead instructor, CMTC, 44th MEDCOM. “AMEDD came up with a solution to create one MOS that encompasses both the battlefield and clinical settings.”

The 44th MEDCOM’s Combat Medical Training Center here is the first and only medical training center of its kind in theater. Frequent and longer deployments have made the CMTC a valuable asset to the Army and the Soldiers it trains.

“We are the first to offer the transition training to medics while in theater,” said Driscoll. “In doing so, we’ve given Soldiers the opportunity to enhance their skills as well as continue to support their unit’s mission while deployed.”

Although a slightly different MOS, medics and practical nurses will still be able to specialize in other medical disciplines and can be recognized for doing so.

“The 91Cs will still be practical nurses,” Scales said. “Except now they’ll be a 91W with a M6 additional skill identifier and also have the skill-sets to perform on the battlefield.”

The transition can be a lengthy process and varies from

skill level to skill level. Some medical NCOs only have to complete certain portions of the 91W transition, while most have to go through the entire course.

“Back in the states, the training can take as long as six months to complete, whereas here we get the Soldiers through it in about three weeks,” Scales said.

As impossible as it may seem, said Scales, the Soldiers had no trouble getting through the intense training. With little or no distractions due to work or personal issues, he added, the Soldiers were able to focus on the training and the training alone.

During the graduation ceremony leaders and supporters of the eight graduates filled the auditorium seats.

Driscoll thanked the commanders and NCOs in attendance for supporting the CMTC’s program and commended them for fostering the development of their own Soldiers.

“This training is something that the medics must do in order to remain MOS qualified, and we appreciate the commanders for supporting this requirement,” said Driscoll.

Driscoll said that there’s more to this program than just fulfilling professional development requirements.

“The real reason behind this program is to put the best medics in the Army out on the battlefield,” he said. “With these eight Soldiers, I think we’ve started to do just that.”

Graduating from the 91W-Transition course were: Sgt. 1st Class Michael Priebe, 411th CA Bn.; Sgt. Marquis Arnold, 1/13 Armor; Sgt. Eric Ashmore, 50th MEDEVAC; Sgt. Karolina Loyewska, 443rd CA Bn.; Sgt. Melissa Olson, HSC, 92nd Eng. Bn.; Spc. Frank Goodnight, HHC, 29th BCT; Spc. Jasmine Ocampo, HHC, 29th BCT; and Pfc. Thomas Else, 546th ASMB.

## CHAPLAIN'S TALK

## Swords into Plows

By Chaplain (Cmdr.) Donald Cramblit  
Multi-National Force - Iraq  
Deputy Command Chaplain

It was quite a few centuries ago that Micah the prophet spoke to his nation, "They will beat their swords into plows, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore."

Is that not our hope and prayer for the people of Iraq? How fantastic to see schools open and fearless, with all the resources of this nation going into productive efforts, with no



Chaplain Donald Cramblit

violence on the highways or the mosques, and Iraq standing solid in its rightful place among the nations, surrounded by peaceful neighbors.

This view is not just a dream, but truly a vision for our future. This continuing vision includes individual opportunity and security. "Every man will sit under his own vine and under his own fig tree, and

no one will make them afraid for the Lord God Almighty has spoken."

This certainly fits well into the absolute "best case scenario" for those who seek good things for the people of Iraq. The insurgents, who want to videotape the sawing off of heads and the bombing of houses of worship, certainly seek to instill insecurity and fear in the hearts of the populace. Micah's vision is much more appealing to me.

The open real joy in working for this vision is that it goes beyond individual or national or Coalition goals. In the vision of Micah, "All nations will walk in the name of their gods, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever."

I take comfort in my belief that Micah's vision applies to this nation of Iraq, its people and this time. As you look at the first verses of Micah 4, see if you feel it applies to our here and now.

## Free legal advice available for troops, DOD civilians in Iraq

By Sgt. W. Watson Martin  
Scimitar Staff

**INTERNATIONAL ZONE, BAGHDAD, Iraq** — Don't let troubles back home or in Iraq distract your attention from your job here. Problems with landlords, consumer laws, finances, family, evaluation reports ... then who do you turn to?

"I am here to provide legal assistance to all service members and all Department of Defense civilians," said U.S. Army Capt. Brian Morris, who works as a legal assistance attorney with the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate at the Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq at Phoenix Base, here.

