

EXPEDITIONARY TIMES

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Vol. 2, Issue 17

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Iraqi General visits Balad

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U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Alex Snyder
Brig. Gen. Mohammedali Kathem, director of ammunition for the Iraqi Army reviews shipping information on munitions supply crates at the corps storage area at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, April 20. Kathem visited JBB to see how the 3^d ESC issues, stores and accounts for munitions.

LAST WEEK!

**Joint Base Balad
Tax Center is open until
April 30, 2009**

Taxes are prepared and filed for all Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors, Marines and Coast Guard, as well as DOD/DA/DAF Civilians; and for those filing a Form 1040EZ, 1040, or 1040A, as well as Schedules A, B, C and D.

The JBB Tax center is closed Wednesday and will re-open on Thursday 0800-1700 hours; The center is located at: 332 EMSG Building (Mission Support Group/JBB Info Center), directly across the street from DFAC 2.

For more information, e-mail: Master Sgt. Katrina Martin at katrina.martin2@blab.afcent.af.mil, Spc. Jaclyn Mims at jaclyn.mims@blab.afcent.af.mil or call DSN: 443-8304 or stop by during business hours.

Personnel may be referred to a paid preparer for any tax returns that are complicated, or involve filing multiple forms and schedules.

Sustainers Save “Skunk Werks”

BY SPC. KIYOSHI C. FREEMAN
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq –

When Soldiers of the 602nd Maintenance Co. leave Iraq this summer they’ll be taking a piece of history with them: the “Skunk Werks” welding shop.

Starting in 2003, the “Skunk Werks” was one of the first locations where Level II up-armor kits – more commonly known as “hillbilly armor” – were installed on military vehicles. It’s because of this historical significance that Mr. Richard Killblane, the transportation corps historian, plans to move the

“Skunk Werks” to the transportation museum at Fort Eustis, Va.

“‘Skunk Werks’ was at its peak before all of the factory-made armor had made it into the system,” said Master Sgt. Scott W. Berndt, support operations maintenance noncommissioned officer in charge, 259th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion.

Berndt’s former unit, the 457th Transportation Bn. (which was part of the 3rd Corps Support Command at the time), ran the welding shop in 2004 and 2005. “We spent many long days and nights fabricating armor for anyone that would come in,” he said.

See SKUNK WERKS,
Page 10



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Kiyoshi C. Freeman
Spc. Jared L. Mauer, of Miami, Okla., uses a MIG welder to fabricate a lockbox for sensitive items at the “Skunk Werks” welding shop at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, April 9. While the shop was once well-known for up-armor vehicles, now the “Skunk Werks” occupies most of its time making more routine items, such as retention rings and this lockbox.

332 ESFS Blotter

April 15 - 21

MAJOR VEHICLE COLLISION:

A driver telephoned the law enforcement desk and stated a major vehicle collision had occurred. Security forces arrived on scene, made contact with the driver and assisted him in completing a statement. The driver said he was conducting post checks and lost control of his vehicle due to loose gravel, causing it to flip onto its driver's side. Ugandan personnel were able to upright the vehicle on its tires prior to security forces patrols arriving on scene. Ugandan guard drove the vehicle inside the north entry control point. Vehicle damage consisted of broken passenger side window, minor dents, scratches on passenger side doors and side panels. The vehicle collided with a small dirt berm on the side of the road and turned over on its right side. The vehicle driver was driving too fast for gravel road conditions causing the collision

MINOR VEHICLE COLLISION:

A driver telephoned the law enforcement desk and reported a minor vehicle collision. The driver said that while backing out of a parking space with a manual transmission, the vehicle rolled forward instead, and struck a concrete block.

MINOR VEHICLE COLLISION:

A reporting party telephoned the law enforcement desk and reported a vehicle collision, which occurred at the DFAC 3 parking lot. Security forces arrived on scene and made contact with a vehicle driver who said, he was backing out of a parking space without a ground guide and struck an unattended, parked vehicle. The driver further stated he placed his vehicle in park and assessed the damage to both vehicles.

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OWT-101
OWT-101

EXPEDITIONARY TIMES

3^d ESC Commanding General, Brig. Gen. Michael J. Lally

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Mission Statement: The Expeditionary Times Staff publishes a weekly newspaper with a primary mission of providing command information to all Servicemembers, partners, and Families of the 3^d Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) team and a secondary mission of providing a means for units on Joint Base Balad to disseminate command information to their audiences.

Chaplain's Corner

"If God did not exist it would be necessary for us to invent Him."

-Voltaire

I find it curious that people are told not to talk about God in a public setting. I mean if He doesn't exist, what's the problem? And if He does exist, it seems only natural that people would want to talk about Him.

I think there is a fear when it comes to discussing God. There is a fear of offending people with differing viewpoints. There is a fear of discovering that God may be far greater than we ever imagined. There is the fear of realizing we may actually know very little about the true nature of God.

Many people choose not to believe in God because they have been hurt in the past and they feel like God has let them down. Others feel like God is a crutch for weak people or that He is only for the simple-minded.

As spiritual beings, we are pre-disposed to consider the existence of a Power greater than ourselves. As human beings, we are well aware of our limitations, our finitude, our own mortality. What if God were to appear before us and say, "Here I am!"

What if He already has?

*Submitted by CH (CPT) Peter Strong
Brigade Chaplain, 304th Sustainment Brigade*

Hooah of the Week



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Brian A. Barbour

Spc. Jaclyn M. Mims is congratulated by Brig. Gen. Michael J. Lally, 3rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) commanding general, for being selected this week's "Hooah of the Week". Mims, who is from Palmer, Mass., is a paralegal specialist for Headquarters Service Company, 224th Military Intelligence Battalion, Aerial Exploitation out of Hunter Army Airfield in Savannah, Ga. Mims was recognized for her work managing the JBB tax center which helped approximately 1,000 service members and civilians to file their taxes. The center provided a free tax service which helped save service members and civilians over \$110,000 in fees that would have been paid to professional tax service centers in the US.



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K-9, handler keep servicemembers safe

BY STAFF SGT. DILIA AYALA
332nd AEW Public Affairs

CAMP TAJI, Iraq- It is often said a dog is a man's best friend. For a Joint Expeditionary Tasking or JET Airman here, his dog is not just a friend, but a tool that could mean life or death for servicemembers patrolling the Iraqi streets.

Senior Airman William Bailey, a military working dog handler and JET Airman from the 732nd Air Expeditionary Group attached to the Army's 1st Cavalry Division here, and Robby, a nine-year-old Belgian Malinois patrol, explosives detector dog, work together to keep servicemembers safe.

"My mission here is to search for and expose explosives in any form," said Airman Bailey. "(Robby and I) go on cordon walks, air assaults, raids, anything that the Soldiers on the ground need help in protecting themselves by the detection of explosives.

"We go out and find the bombs before something could go off and injure our fellow men and women fighting together," he added.

