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March 25, 2009

Iraqi Army marches in Maysan



Photo by 1st. Lt. Jason Frisco

A village leader pockets an information card given to him by an Iraqi platoon leader recently. The 41st Iraqi Army Brigade partners with Soldiers from the 5th Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division on missions near Forward Operating Base Hunter. The villagers thanked the troops for protecting them and bringing peace to their homeland.

1ST LT. JASON FRISCO
4TH BCT, 1ST CAV. DIV.



FOB HUNTER – Nearly 500 Iraqi soldiers traveled approximately 20 miles recently to reinforce that the Iraqi army is capable of providing stability in southern Iraq.

The 3rd Battalion, 41st Iraqi Army Brigade, with assistance from the 5th Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, completed 'Operation Thesinger'.

"I'm always excited to work with the Americans," said Lt. Nubrass Shaker, an operations officer in the Iraqi Army. "My Soldiers always learn new things during these missions,"

The IA and American Soldiers conducted mounted and dismounted patrols. They tactically moved in full combat gear and body armor across open fields, villages and canal

roads to interact with the locals and establish relationships in the area. The purpose of this operation was to emphasize to the Iraqi people that their Army is capable of providing stability in the Maysan province.

"This is my second time in Iraq, and the Iraqi Army is a much more organized and disciplined unit than it was when I was here in 2005," said Spc. David Dawson, a cannon crew-member with the 5th Btn., 82nd FA Regt. and Keysar, W. Va. resident. "I think they will be able to handle things once we leave Iraq."

As Coalition Forces patrolled along suspected smuggling routes, the local citizens were very excited to see the Iraqi and American troops working together.

One local leader said his village consists of simple farmers who just want to live a peaceful life for themselves and their children, raise their crops and livestock and not have to worry about the criminals smuggling weapons into their homeland.

Communication key to helping Iraqi doctors



(Top right) Dr. A.F. Arar, general surgeon at the Abbas Hospital (right), talks to Capt. N.I. Okpokwasili, 41st Fires Bde. surgeon, during a visit with the hospital staff recently. (Bottom right) Sgt. 1st Class Shane Waite, Operations Sergeant for the 41st Fires Bde. Surgeon Cell, hands an Iraqi boy some coloring books during the visit. (Left) A little boy looks up after receiving a toy car at the Abbas Hospital.

SGT. 1ST CLASS JOE THOMPSON
41ST FB



FOB DELTA – In an effort to provide sustainable health projects in the Wasit province and maintain a clear line of communication, local Iraqi doctors met with the medical

team from the 41st Fires Brigade at Al Abbas Hospital recently.

The visit was part of Operation Gunner Med, a joint medical civil-military operation between the Wasit Director General of Health and the 41st Fires Brigade, designed to restore

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THE Mountain View

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 41st Fires Brigade
 343rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment
 793rd Military Police Battalion
 Division Special Troops Battalion, 10th Mtn. Div.
 Task Force 449