A counselor and adviser for all legal issues, Morris answers Soldiers' questions about administrative law, Servicemembers Civil Relief Act as it pertains to rights and benefits, bonuses, state or federal laws, report of surveys and even negative officer or noncommissioned officer evaluation reports.

"I can review evaluation reports with service members and go through the regulations to make sure all the regulatory steps have been followed, and that they are entitled to provide comments or even a rebuttal in defense of their performance," Morris said.

Besides acting as a counselor, Morris advises clients on their legal rights. For example, service members may face financial liabilities for missing or damaged government property; he can assist them with those problems. He can be an activist for a service member throughout an administrative proceeding or filing a report of survey.

"I deal a lot with consumer law protection," he said. "[For instance,] a spouse has a car back home and it's not getting repaired properly. I have access to call to the rear to resolve those problems, most of the time a lot more efficiently than [the spouse] would."

Legal services Morris offers include wills, powers of attorney and notarization services. A POA gives someone, most commonly a family member, the legal right to sign on your behalf. It is a very powerful document, whether it is general or specific, he said.

One of Morris' clients, 1st Sgt. Kelly Luster, who is deployed to the International Zone, came in need of legal advice here when his aunt died. "She died without a Last

Will and Testament or Power of Attorney set up," Luster said. "Her only living blood relatives are my two brothers, me and three cousins with whom we have never had contact."

Morris, who is from Chicago, researched the laws in Pennsylvania to find out what would happen without the documents. "At the same time, my brother had hired an attorney to represent the estate, so there was some question as to whether or not original signatures from me were required on court documents," Luster said. "[Capt. Morris] answered everything and found out that Pennsylvania requires original signatures, and he even went so far as to notarize documents before I sent them home."



Capt. Brian Morris

About 50 percent of what Morris covers is family law, which includes divorce, separation, marital problems, child support or all of the above. "I can draft legal documents such as legal separation papers, but I'd like to advise service members when it comes to family law ... on things they need to know about before they decide to get divorced or separated," he said. "Especially the obligations they need to know about under laws pertaining to child support."

At the mid-point of deployments, problems that service members forgot or ignored begin to surface again, said Morris, who is serving his second tour of duty here. "It is very important to resolve those troubles so they can focus on their mission. We don't want them out on patrol worrying about things back home."

"Hopefully I can help somebody every day resolve an issue so they don't have to worry about it, or at least worry about it to the extent where it becomes an all-consuming problem," he said.

Morris provides legal services to all service members and Department of Defense civilians in Iraq. He can travel to a duty location, if possible, which can be a lot easier than someone finding his office.

"I would recommend him to everyone who needs any civil legal help while here in Iraq. He is a competent attorney who pays attention to detail and knows his stuff," said Luster.

"There may be a lot of lawyers in the IZ, but I am the one lawyer that is here to be an advocate, adviser and counselor," Morris said. "I'd encourage anyone who has any type of question or concern to contact me."

For more information or to contact the MNSTC-I SJA office at Phoenix Base, call DSN 318-852-1106, MCI 914-822-2244 or e-mail [morisbm@mnstci.iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:morrisbm@mnstci.iraq.centcom.mil).

## Chaplains do good works for Iraqi neighbors

Story and photo by  
Senior Airman Shaun Emery  
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing  
Public Affairs

**BALAD AIR BASE, Iraq** — While Air Force chaplains deployed here are called to serve their fellow service members, a higher calling compels them to serve everyone, on or off the base.

Humanitarian missions provide chaplains with an avenue to enrich the lives of Iraqis as well as the troops here, said Chaplain (Capt.) Charles Seligman of the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing.

"It helps our [Airmen] see the bigger picture outside the wire," he said. "They'll find out there's more going on than the day to day of their specific job [here]. They're part of something bigger than just themselves or their job."

"Hopefully, the Iraqi citizens realize that we are not here as an occupation force," the chaplain said. "We're here for the sake of freedom that we want to pass onto them."

Traveling to local villages can be dangerous, but chaplains here said they are going on these missions without blinking because they understand the importance of reaching out to the Iraqis.

"We know the reality of the situation," Seligman said. "We are reminded all the time we're in a combat zone, but [we are also here] to win the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people. There's a freedom and sense of liberty in knowing that we have people all around us, protecting us."

Doing good works will help improve relations with Iraqis, said Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Dave Wilshek of the 332nd AEW.

"Our mission helps the mission of the wing,"

he said. "We're out there spreading good will among the people to win the hearts and minds of present and future generations. If the children understand we are here to help, in the long run they will be less likely to see us as adversaries."