The duo is constantly training to ensure they are always mission-ready.

"We do training daily," said the Airman, deployed here from the 4th Security Forces Squadron at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, N.C. "Training is constant with us; we have to stay proficient in our duties because of the dangerous aspect of it.

"Obedience (training) is done daily,

and explosive detection (training) is done as often as possible," said the native of Richmond, Va. "It's vital."

Paired for almost a year now, Airman Bailey said the team hit it off from the first time they met.

"We have a great bond together," he said. "We've been together since June of 2008. We just mesh together perfectly.

"(Being deployed with Robby) has been a fun experience," he said. "(Military working dog handlers) get a little extra privilege by having a little buddy with us the whole deployment. It's nice to have that bond especially on those tough days when you're feeling a little bit down. You just look down at the dog and see how happy he is to just be hanging out with you. It just brightens your day."

As a JET Airman, Airman Bailey has had the opportunity of being attached to the Army, and he said he has thoroughly enjoyed being a part of the Army's 1st CAV MWD team. His Army counterpart feels the same way about Airman Bailey.

"It's great having him as part of the team," said Army Staff Sgt. David Harrison, 1st CAV kennelmaster, who is deployed from Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. "He goes out on missions and does his part like any Soldier would. There isn't a difference.

"We work well together," added the Castle Rock, Colo., native. "We are helping keep our fellow servicemembers safe."

As his deployment nears its end,



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Dilia Ayala

Senior Airman William Bailey, a military working dog handler and Joint Expeditionary Tasking Airman from the 732nd Air Expeditionary Group attached to the Army's 1st Cavalry Division, praises Robby, his nine-year-old Belgian Malinois patrol, explosives detector dog, after he successfully completed an obstacle course as part of daily training here. Airman Bailey and Robby are deployed here from the 4th Security Forces Squadron, Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, N.C.

Airman Bailey reflects on his appreciation for his K-9.

"It's been a great experience; I've had a lot of fun," he said. "I was a little nervous (about being deployed to Iraq) this being my first time over here, especially with the dog. It has created a lot of good memories.

"The bond that I share with (Robby) is probably the most meaningful part of the job," said the Airman with

a smile. "If I didn't have him, then I'd have to learn how to smell bombs. It would be much more difficult, more time-consuming, and a lot more dangerous. He's been doing this all his life, and he loves to do it."

Together, Airman Bailey and Robby will return together to Seymour Johnson AFB and continue working as a team -- and preparing for future deployments.

HVAC technicians enhance quality-of-life mission for JBB

BY STAFF SGT. JOHN GORDINIER
332nd AEW Public Affairs

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq - With temperatures on the rise, more and more Airmen deployed here are looking to their air-conditioning units for relief. When the AC units are not functioning properly, a small group of Airmen come to the rescue - heating ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration systems technicians.

"We maintain, repair and install all HVAC systems and related components," said Master Sgt. Dennis Salud, 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron HVAC/R section chief deployed here from Andersen Air Force Base, Guam. "We ensure all mission-critical and support facilities have adequate HVAC equipment, inspect new facilities as they are being built to make sure contractors are following specifications, and make recommendations on plans that are being made for future facilities."

As summer approaches, this time of the year is the busiest for the HVAC technicians.

"We are trying to be sure all units are working properly before the hot season gets here," said Staff Sgt. Clint Ressler, 332nd ECES HVAC technician, deployed here from Misawa Air Base, Japan. "It gets extremely hot during the summer here so that is our busy time. During the winter it doesn't get extremely cold here so that is our slow time and our time to get all air conditioners in good working order."

There is always an increase of work during changeover, said Staff Sgt. Alphonso Reed, 332nd



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. John Gordinier

Staff Sgt. Harold Gaines, 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration systems craftsman, installs a new A/C unit at the Patriot Clinic here April 14. Sergeant Gaines is part of the 16-person HVAC shop that maintains more than 6,000 pieces of equipment throughout JBB. Sergeant Gaines is deployed here from Langley Air Force Base, Va.

ECES HVAC technician, deployed here from Andrews Air Force Base, Md.

"During the changeover, we are mostly preparing for the next season, which consists of maintenance and equipment replacement," added the Waycross, Ga., native.

The HVAC technicians all say they are busier while deployed here. This can be attributed to the technician-to-task ratio.

"It's just the amount of manning we have here," Sergeant Salud said. "Currently, we have a 16-person shop, and we have approximately 6,000 pieces of equipment that need to be maintained.

"Right now, we just received four local-national hires," added the Darien, Ill., native. "They are here for training. Between trying to get our job done and training them, it's a pretty good challenge juggling things around. Knowing the local-nationals are going to be our replacement as we draw down is a good feeling, because the more we get them trained, the fewer Airmen have to deploy here."

Although the shop may be undermanned, the technicians make it a priority to maintain each piece of equipment. With all the jobs throughout JBB, the HVAC technicians provide service to many customers.

"As an HVAC technician, I feel both unappreciated and appreciated - it depends on the customer," Sergeant Reed said. "For example, if I go on a job and it takes longer than expected, the customer sometimes complains. However, there are always the more appreciative customers that are just glad to see us respond - especially when temperatures are 100 degrees-plus."

Overall, the HVAC technicians love what they do.

"I love to walk into an office that is 90 degrees-plus, fix their A/C unit, and it is 72 degrees or cooler when I leave," Sergeant Ressler said. "It is a good feeling to know everyone in the office can do their job more efficiently because they are more comfortable."

Sustainers, PRT bring joy to Iraqi kids

BY MAJ DALE COPARANIS
UPAR, 167th CSSB, 287th Sust.
Bde.

MUTHANNA PROVINCE, Iraq – Coalition Soldiers from the 167th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion conducted two civil military operation missions here April 13, bringing the joy of toys and school supplies to over 225 Iraqi children.

Adel Fadel, director of the Al Muthanna Provincial Reconstruction Team and operation supervisor, viewed the progress of two projects. The PRT is part of the U.S. State Department and works directly with the Government of Iraq, non-governmental organizations

and Iraqi businessmen and citizens in order to assist Iraq in building a strong and stable future.

The first mission was to Samawah's Eternal Hope Orphanage, where over 150 children in grades one through five, without living parents, use the orphanage's facilities. Unlike orphanages in western cultures, the children do not live at the facility. Instead, here they are taken care of by extended family members. The orphanage is set up as a facility for the children are educated and cared for during the day and given "fatherly" guidance.

Capt. Bruce S. Balvin, commander of Alpha Company, 56th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, oversaw the distribution of toys, clothes and other items brought to the orphanage.

"The children for the most part were quiet, shy, maybe a little scared of us. That was until the Soldiers left the room. After a few minutes you could hear them laughing and playing," he said.