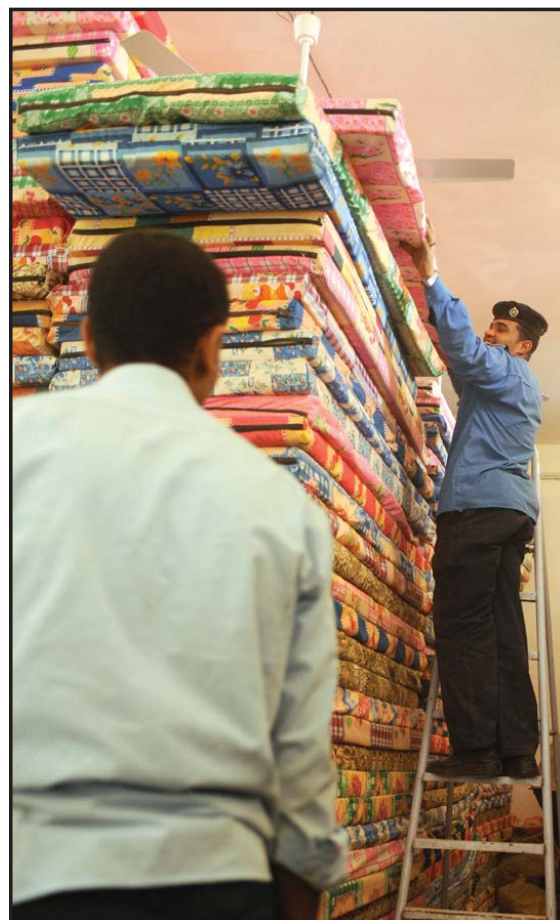


Warhorse Soldiers drop off humanitarian aid to prison



Photos by Senior Airman Eric Harris

(Top) Staff Sgt. Kimberly McGinness, a Soldier with 110th Military Police Co., attached to STB, 2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div., and native of Fletcher, N.C., provides security before handing out blankets, mattresses and other supplies to prisoners at Attica Prison in Diwaniya recently. Soldiers delivered approximately \$28,000 worth of blankets, mattresses, clothing and hygienic items to the prison. (Below) Staff Sgt. George Chang, a Soldier with Company B, 445th Civil Affairs Bn., attached to 2nd Special Troops Battalion, 2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div. and resident of Haywood, Calif., unloads supplies for prisoners at Attica Prison. (Right) An Iraqi policeman and Iraqi contractors stack mattresses for prisoners at Attica Prison.



Staff Section Round-up

Chaplain's Corner: Ending the Great Journey

Well, it's that time (again for many). The end of the great journey of deployment is almost here. What have you done to prepare yourself for the end of the journey? Is everything prepared for your return home as you would like or is there something not quite ready yet?

When I was growing up, there was a biblical tract that I read that had to do with life's end. I liked it because it was in cartoon format (smiles). The story was about a king who had summoned his court jester to find the biggest fool in the kingdom. The jester looked to and fro throughout the kingdom to find the biggest fool.

The jester returned to the king out of luck. He reported mission failure to the king. While the jester was conducting the search the king fell ill and was about to die. He told the jester that he was about to go on a very long and great journey (referring to his death). The jester asked the king if he had prepared for the journey.

The king replied that he had not. The jester then told the king, "then you are the biggest fool of all." Friends, as we prepare for the great journey home, let us not find ourselves in the position of the greatest fool of all. Let us effectively ready ourselves and our loved ones prior to our return.

It does not matter what date you return. Be in a state of preparedness in your communication with loved ones and in your attempts to emotionally connect with them. Also be financially prepared and ready to succeed for a great financial future. Be very flexible and do not attempt to push your way into the challenges of home too quickly. Above all, be spiritually prepared so that you are able to have the resilience to handle every challenge that lies ahead.

CH (MAJ) Paul Ramsey
Division Chaplain

DOCTORS: *Communication key to helping Iraqi doctors*

From Page 2

the medical capacity in Wasit and improve the level of patient care.

"The most important thing we want everyone to know is that we are trying to open up all the lines of communication so we can discuss things, with the ultimate goal of making things better for patients in Wasit," said Capt. N.I. Okpokwasili, 41st Fires Bde. surgeon.

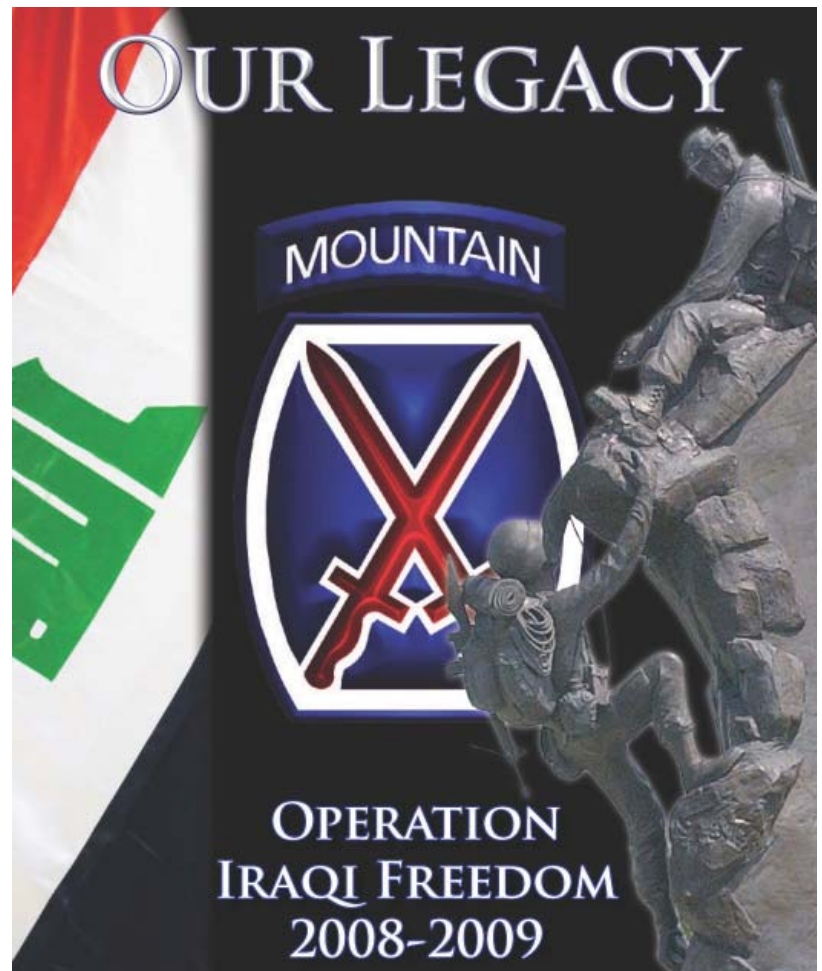
This was Okpokwasili's first visit to the Abbas Hospital by since he became the brigade surgeon. Much of his visit was spent with the senior Iraqi physician, Dr. Nawfal Al-Malily, explaining the medical capabilities that FOB Delta has and how the 41st Fires Bde. medical team can help him and his staff.