Off the base, Airmen wear two hats, or as Seligman said, two gloves.

"They see us two ways," he said. "We show the iron glove as gun trucks and guys with weapons head off base, showing the Iraqi people that we mean business. But the velvet glove aspect to what we do can be seen in the humanitarian missions. It's the softer side of what America is all about."

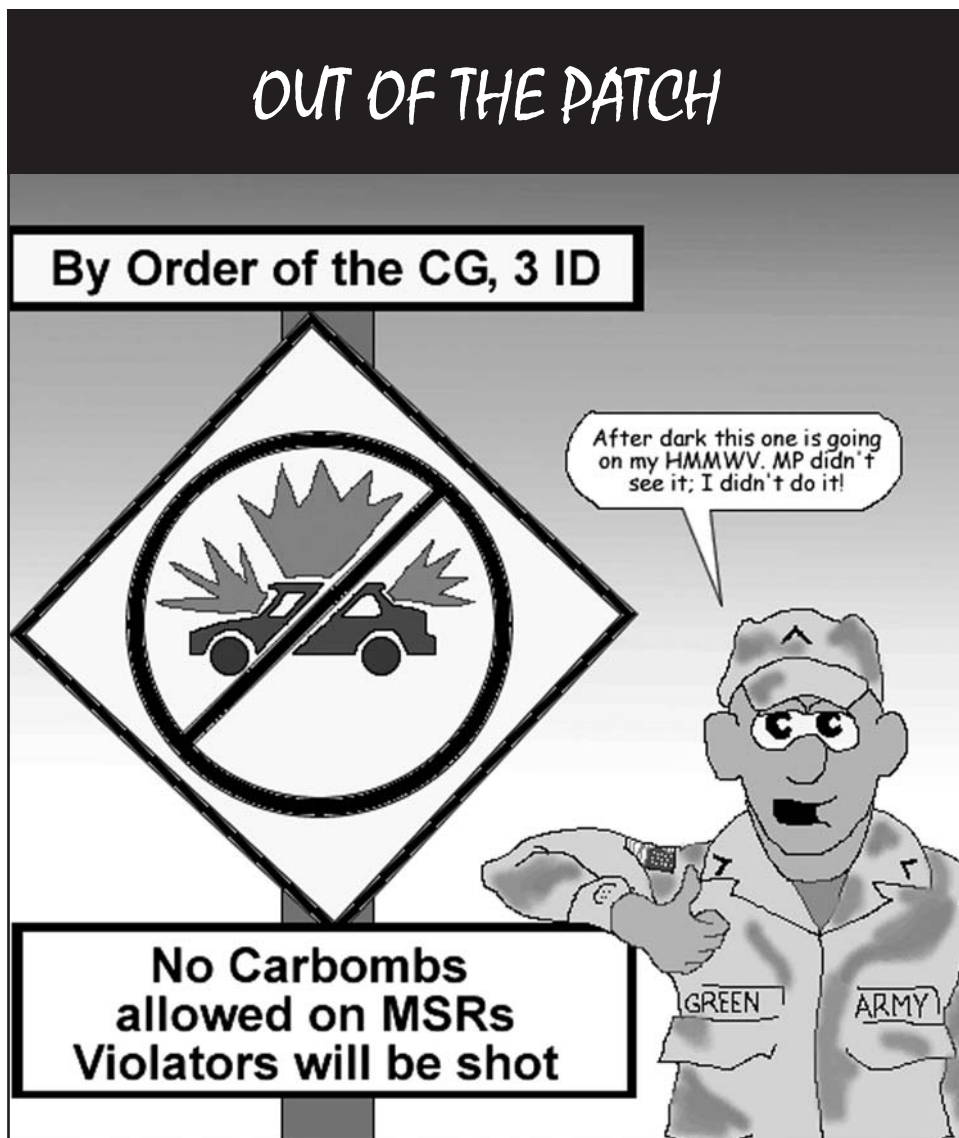
"There is great strength in that softer side,"