Fadel said he was very pleased with the progress the orphanage is making and states that a class is added each year and soon there will be grades through high



U.S. Army photo by Lt. Col. Gavin Heater

1st Lt. Antonio Garcia-Mendez, 167th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion Chaplain sits with two children from the Eternal Hope Orphanage at Samawa, Iraq, April 13.



U.S. Army photo by Lt. Col. Gavin Heater

Iraqi children at the Eternal Hope Orphanage in Samawa, Iraq wait patiently for the 167th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion Soldiers to pass out toys and supplies, April 13.

school. "They want to build a foundation with the children and then nurture them into their teen years," he said.

Upon successfully completing their first mission, Coalition Soldiers continued to their next location, the Al Doha Elementary School.

Settled amidst mud and straw buildings, approximately 85 children at the mud-walled school anxiously peered out of their classrooms as Fadel and the Soldiers brought them school supplies, toys and blankets.

With much excitement, the children

sat back in their seats as the Soldiers came inside.

Despite their primitive conditions, the school boasted a soccer team. They were happy to receive their first-ever team shirts, courtesy of Fadel's PRT.

"The kids were very interested in trying to speak English and they truly wanted to interact with the Soldiers," said Lt. Col. Gavin Heater, battalion commander, 167th CSSB. "Despite the physical challenges to their education, they were willing to walk great distances to better themselves."

Iraqi General visits Sustainers at Joint Base Balad

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SGT. ALEX SNYDER
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Brig. Gen. Mohammedali Kathem, director of ammunition for the Iraqi Army, met with Sustainers from the 3rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) here April 20.

Kathem visited JBB to see how the 3rd ESC processes, stores and accounts for munitions.

Brig. Gen. Michael J. Lally, the 3rd ESC commander, led Kathem on a tour of the corps storage area, where various types of munitions are stored and processed.

Lally explained how the Army uses radio frequency tags to track and ship munitions.

Kathem also toured the ammunition turn-in area, an area within the CSA, where munitions are inspected for serviceability and then stored or destroyed.

3rd ESC personnel explained to Kathem how the U.S. assigns batches of munitions lot numbers, which makes it easier to differentiate and remove munitions that have been found to be defective or potentially



Brig. Gen. Mohammedali Kathem, director of ammunition for the Iraqi Army, listens to Brig. Gen. Michael J. Lally, the commander of the 3rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) speak during a visit to Joint Base Balad, Iraq, April 20.

dangerous.

"Our automation system allows us to look over all of Iraq," Lally said.

At the 3rd ESC headquarters, Kathem was briefed on the step-by-step process of moving munitions, beginning at the ammunition factory in the U.S. and ending in the hands of the warfighter overseas.

Speaking through an interpreter, Kathem explained that he is developing an eight-month course for his officers and enlisted Soldiers on munitions operations – the likes of which does not currently exist within the Iraqi Army, Kathem said.

Kathem, who rejoined the Iraqi Army in February 2007 after a five-year absence, thanked Coalition forces for sharing information on munitions operations.

Iraqi, Coalition Leaders open the Iraqi Logistics Operations Center

COURTESY STORY BY 3^d ESC ISF-TRANSITION TEAM

FORWARD OPERATING BASE HONOR, Iraq – Iraqi and Coalition force leaders met here to open the Iraqi Logistics Operations Center (ILOC) during a ribbon cutting ceremony April 15.

Twenty-six leaders in attendance came together with one primary mission in mind- “provide the commander, Joint Headquarters Iraqi Armed Forces fast, accurate and actionable logistics readiness information, to include key equipment serviceability status and the availability of critical sustainment commodities.”

Attending the ceremony were Min. of Defense Abd Al-Qadir Muhammad Jassim Al-Ubaydi; Gen. Babakir Badir-khan Zibari, chief of staff, Iraqi Joint Forces (IA); Maj. Gen. Mike Eyre, commander, USACE Gulf Region Division (US) ; Brig. Gen. Mark Lacey, Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq, deputy commanding general (AUS); Brig. Gen. Heidi Brown, Multi-National Corps-Iraq, deputy commanding general (Sustainment) (US); Brig. Gen. Michael J. Lally, 3^d Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) commanding general; Brig. Gen. Steven Salazar, deputy commander MNSTC-I, Coalition Army Advisor and Training Team (CAATT).

The generation of the ILOC is another milestone in the development of the

Iraqi Security Forces into a self-reliant organization and will increase its capacity to conduct self-sustainment of security operations.

The ILOC will allow senior Iraqi logisticians to receive critical logistics data such as vehicle operational readiness, repair parts stockage and maintenance work orders and utilize the information fusion process to generate an operational level of knowledge for use in conducting logistics estimates and developing threshold planning factors.

Also in attendance was Lt. Col. Billy Hall, chief, Iraqi Security Forces-Transition Team, 3^d ESC, who will serve as the 3^d ESC senior adviser in support of the Joint Headquarters Advisor and Assistance Transition Team (JHAATT)

during the ILOC’s upcoming certification exercise.

The ceremony was part of an Iraqi tradition to celebrate the completion of the construction of the new buildings and structures; the official ribbon cutting was followed by a gracious feast for everyone present.

The ILOC will fall under the control of the deputy chief of staff logistics (DCSLOG) and will support the logistics directors through coordination of effort between the transportation and provisions, mechanical maintenance and munitions managers to provide the Iraqi Army a true logistics common operating picture (LCOP) to support operational planning and decision making processes.

‘Bushmasters’ curb their enthusiasm

BY SGT. 1ST CLASS PAUL W. MCKENNA, JR.
UPAR, 30TH CSSB, 16TH SUST. BDE.

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq – Soldiers from Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment, 30th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, made noticeable improvements, like

curbs and painted logos, to their company area here April 10.

“It’s important to improve your fox-

hole,” said Capt. Peter Lewis, commander, Co. B and native of Sacramento, Calif. “Charlie Company, 151st Infantry, did it for us and we’re doing it for the next company coming in. This is just a small way that Bravo Company can leave its mark here in northern Iraq.”

The most noticeable difference to the Dublin, Calif., based company’s area is around the tactical operations center where Soldiers replaced sandbags with concrete curbing and added a pull-up bar. The Soldiers also painted the Bushmaster logo onto the large barrier wall near the entrance to the company area.

“Even the small things take a great

deal of work” said 1st Sgt. Steven Trestler, native of Paso Robles, Calif., and first sergeant, Co. B, 1st Bn., 184th Inf. Regt. “We take for granted the simple things; you can’t go to the hardware store and get bags of concrete.”

Bravo Company soldiers worked many hours doing clean up and area beautification, and packed away boxes of old parts and set up parking spots in the motor pool.

“This helps mark a transition from old business to a new type,” said 1st Lt. Patrick Bagley, executive officer, Co. B. “We see it as a statement. We are taking pride in this country and we want to see it better.”