"Most of the stuff that you have at Al Abbas is far above what we have over at FOB Delta," explained Okpokwasili to the staff. "The American medical system in Iraq is not to completely fix our Soldiers here. Instead, we stabilize and then we send them out either to Germany or the United States."

What the 41st Fires Bde. medical team can offer to the doctors at Abbas is weekly training and discussion of cases, said Okpokwasili.

Okpokwasili also explained the video-teleconferencing systems that the Ministry of Health and the 41st Fires Bde. are installing in the local hospitals in Wasit to enable communication between each of the hospitals as well as Baghdad.

"Our surgeons can discuss with your surgeons the things that they know. In that way we can be a resource," said Okpokwasili. "Once you establish if our doctors can help you then we can establish how."



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Headline Round-up

World News:

PERTH, Australia - Eleven long-finned pilot whales were returned to sea March 24 after surviving a mass stranding on a remote southwest Australian beach, an official said. Two were still lagging slightly behind the others and another appeared unwell and was brought close to shore for monitoring, said Laura Sinclair of the Department of Environment and Conservation. "Eight of the 11 appear to have been successfully encouraged back out to sea after initially trying to return to shore," Sinclair said. "Another two are following at some distance." The animals had been trucked overland in the morning to a bay with deeper waters in an attempt to save them after nearly 70 others died when they beached themselves early March 23 in Western Australia state.

U.S. News:

MIAMI - Officials say more than 3,000 patients at a Veterans Affairs hospital in Miami had colonoscopies with equipment that wasn't properly sterilized. They've been told they should be tested for HIV and other diseases. The VA insists the risk of infection is minimal and only involved tubing on equipment, not any device that actually touched a patient. But it's the second recent announcement of errors during colonoscopies at VA facilities. Last month, more than 6,000 patients at a clinic in Tennessee were told they may have been exposed to infectious body fluids during colonoscopies. The VA also said 1,800 veterans treated at an ear, nose and throat clinic in Augusta, Ga., were alerted they could have been exposed to an infection due to improper disinfection of an instrument.

Odd News:

LAKELAND, Fla. - An eighth-grader was suspended from riding the school bus for three days after being accused of passing gas. The bus driver wrote on a misbehavior form that a 15-year-old teen passed gas on the bus on March 16 to make the other children laugh, creating a stench so bad that it was difficult to breathe. The bus driver handed the teen the suspension form the next day. Polk County school officials said there's no rule against flatulence, but there are rules against causing a disturbance on the bus. The teen, Jonathan Locke Jr., said he wasn't the culprit. "It wasn't even me," Locke told The Ledger newspaper. "It was a kid who sits in front of me." Whether he did it or not, he might have gotten off easy. A 13-year-old student at a Stuart school was arrested in November after authorities said he broke wind in class.

Quote of the Day

"Soylent Green is people!" – Charlton Heston as Det. Robert Thorn in *Soylent Green* (1973)

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For the answer to today's puzzle, go to:



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AROUND THE COMMUNITY

Fishbowl Gym

March 27

Relay for Life HOPE Ceremony @ 8 p.m.

March 28

Cancer awareness 5K/10K walk run. Free t-shirt and continental breakfast. Race begins @ 7 a.m.

April 11

Pirate's Cove Run 5K/10K.

Registration begins @ 7 a.m., race begins @ 8 a.m.

T-shirts awarded to top finishers.

Freedom Chapel

Sundays

Protestant (Traditional) @ 10 a.m.

Roman Catholic Mass @ 12 p.m.

LDS service @ 2 p.m.

Eastern Orthodox @ 4 p.m.

Protestant (Contemporary) @ 12 p.m.

Mondays

A History of Christianity @ 7 p.m.

Tuesdays

God & the Military @ 6:30 p.m.

Wednesdays

Guitar Lessons @ 7 p.m.

Thursdays

Catholic Choir practice @ 5:30 p.m.

Fridays

Catholic hour @ 6:30 p.m.