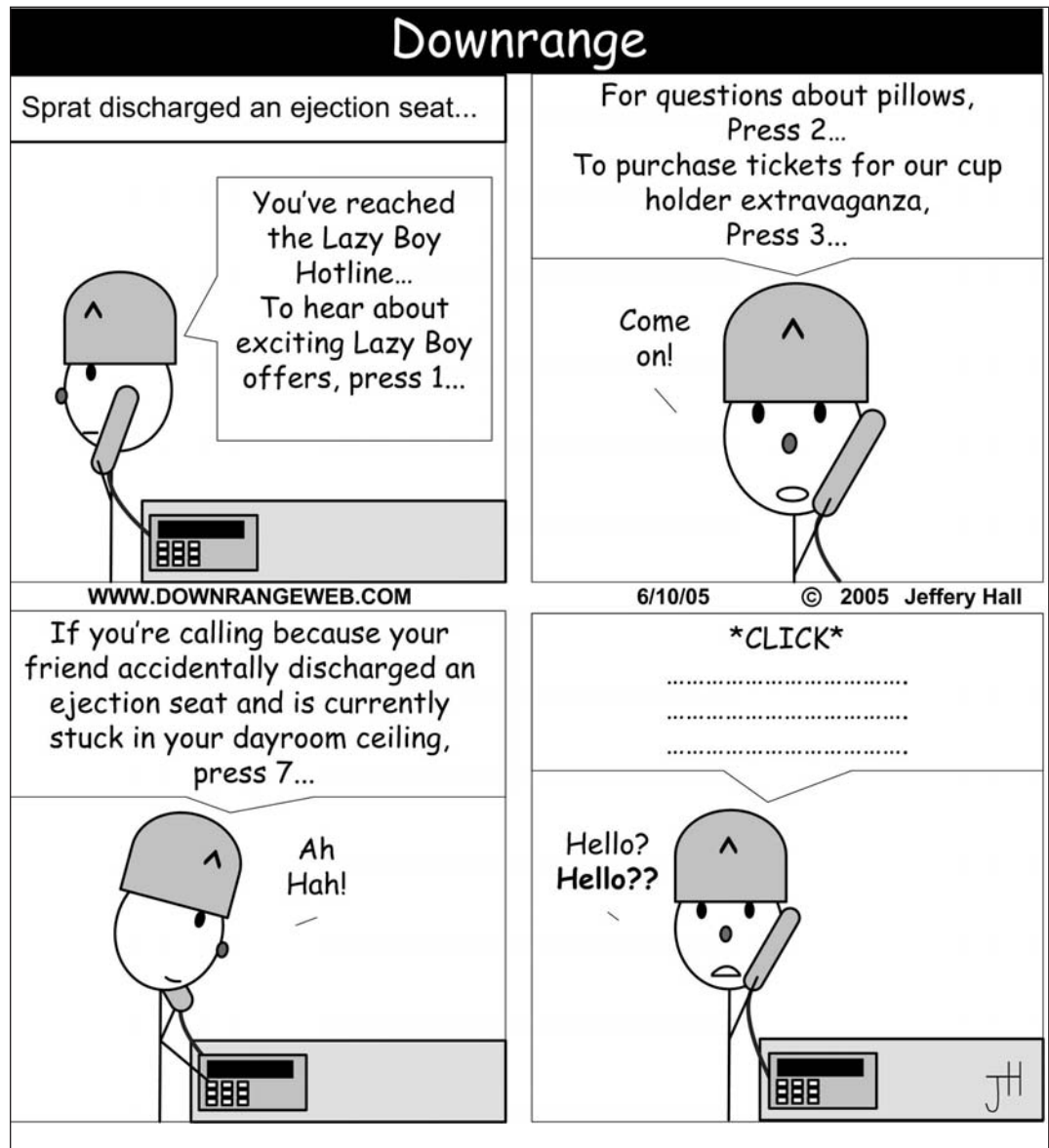
Chaplain (Capt.) Charles Seligman gives a local girl a bracelet during a humanitarian visit.

he said. "Hopefully that side is gaining more support for what we are doing here every day."

# Scimitar Slapstick



Art by Chief Warrant Officer Mark J. Hart



Art by Jeffery Hall



Art by Maj. James D. Crabtree



Art by Staff Sgt. Timothy B. Lawn

# Tour de Force artists perform American favorites Aussie style



Story and photos by  
Senior Airman Chawntain Sloan  
Multi-National Corps – Iraq Public Affairs

**CAMP VICTORY, BAGHDAD, Iraq** — Some of Australia's most renowned artists entertained more than 150 civilian contractors and Coalition troops during the Tour de Force 3 concert May 26 at Camp Victory.