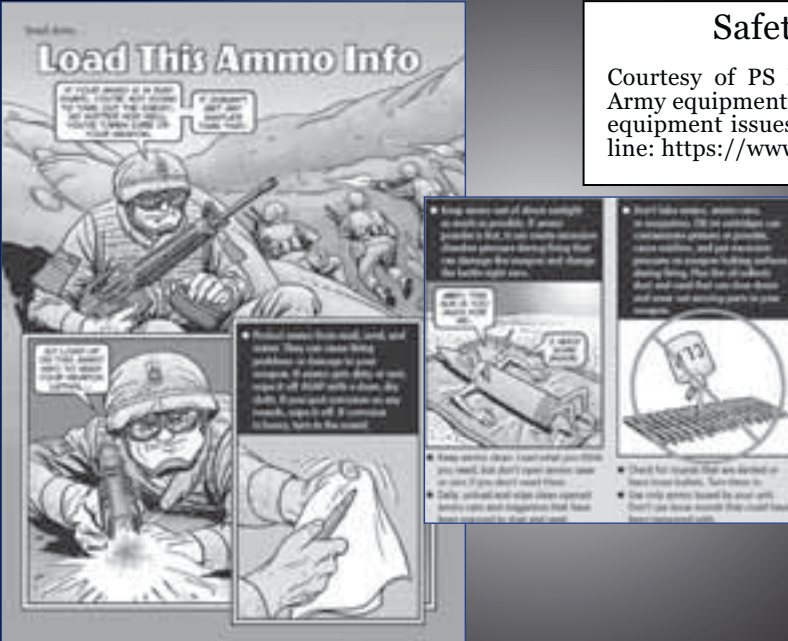
Check CHUsdays

Each Tuesday Check The Following in Your CHU

1. Power strips are free of debris and clothing
2. Electrical devices not in use are unplugged
3. Power strips and outlets are not overloaded
4. Smoke detector is operational
5. Fire extinguisher is serviceable (in the green)
6. Room is neat and orderly

This Simple Act Could Save You, Your CHU and Your Buddy Too

SAFETY



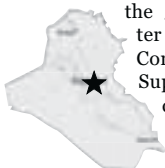
Safety Topic of the Week

Courtesy of PS Magazine. For service members using Army equipment needing more information for on-going equipment issues and challenges, visit PS Magazine online: <https://www.logsa.army.mil/psmag/psonline.cfm>

QM Mission Complete: Rustamiyah

By 1st Lt. Man Fung Wong
UPAR, 590th QM Co., 398th CSSB,
10th Sust. Bde.

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq -- Soldiers of the 590th Quartermaster Company, 398th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, recently completed the important mission of providing shower, laundry,



and clothing repair support to thousands of Coalition Soldiers at the former Forward Operating Base Rustamiyah.

"It was a learning experience for me since this was my first jump [relocate] mission as a shower and laundry specialist," said Sgt. Mecca Forrest, a native of Brooklyn, N.Y. "The Soldiers in this team are highly motivated and showed me what this job is all about. We worked many long nights in order to provide the Soldiers at FOB Rusta-

miyah the services that they needed." The 590th QM Co. sends out teams of shower, laundry, and clothing repairers all across Iraq.

These teams operate a portable laundry unit called the laundry advanced system.

This industrial-sized washer and dryer enable the laundry teams to begin operations within 24- to 48-hours of arriving at a site.

The Soldiers of the 590th QM Co. understand the importance of their

roles in the battlefield and strive to perform their duties under any circumstance. They understand they provide an important service to Soldiers in stressful combat situations and their laundry teams provide some luxuries of life that many Soldiers often take for granted.

FOB Rustamiyah, was situated in southeastern Baghdad. It was transferred back to the Iraqi Military Academy on March 31, as part of the transfer of bases in the security agreement.

Local Iraqis bond with California, Tennessee guardsmen

BY SGT. 1ST CLASS PAUL W. MCKENNA, JR.
UPAR, 30TH CSSB, 16TH SUST. BDE.

DEBECKA, Iraq – California and Tennessee guardsmen from Contingency Operating Base Q-West brought soccer balls, school supplies and medical attention to one Iraqi family here April 1.



In March, an Iraqi child from the community ran in front of a Coalition forces convoy and was struck by a ve-

hicle mirror causing minor head injuries.

"It is important to check on the young boy to ensure he is getting the proper medical treatment from the local authorities and to demonstrate our care and concern for the local populace and their well being," said Lt. Col. Tommy Baker, commander, 30th CSSB.

Coalition forces concern for the Iraqi boy's health and the interaction with the local community during the visit was a success.

"The village was extremely receptive to our visit and our troops had

a chance to interact with the locals which is always good for building stronger relationships," said Baker. "Overall, this mission will strengthen relationships between Coalition forces and the local populace in that area."

Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment, 30th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade assisted and explained to the Iraqi family on the proper completion of the claims card for compensation of medical bills and associated expenses for the medical care of the young boy.

"He appeared well when we visited

him," said Maj. Michael Price, surgeon, 16th Sust. Bde., after examining the child. "I believe he is going to make a complete recovery with no permanent neurologic deficits."

"It was good to see how well the young man was doing and to have the chance to show him that we care," said Spc. Michael Rankin, an Alpha Co. driver.

The unit Soldiers and 30th CSSB leaders distributed soccer balls, pens, pencils, school supplies and many treats to the children of the community.

Mannheim Sustainers return to the road again

BY MAJ. DONNA JOHNSON
UPAR, 68TH TRANS. CO., 419TH
CSSB, 10TH SUST. BDE.

CAMP TAJI, Iraq - The 68th Transportation Company, from Mannheim, Germany, served as a Logistics Training and Advisory Team with the mission to train, advise, and mentor the Iraqi Army's



General Transport Regiment from Sept. 2008 through Feb. 2009

On March 1, the Soldiers of the 68th Trans. Co., 419th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade returned to doing what they do best - driving trucks.

"I liked partnering with the GTR, it was a good experience" said Pfc. Brandy Kallio, a Fayetteville, N.C. native. "I enjoyed learning about a different culture, but I am excited about returning to the road."

While their mission training the GTR has ended, they positioned the GTR for success and continuing to self-sustain their logistics and transportation operations.

The GTR, the only theater-level transportation unit in the Iraqi Army, has a tremendous task of transporting critical supplies and equipment to and from various depots, multiple ports of embarkation, and 12 location commands around Iraq.

In six months, Soldiers of the 68th Trans. Co., planned and executed a month-long exercise for the GTR to

become trained and certified to conduct convoys.

The unit also taught an extensive maintenance training program, enabling the GTR to keep its fleet of more than 350 vehicles on the road.

Establishing a Driver's Training Academy (DTA), the 68th Trans. Co. Soldiers trained and licensed the GTR vehicle operators. As a result, the GTR now operates a DTA with no Coalition forces assistance. To date, the GTR DTA cadre have trained and licensed more than 100 Iraqi Soldiers on the regiment's fleet of vehicles. This is a significant accomplishment for any unit - let alone one manned entirely by Iraqi Army noncommissioned officers.