Musicians Tottie Goldsmith and Australian Army Band Melbourne highlighted some of America's most popular cover songs while comedians Big Brother Little Brother gave their take on America's favorite television personalities.

"Any deployment becomes monotonous and boring," said Australian Army Maj. Gordon Lambie, commanding officer and music director for the Australian Army Band Melbourne. "These Soldiers are a long way from home, so we have to break up that monotony, provide entertainment and bring a little bit of Australia to them."

Goldsmith, a singer from the former 80s all-girl band "The Chantoozies," kicked off the two-and-a-half-hour show with the help of one lucky Australian Soldier.

Goldsmith's seductive performance of the modified version of "You Can Leave Your Hat On" by Randy Newman was

unsuccessful in getting anything more than the soldier's blouse off as the song suggests, but it piqued the audience's interest, who responded with cheers and applause.

The Australian Army Band Melbourne took over, enticing the audience with sultry songs like "I Touch Myself" by the Divinyls and forging participation with famous ballads like AC/DC's "It a Long Way to the Top (If You Wanna Rock and Roll)."

"A lot of the stuff we play is influenced by the American music industry," Lambie said. "It's fun to watch the Soldiers'

reactions. In fact, during (Melbourne's version of Tina Turner's) 'Proud Mary,' I was standing around about a dozen American Soldiers, and they knew every word, they knew that particular arrangement, and they were just singing along at the top of their lungs. It was a really good feeling because I knew they were enjoying the show just as much as the Australian Soldiers."

The concert showcased more than just 80s and 90s cover songs.

Australian comedians Big Brother Little Brother used their musical talents to poke fun at American, British and Australian traditions and America's infatuation with famous crocodile hunter Steve Erwin.

Solo artist Rebecca Lavelle also made an appearance to share the melodious tracks from the international television series "McLeod's Daughters."

"Some of the press in Australia about the war isn't positive; you just see the negative side, which isn't necessarily a bad thing. But, I thought it would just be nice to be able to come over and say hi and make sure for my own peace of mind that [the soldiers] are OK and everything is going all right," Lavelle said. "When we get home, we will actually have quite a lot of publicity that is positive. ... Obviously, a career doesn't get harmed by doing a tour like this, but at the same time, I can go back and let everyone know



Lead singer Deb Cotton from the Australian Army Band Melbourne gestures during a special performance.

that [the troops] are doing an awesome job."

The concert closed with original music from Australian rock band The Avenues.

The Tour de Force artists visited troops at several other locations throughout Iraq, wrapping up the tour Sunday with one final show for the Australian Army here.

"I have just had an absolute ball," Lavelle said. "There has never been one time that I have felt my life is in danger or my safety was being jeopardized. ... It's actually the safest I have ever felt."

**Tottie Goldsmith's seductive performance of the modified version of "You Can Leave Your Hat On" by Randy Newman was unsuccessful in getting anything more than an Australian Soldier's desert camouflage uniform blouse off, but it was enough to peak the audience's interest. Goldsmith and some of Australia's most renowned musicians and comedians were part of Tour de Force 3. They performed at concerts throughout Iraq for Coalition Forces.**

## 3/4 Marine, 'crew' use Corps values to build rap label

Story and photo by  
Lance Cpl. Paul Robbins Jr.  
2nd Marine Division Public Affairs

**CAMP MERCURY, FALLUJAH, Iraq** — When Sgt. William L. "Thoro" Reed began working towards his dream of building a rap label, he didn't picture an all-Marine crew ... but that's how it turned out.

Reed, a 27-year-old noncommissioned officer in charge of the field mess for 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines, Regimental Combat Team-8, and chief executive officer/producer of Street Stalkaz Entertainment, is the head of an 11-man group working out of various areas along the West Coast and Iraq.

"Two of us are currently deployed to Iraq," said the Brooklyn, N.Y., native, who is currently deployed to Fallujah. "The rest are back in the states still working, performing and pushing the company on."

All members of the hip-hop label are either active duty or former Marines who joined the group over time. Some of the members have worked together aboard various bases in the

Corps, and others were recruited during performances, according to Reed.

"The label is not restricted to just Marines; that's just how it came together," Reed said. "That's the environment we've been in."

The members of Street Stalkaz have noticed a positive influence on their work and music stemming from the Marine Corps. From professional relationships to stronger work ethics, each member of the group believes his training and time as a Marine is helpful in the growth of the label, according to Reed.