While mentoring the GTR through 50 real-world missions, the 68th

Trans. Co., has shared essential technical and tactical knowledge with the Iraqi Soldiers and leaders. The GTR successfully executed more than 12,000 miles transporting more than 1,500 pieces of equipment throughout Iraq.

As the GTR's need for transporters has increased, they continue to display outstanding performance as they support Coalition forces throughout Multi-National Division-Baghdad.

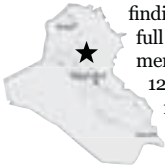
Since returning to truck missions, the 68th Trans. Co. executed numerous missions supporting the 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment and other customers within the Multi-National Division - Baghdad.

The 68th Trans. Co. is scheduled to re-deploy in June 2009.

Soldiers receive assignment incentive pay

BY SPC. AMANDA TUCKER
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq -- Soldiers are finding their pockets more full at the end of deployments lasting longer than 12 months. Active and reserve Soldiers who are serving in Iraq and Afghanistan on temporary change



of station orders qualify for assignment incentive pay.

Sgt. Karl Paul, the chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear noncommissioned officer in charge for the Fort Knox, Ky., based 3d Sustainment Command

(Expeditionary) said, "The extra \$3,000 that I would get, I wouldn't spend it; I would save it and put it in some kind of investment."

"It (is) a way of compensating Soldiers for staying beyond their original 12 month rotational requirement," said Capt. Autarie Bivins, a Cordele, Ga., native and commander of the 126th Financial Management Company, based out of Fort Bragg, N.C.

AIP entitlements will depend on branch of service and the extended time deployed. Active duty Soldiers will receive \$1,000 for each month after their year mark from boots on ground. For reserve Soldiers, if their extension is less than three months, their AIP will be

\$300 a month. If a reserve Soldier's extension time is longer than three months, they will receive \$500 a month for each month past the year mark.

"I think it's a great idea," said Paul, a Hinesville, Ga., native. "It shows that the military service is basically commending us for the extra effort."

So what is the catch? How much paperwork does the Soldier have to go through to receive this benefit? The answer is nothing! Your unit S1 will take care of the paperwork about a month before your 365th day in theater.

For active Soldiers, the new pay will be reflected on the leave and earnings statement as Save Pay. For reservists, the pay will reflect as incentive pay. Active

duty Soldiers will begin receiving pay the month after their 366th day; reservists will have a one month lag on their AIP payment.

For enlisted Soldiers, AIP is tax free. For officers, if the AIP pushes monthly pay over \$7,100.10, the overage is taxed.

For more information, read ALARACT 137/2007, MILPER Message 07-235 or contact your Adjutant or local finance office.

Editor's Note: This is a reprint from the Sept. 10, 2008 Expeditionary Times article to inform our readers of the AIP program.

Logisticians exchange reins of 402nd AFSB

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SUMMER BARKLEY
402ND AFSB PAO

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq -- Col.

Brian R. Haebig assumed command of the 402nd Army Field Support Brigade during a change-of-command ceremony here March 21.

The ceremony was presided over by Brig. Gen. John F. Wharton, deputy commanding general, United States Army Field Support Command with duty as commanding general, Army Materiel Command Southwest Asia/G-4, United States Army Central.

Haebig previously commanded the 404th AFSB headquartered at Fort Lewis, Wash., where he supported I Corps-Fort Lewis and the Pacific theater.

Haebig assumed command from Col. Robert P. Sullivan and Lt. Col. Ronald F. Fizer, the 402nd AFSB commanders.

"If there was ever a right fit to replace Pat Sullivan, it's Brian Haebig," said Wharton. "He's combat ready, knows logistics and he knows how to lead. I am confident he will provide the best combat support available under the most challenging and adverse conditions."

Wharton praised Sullivan for "blazing a path for transformation of sustainment and field level support." He said under Sullivan's command the brigade fielded, sustained and serviced nearly 8,000 Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicles; maintained operational readiness over 90 percent; planned and executed installation of 100 percent of the required gunner restraint system on more than 5,700 MRAPs in less than three months from the first delivery and provided "first-class support to active National Guard and Reserve units in [the] battle space."

Wharton said Fizer provided continuous, uninterrupted support without mission failure to Operation Iraqi Freedom; he maintained readiness rates well over Army standards, planned for future operations in support of responsible drawdown and "provided the best combat support available."

In his remarks, Haebig said, "I was always envious of the size and complexity of the 402nd and was so impressed by the professionalism of the team and how they conducted support to the warfighter throughout the entire county of Iraq."

"These are exciting times, we have a presidentially assigned mission: responsibly reducing the size of our force here -- success for us is proper accountability, continued maintenance



Col. Brian R. Haebig, commanding officer, 402nd Army Field Support Brigade receives the unit colors from Brig. Gen. John F. Wharton, deputy commanding general, United States Army Field Support Command, during a change of command ceremony at Joint Base Balad, Iraq March 21.

excellence and supporting the warfighter's requirements" Haebig said. "If we work together we will succeed."

He thanked Fizer for posturing the brigade for success.

"Since December, I have had the honor to lead this great organization and build upon the monumental work that Colonel Sullivan had put in place," Fizer said.

He thanked the men and women of the 402nd that they "perform incredible acts across the Iraq theater of operations that enable our forces to execute successful operations."

Fizer's next assignment will be to the U.S. Army War College. Sullivan was not in attendance due to medical reasons and was stateside during the ceremony.

Germany-based Sustainers master battalion board

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. 1ST CLASS JENNY ANNE CANLAS
UPAR, 18th CSSB, 16th Sust. Bde.

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE MAREZ-EAST, Iraq -- For many Soldiers in the Army, it's a familiar drill: Knock loudly three times on the door, listen for "Enter!" and next thing you know, a command sergeant major and four first sergeants are staring you down.

The often-intimidating senior enlisted leaders watch a Soldier's every move and listen carefully to every answer that comes out of their mouth. The nervous Soldier recites the creed of the noncommissioned officer, the Soldier's Creed, and sings the Army Song, until finally directed to take a seat. This is just the beginning of the long, arduous process in any military "board," and ends after a Soldier answers rapid-fire questions on a wide range of Soldier



Sgt. Joseph Bannister, section leader and board sponsor, Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, makes last minute uniform adjustments for Spc. Shairlonda Harden, HHC, 18th CSSB, before she enters the 18th CSSB Warrior Leader and Soldier of the Quarter board at Contingency Operating Site Marez-East, Iraq, April 9.

and leader tasks.

For Sgt. Keelon Primus, 51st Transportation Co., based out of Mannheim, Germany, and Spc. Shairlonda Harden, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, based out of Grafenwoehr, Germany, both 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion Soldiers experienced these intense situations during the battalion's Warrior Leader and Soldier of the Quarter board here April 9.