"It's already helped, and it will continue to help," said Sgt. Abraham "Flava" Gonzalez, 25-year-old career retention specialist for Marine



Sgt. William L. "Thoro" Reed poses with his M-16 rifle on top of a Humvee.

Aviation Logistics Squadron-26, and manager/producer for the label. "It's the leadership and management skills, confidence and public speaking that all comes from being in the Corps."

That same influence has spurred Gonzalez, currently deployed to Al Asad, and Reed to continue their work from Iraq.

Gonzalez spends his off time searching the Internet for performance venues and advertisement

opportunities, while Reed purchases equipment for the studio and writes music.

"We all adapt and overcome — the show

must go on," said Gonzalez, a native of Bronx, N.Y.

The Street Stalkaz produced one mixed tape and 5 singles currently rotating through radio stations and clubs throughout the West Coast, according to Reed.

The group's performing artists also continue to do shows for enlisted and civilian clubs in their area.

"We have regular meetings on the Internet to discuss what needs to happen," Reed said. "But they're still running the company back there, and I can sleep at night with no worries."

The music produced by the Street Stalkaz carries a variety of influences and topics, yet has stayed away from the harshness of typical gangster rap.

One of the group's most popular singles, "Respect the Troops," deals with the hardships of war and deployment.

"It's not all about I'll pop you, or I'll kill you or nothing like that," Reed said. "Some of our songs even try and make people relate to what's going on over here."

## Coalition security celebrates culture

Story and photos by Pfc. Ferdinand Thomas  
Scimitar Staff

**INTERNATIONAL ZONE, BAGHDAD, Iraq** — Providing security at checkpoints around the IZ, many of Global Security's employees have not been fortunate enough to attend the many parties hosted in the last year. As a result, Global hosted a free, open-to-all "Get Together Hot and Spicy Nite" cultural event at the Presidential Palace's pool Saturday.

The event featured various Nepalese and Indian cultural dances. There was also a solo performance with flaming torches. A martial arts performance concluded the evening — entertaining the 300 military and civilians attending.



Above, Sakti Lama breaks a vase held by Deuram Rana. Right, Surya Nepali stands stiff as his buddy breaks six fluorescent bulbs on his arm.



Athula Polgolle, former Indian Army Soldier and current Global Security employee, amazes the audience with a cultural dance with torches.



Dhansing Tawang (left) and Krishna Ghale perform a dance for the crowd.

## Coalition Corner

... highlighting countries  
serving with MNF-Iraq



### Latvia

local name: *Latvija*

The Republic of Latvia is located in Eastern Europe and borders the Baltic Sea, Estonia, Lithuania, Belarus and Russia. Size-wise, it is slightly larger than West Virginia. Although Latvia joined both the European Union and NATO in early 2004, its official currency is still the Latvian Lat. Over 2.3 million people live here and speak Latvian, the official language. However, Lithuanian and Russian are also spoken in various regions.

Latvia is perhaps one the most historically-rich countries in Europe, boasting breathtaking castles and churches in nearly every city. Riga, the capital, is considered the international gateway and the cultural center of the Baltics – Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. Riga is an ancient city filled with Art Nouveau buildings and medieval architecture, including St. Peter's Church, which is a 103-meter tall spire that offers a breathtaking view of the city and the Baltic Sea. Bauska is home to a castle that was built around the mid 1400s and was the Livonian knights' stronghold. The most picturesque city in western Latvia is Kuldiga, boasting remains of an ancient Cour (Kursi) fortress, and majestic Lutheran, Russian Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches. For a great vacation spot, Jurmala is the place to go; its location right on the Baltic Sea and countless resorts offer beach-goers a haven for relaxation.

Latvian cuisine would make meat lovers salivate with foods such Piragi, Lavian bacon roll appetizers; zirni, brown peas served with a ham-based sauce; karbonade, fried pork with mashed potatoes; soljanka, a hearty soup made with lots of meat and red beats. Dairy is also a big part of the Latvian diet, as well as rye bread.

Latvia — yet another piece of the Multi-National Force - Iraq puzzle, dedicated to rebuilding Iraq.



References: [www.cia.gov](http://www.cia.gov), [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com), <http://www.li.lv>, <http://europa.eu.int>, <http://secure.hospitality-club.org>, <http://roughguides.iexplore.com>, <http://www.romar-traveler.com>.

Coalition Corner is compiled by Sgt. Misha King, assistant editor, [scimitar@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:scimitar@iraq.centcom.mil).

# Liberty soccer challenge brings armies together for fun

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Peter K. Towse  
42nd Infantry Division Public Affairs

**FORWARD OPERATING BASE DANGER, TIKRIT, Iraq** — Soldiers from Task Force Liberty and their Iraqi Army partners took part in a Memorial Day soccer challenge on the playing field of the Iraqi Island training site May 30.



Task Force Liberty Soldiers and Iraqi Army cadre celebrate after the first Liberty soccer challenge between the Liberators and Iraqi Islanders.

The 42nd Infantry Division's Liberators played the Iraqi Army's Islanders in a close game with the Americans netting a 3-2 victory.

The teams included Rainbow Division Soldiers from FOB Danger, and the Iraqi Army cadre represented the Islanders from the IA's 4th Division training academy, a small island adjacent to FOB Danger in Tikrit.

"This is about fun," said Maj. Don E. McArdle, the 4th Division Iraqi Island training facility advisor and the captain of the Islanders. "If we won so be it; if not, we had a good time playing."

The Americans scored the only goal in the first half of the game and another goal at the beginning of the second half. The Iraqi's offense improved during the second half as the team scored two goals against the Americans to tie the score with six minutes remaining in the game. The Liberators scored another goal with four minutes left, and the Islanders could not recover in time to tie.

"They came together and played well," McArdle said of the Iraqi Army team. "I am happy with the performance of the team. Overall, it was a success, and we hope to play



A Task Force Liberty Soldier Liberator and an Iraqi Army cadre go for the ball during the first Liberty soccer challenge between the Liberators and Iraqi Islanders at Forward Operating Base Danger, Tikrit, Iraq.

them again in a rematch."

"It showed on the soccer field that we are just a bunch of guys here having fun," said Lt. Col. Frantz Michel, the Liberators coach. "This was just good fun and good friends. There is no difference in culture on the soccer field."

## Capoeira: not just a martial art

By Pfc. Mark B. Matthews  
27th Public Affairs Detachment

**LOGISTICS SUPPORT AREA ANACONDA, BALAD, Iraq** — There are many forms of martial arts, each one unique in its own way. However, one martial arts style is particularly different. Through music, dance, skill and history, Capoeira is helping Soldiers broaden not only their minds, but also their bodies and souls.

Spc. Tulasi Tamayo, 29th Brigade Combat Team, began studying the Brazilian martial art of Capoeira about five years ago.

When she arrived at Logistics Support Area Anaconda, she discovered a group of people who shared the same love of Capoeira as she did.

As soon as people began redeploying and transitioning to other locations, Tamayo took the reigns and began teaching Capoeira to people with little or no martial arts experience. She also began teaching some people who had experience and wished to broaden their horizons into a new form of martial arts.

### MIND

Service members and civilians come to the class for all different reasons. Whether it be for knowledge of something new or to relieve stress, there is always something people can take home with them.

"Capoeira is huge stress reliever," Tamayo said. "Whether you are at home or deployed, there are always frustration and issues that can be dealt with by learning a new move or improving an old move."

### BODY

People who are interested in getting into better shape will feel right at home with a Capoeira



Spc. Tulasi Tamayo, 29th Brigade Combat Team and instructor of the Capoeira class, participates in the sparring as well.

workout that covers every aspect of physical fitness.

"It's great cardio, great flexibility and great muscle strengthening all in one," Tamayo said.

Capoeira is a martial arts style that doesn't depend on any one particular area of the body, but requires all aspects of the body: upper body, lower body and heart to all function at their peak.

### SOUL

Capoeira is a fighting style that originated in Brazil by slaves. Their culture revolved around music and dance. Therefore, the best way for them to continue training and practicing was to disguise their fighting style with their traditions and ceremonies.

"There is so much that is Capoeira," Tamayo said. "It's music, it's dance, it's culture, it's religion and so much more that somehow you just become enriched by learning it."

Capoeira classes are held at 8:30 p.m. every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at the Sustainer Gym.

## Memorial ball



Photos by Sgt. Lynne Steely

Staff Sgt. Nakamura of the 18th Military Police Brigade steals home plate during a Memorial Day softball game between the 18th MP Headquarters and the 306th MP Battalion May 30 at Abu Ghraib. It was a close game, but 18th's headquarters took home the 17-16 win.



Spc. Oliver from the 306th MP Battalion gives it his all as the pitch comes in. Soldiers from both teams played in full combat gear.