"I was recommended to the board because of my drive and will to succeed," said Primus, a native of East Stroudsburg, Pa.

Primus's NCOs and Soldiers in his platoon supported and helped him succeed in his achievement, he said. They asked him general military questions throughout the day to help prepare him for the board.

Despite his busy schedule conducting convoy operations, Primus said he still continued to study and practiced breaking down weapon systems to prepare for the board.

"It's a challenge, because of the lim-

ited time you have between missions and down time, but it's a great accomplishment when you know your hard work pays off," he said.

General military knowledge and professional bearing are also evaluated during the board.

"They help you to really know where you stand as far as Soldier skills and military bearing," says Harden, who is in her first deployment to Iraq.

Primus and Harden both want to set a good example for their peers and continue to excel in their military careers. They represent the future leaders of the Army.

Primus and Harden were both selected to compete in the upcoming 16th Sustainment Brigade "Warrior and Warrior Leader of the Quarter" board, at Contingency Operating Base Q-west, Iraq. Both Soldiers said they are confident and well-prepared, and they are ready to represent their units and the 18th CSSB against the top Soldiers from six other battalions across northern Iraq at the brigade board.

On the Web



3D SUSTAINMENT COMMAND
(EXPEDITIONARY)

<http://www.army.mil/3rdesc>

Transportation Soldiers train sister brigade company

STORY AND PHOTO BY
1ST LT. CHARLES YORK
UPAR, 233rd Trans. Co., 391st
CSSB, 16th Sust. Bde.

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE
SPEICHER, Iraq – Army motor vehicle
instructors from the Fort
Knox, Ky., based 233rd
Transportation Compa-
ny, 391st Combat Sus-
tainment Support
Battalion, 16th Sust-
tainment Brigade,
trained 20 Soldiers



on the heavy equipment transport sys-
tem here April 14.

Soldiers from the 135th Quartermas-
ter Co., 167th CSSB, 287th Sust. Bde.,
currently deployed at COB Adder, travel-
ed to Speicher for the 10-day train-
ing.

“The 233d Transportation Co. has
trained us in the past, at Fort Stewart,”
said Staff Sgt. Terrance Porter, 135th
QM Co. “They always do a great job
ensuring that every Soldier is given the

tools necessary to become proficient
with the HET system.”

Porter, a Jackson, Miss., native, partici-
pated in the training with his Sol-
diers. The training lasted ten days and
encompassed every aspect of the HET
system to include preventive mainte-
nance, winching, ground guiding, tying
down loads, and maneuvering the ve-
hicle through tight areas.

Sgt. Corey Case, heavy wheeled ve-
hicle operator, 233d Trans. Co., gave the
Soldiers instructions on maneuvering
the HET system through tight areas.

“You have to be careful when driving
through the Iraqi Army’s checkpoints
because you don’t want to cause any
damage to your vehicle, and you also
don’t want to disrupt any of the Iraqi’s
security efforts,” said Case, a Storm
Lake, Iowa, native.

The 135th QM Co. has been running
truck tractor missions throughout cen-
tral and southern Iraq, and will now be
running HET systems throughout the
area as well. This will provide support
to units who require oversized vehicles
to haul their heavy equipment.



Sgt. Kenneth Robinson, 233d Transportation Company, 391st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, and Bardstown, Ky., native, instructs Soldiers from the 135th Quartermaster Co. on how to properly change a tire on a heavy equipment transport at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, April 13.

The “Wright” example for an NCO

BY LT. COL. RENEE ROUSE
304th Sust. Bde. PAO

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq — Sgt.
Cleveland Wright, native
of Savannah, Ga., and
supply sergeant for the
602nd Maintenance
Company from Fort
Hood, Texas, moti-
vated 35 Soldiers
who were enrolled



in the company’s remedial physical
training program since arriving here in
June 2008.

The Soldiers entered the program
for physical fitness, weight control, or
both.

“The environment in theater has a lot
to do with the success of the Soldiers
in the program,” Wright said. “Physical
fitness is done by everybody, every-
where you go. One can concentrate on
oneself and they don’t have the distrac-
tions of alcohol and restaurants they
have at home.”

Wright said the troops’ hard work
and motivation paid off when 10 Sol-
diers improved their Army Physical Fit-

ness Test scores by 20 to 50 points
thus passing their APFT; 15 Soldiers
met the Army weight control stan-
dard.

Part of Wright’s physical training
program, required the participants to
meet twice a day for one hour and
conduct various forms of physical
activity.

“With the weather (here), they can
participate in more outside activities.
Soldiers walk everywhere with their
weapons and their bodies know the
change,” he said.

“I can continue to be involved in Sol-
diers lives every day and feel like I
have made a difference,” he said. “See-
ing the benefits of your work, such as
seeing an irresponsible Soldier become
a responsible one and ready to lead.”

Although Wright has many career
options in the military, he said he will
remain an NCO and “continue to advise”
Soldiers. While his “biggest fear grow-
ing up was I wasn’t going to be some-
thing but as an NCO, I’m a big brother
to some and a little brother to others.”

Wright advises young Soldiers that
“They must be versatile, understand
their job. Turn things into positives,
be flexible and have the ability to adapt to



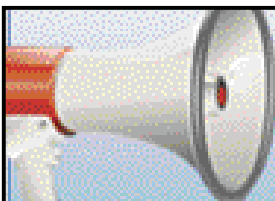
U.S. Army photo by Spc. Kelly Anne Beck

Sgt. Cleveland Wright, from Savannah, Ga., and supply sergeant for the 602nd Maintenance Company out of Fort Hood, Texas, monitored his company’s remedial physical training program while deployed to Joint Base Balad since June 2008. He said he has a passion for motivating Soldiers to become healthy and physically fit.

your environment.”

Wright said he was commended by
his first sergeant, 1st Sgt. Curtis Spann,

from Branden, Miss., for the success
of the remedial physical training pro-
gram.



Give a Shout Out!

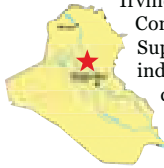
Tell your family and friends how much you miss them.

Send a brief message to: expeditionarytimes@iraq.centcom.mil Subject line: “Shout Out”

Taji Sustainers inducted into NCO corps

BY SGT. PAUL GARCIA
419TH CSSB, 10TH SUS., BDE.

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Fifty Soldiers from Irvine, California’s 419th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion were inducted into the non-commissioned officers corps during a ceremony here March 27.



Many new NCOs waited to take part in this ceremony, to listen to the advice and expectations as new leaders from the 419th CSSB senior NCOs.

“You guys own a piece of the Army now. These Soldiers are yours. You let the officers borrow them sometimes, but at the end of the day you take them back,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Paul Swanson, a native of Perris, Calif., and 419th CSSB command sergeant major.

First Sgt. Royce L. Harris, a Lubbock, Texas native and Alpha Company, 949th Brigade Support Battalion first sergeant explained, “The soldiers are not here to serve you, but you are there to serve them.”

First Sgt. Craig D. Hale, a Weatherford, Texas native and F Company, 949th BSB first sergeant said, “You are the future legacy of the Army, and your leadership, dedication and com-



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Rex Tran
First Sgt. Donald R. Mills, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 419th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade and a resident of Perris, Calif., offers his advice of “Always do the right thing,” to 50 newly inducted noncommissioned officers during a ceremony at Camp Taji, Iraq March 27.

mitment is what defines you. you need to lead the troops, feed the troops, and train them.”

First Sgt. Brian P. Stoops, a native of Butler, Pa., and Mannheim, Germany’s 68th Transportation Company first sergeant said, “NCOs. I charge you to know yourself and seek self-improvement; know your Soldiers and train them. Set the example in all that you

do. Remember, setting the example is not a job, it is a way of life, 24/7.”

First Sgt. Lamando A. Parker, a native of Salisbury, N.C., and 991st Trans. Co., first sergeant said “Your success is not judged by how far you move up in the ranks ... but how many Soldiers you help move through the ranks. NCOs are homegrown. As sergeants, you produce good or bad NCOs”

As a Perris, Calif. native, 1st Sgt. Donald R. Mills and Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 419th CSSB first sergeant said, “Always do the right thing,” as many senior NCOs offered their guidance of advice and were witness to these young leaders who took the first step into the NCO corps under the archway.

SKUNK WERKS Continued from page one

Before 2003, Chief Warrant Officer 4 Lee A. Rowland, the current officer in charge of the “Skunk Werks”, said he did not believe Soldiers in his career field got a lot of the recognition they deserved; there was even talk of slowly phasing the job out of the Army altogether.

Operation Iraqi Freedom changed all that, he said.

Welders suddenly found themselves fabricating improvised armor for humvees, trucks and armored personnel carriers; cutting patterns out of Armox ballistic steel (or sometimes even salvaged metal); and figuring out the best way to protect Soldiers.

“Now our mission has changed, but back in the day we actually provided a lot of protection for Soldiers,” said Rowland, who remembers up-armor-ing vehicles himself during his last deployment to Mosul, Iraq. “Saving lives was the ultimate goal.”

The 402nd Army Field Support Brigade has since taken over the responsibility of up-armor-ing military vehicles. The “Skunk Werks” returned to its primary mission as a simple welding shop, making everything from ra-

dio mounts to shelves to satellite dish brackets.

In 2006, the “Skunk Werks” was featured in the season finale of the popular Discovery Channel show *Monster Garage*, hosted by Jesse G. James. A crew of handpicked Soldiers and Airmen were given a timed challenge to create a humvee hotrod, complete with custom-made 28-and 26-inch wheels.

The show’s crew added their signatures to the shop’s walls, another reason why they’re being preserved. Ironically, as Rowland pointed out, James’s signature, which was written on the concrete portion of the wall, may not make it to the transportation museum with everything else. Only the temporary walls made out of wood will be torn down and moved, not any part of the permanent structure.

Although no longer involved in the up-armor process, Rowland said his unit is still proud of being a part of the shop’s legacy, and they strive to maintain that reputation by doing the best work they can.

Preserving the “Skunk Werks” is important, he said, because it’s a piece

of history. A different kind of history most people might not be aware of, he went on to say.

“Protecting our troops is what ‘Skunk Werks’ was designed for,”

Berndt said. “Provide armor, even if it was makeshift, for our troops on the road. In my eyes, that’s what needs to be preserved.”



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Mary E. Ferguson
Jesse James (center, w/coveralls) watches as service members work on a hybrid humvee at the “Skunk Werks” welding shop at Logistical Support Area Anaconda, Iraq, December 2005. The mechanics were challenged to create a unique humvee for the popular Discovery Channel show, *Monster Garage*.



287th Sustainment Brigade, COB Adder
<http://www.287susbd.com/>



Finance Soldiers help fellow finance Soldiers

BY STAFF SGT. JOHN J. O'CONNOR
UPAR, 208TH FM CO.,
10TH SUST. BDE.

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq - The Mannheim, Germany based 208th Financial Management Company, 10th Sustainment Brigade Troops Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade arrived here in

January and took control of one of the largest financial disbursing operations in Iraq.

An enormous undertaking, the 208th FM Co., took on a huge mission - battlefield finance support - and were augmented by several detachment Soldiers from Alpha Company, 125th FM Co.; 9th FM Co.; and Delta, 101st FM Co.

Sgt. Lester Standifer, resident of Orlando, Fla., and Det. A, 125th FM Co., military pay review section noncommissioned officer in charge, advised unit commanders and detachment level military pay managers on policy, procedures and technical issues affecting the pay of Soldiers.

The Det. A, 9th FM Co., provided

an additional nine Soldiers to the Headquarters, 208th FM Co., mission. Augmenting the disbursing and operations sections, these Soldiers are essential to safeguarding public funds and the movement of financial resources on the battlefield.

"I was working 128 hours per week before Alpha ninth got here, now I can finally get a little rest," said Sgt. Robert Rhudy of Charleston, W.V., and ecstatic to see such motivated volunteers brought into the headquarters.

Spc. Kealohalani Hanato of Hilo, Hawaii, working with the disbursing section said, "I'll always be an Alpha Knight but I'm very excited and pleased to be here."

"I book and track flights all day long. Who knew the Army had positions for travel agents?" said Pfc. Jared Ouimette jokingly, a native of Highland, Mich., and the company's operations specialist.

"The willingness to cooperate and assist from our finance detachments has been remarkable; without their help the mission would have failed," stated Staff Sgt. Paola Tenorio a Puerto Tejada, Colombia native.

These Soldiers have demonstrated teamwork, loyalty and selfless service



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Denetra Johnson

Members of Alpha Detachment, 9th Financial Management Company, 10th Sustainment Brigade Troops Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, newly attached to headquarters, 208th FM Co., assist the finance support mission at Camp Liberty, Iraq. (From left to right) Pfc. Cassandra Lawrence, a Kingston, Jamaica native; Pvt. Reginald Garner, Mobile, Ala.; Spc. Kealohalani Hanato, of Hilo, Hawaii; Sgt. Ruben Carpenter, a native of Chesapeake, Va.; Spc. Tabitha Sturgil, from Dyer, Tenn.; and Spc. Jermel Adams, a native of San Antonio.

- willing to leave their detachments These Soldiers truly are Army Strong. and join the 208th FM Co., mission.

Base defense Soldiers go on offensive, in softball

STORY AND PHOTO BY
CAPT. JACQUELINE BAIRD
UPAR, 81ST BSTB, 16TH SUST. BDE.

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq - Washington Guardsmen from the 81st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, based out of Everett, Wash., started a softball team,

"B-Pro," the first sports team established since they deployed here six months ago.

The team's coach, 1st Lt. Kurt Strauss from Spokane, Wash., was a softball "skipper," back in the "Evergreen state." He was eager to start a team with Soldiers from throughout

the battalion.

"This has bridged the force protection company and the base defense operations center relationship and gives us the opportunity to compete together," said Strauss. "It's a lot different now; we're having a good time, and getting to know each other."

The team has a lot of rookies, but Strauss has seen much improvement from his players since they first assembled.

"Our team has improved so much since the first time on the field," said Strauss. "Everyone's having a good time and everyone is representing the 81st BSTB well."

The 81st BSTB is responsible for force protection and base defense operations at Q-West. They have been in Iraq for six months, and expect to return home at the end of summer.



Soldiers from the 81st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, out of Everett, Wash., gather around softball coach 1st Lt. Kurt Strauss, a Spokane, Wash., native, to get the line-up for their softball game at the Sgt. Jose Velez Field, Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq, April 11.

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NEVER AGAIN: WHAT WE DO MATTERS



Col. Jarrold M. Reeves, deputy commander of 3^d Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and Rabbi (Capt.) Sarah D. Schechter pose for a photograph with the winners of an essay contest, Joint Base Balad, Iraq, April 23. The contest was part of an event to honor victims of the Holocaust, called "Days of Remembrance."

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Kiyoshi C. Freeman



By 1st Lt. Sean McGarvey
777th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron

The term "holocaust" stems from a Greek word meaning "completely burnt," an appropriate encapsulation of the raging hatred that systematically incinerated millions of innocent people, leaving generations of ashes in its wake. Throughout human history, though, the image of fire has been uniquely dichotomous. In the Bible, for example, fire is the symbol of evil, hell, and Satan; but also of a benevolent and loving God, as in the burning bush that appears before Moses and the fiery tongues that come upon the Apostles at Pentecost. Fire can at once be the arsonist's deadly weapon and the camper's warming light. Similarly, the flames of the Holocaust that devastated so many must also be the very fire that forges a common courage among us to confront evil in our time.

The Holocaust's fires of hatred were ignited long before its exterminations began, however. Like the gasses that slowly suffocated countless Jews, Christians, and other defenseless victims in Nazi death camps, genocide was insidious in its onset. The initial match was struck when a single person declared himself of greater value than another, for reasons beyond the other's control. Without confrontation or opposition, this declaration took hold, subtly poisoning the moral fabric of communities, cities, and ultimately entire countries. Slow to act and weary of confrontation, citizens of moral clarity were soon engulfed by expanding intolerance and eventually rendered impotent by the captivated masses. God's crowning creations, called to be caretakers for the least among them, were senselessly manipulated into handmaidens of hatred and destruction.

From this crucible of death and despair, though, arose a fortified bravery unlike the world has ever known. As famed French thinker Alexis de Tocqueville once stated, "When the past no longer illuminates the future, the spirit walks in darkness." The horrific fires of the Holocaust served to light the torch that illuminates our future. It is a torch that has since been passed to a new generation, yet the survivors of its devastating past continue to guide the way. On February 27, 2003, less than a month before the dawn of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Holocaust survivor and famed Nobel Peace Prize recipient Elie Wiesel spoke with firm conviction to President Bush, saying, "I'm against silence. I'm against neutrality because it doesn't help the victim. It helps the aggressor." A man who once wrote that he and his fellow inmates at Auschwitz "no longer feared death," now had the sagacity to recognize the flames of hatred being stoked once again. Just over six years later, ignited by the example of heroes passed, Saddam Hussein's suffocating tyranny has been toppled, and the foundations of liberty and freedom are strengthening in Iraq with each passing day.

On April 2007's Day of Remembrance, another Holocaust survivor enlightened the world through his resilient valor in the face of inexplicable evil. When a terrifying explosion of gunfire could be heard approaching his classroom, 76-year-old Dr. Liviu Librescu chose to act. Selflessly barricading the doorway with his body, he absorbed five fatal bullets while over twenty of his students escaped through a window. Seventy years after evil had "completely burnt" his family, friends, and countrymen, Dr. Librescu willingly surrendered his body to stomp out the conflagration of contempt that knocked on his door.

As we remember and reflect upon the senseless massacre of the Holocaust, we must also never forget the shining illustrations of courage that have risen from its horrific ruins. The fires of love for freedom and compassion that dwell within us all must exceed the sparks of hatred that have such rapacious potential. Illuminated by the burning flames of the past, we must never be afraid to confront evil and intolerance, for the cost of inaction is far too great. Never again.



By Staff Sgt. Justin Johnson

332nd EAMDS/CASF

*Even in our sleep Pain that we cannot forget
Falls drop by drop upon the heart
Until in our own despair
Against our will comes Wisdom
Through the awful grace of God.*

-Aeschylus

History is a landscape of both horrors and accomplishments. Progression through pain and understanding is an innate human quality that requires resilience and intolerance for injustice. "Without the ability to forget, man would live in a permanent, paralyzing fear of death" (Wiesel, 1986). Working against human nature, we must make a conscious effort to remember the past to ensure that we do not repeat our mistakes, nor can we allow others to make the mistakes of previous tyrants. Accepting injustice allows for the perpetuation of prejudice, repression, and bigotry, tyranny, and intolerance differences between peoples. Standing up to injustice and wrongs committed is an essential position for the progression of humanity.

Nobel Laureate, Elie Wiesel, states in his 1986 Nobel Lecture, *Hope, Despair and Memory*, "There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest." Wiesel (1986) speaks to the atrocities conducted during the Holocaust of World War II in Nazi Europe:

Was Auschwitz a consequence or an aberration of "civilization"? All we know is that Auschwitz called that civilization into question as it called into question everything that preceded Auschwitz. Scientific abstraction, social and economic contention, nationalism, xenophobia, religious fanaticism, racism, mass hysteria. All found their ultimate expression in Auschwitz.

Disallowing the progression of evil ways, and stopping the wrongs committed in our presence, is an obligation of all strong peoples. Edmund Burke (1989) once said, "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for the good men to do nothing." In a world in disarray, many look to the strong for leadership and example. Given the United States' status as a world superpower, and recently, the only superpower, many Americans feel an obligation to stand up for those who cannot stand up for themselves. American foreign policy has often dictated that

the United States come to the aid of countries that cannot adequately support themselves against oppressive aggressors. It is important to both the people of the aided country and the people of the country offering aid; it cannot, and must not, be within our good conscious to stand by and watch as atrocities decimate a population unable to protect itself. It is vital to the collective conscious of the American people to do all that is in our power to do, in ensuring that we exhaust all avenues in the fight to stop injustice.

In his Nobel address, Wiesel (1986) states that, "it is memory that will save humanity." Memory of events past, and atrocities committed, will fuel the fire of intolerance for injustice, ensuring that the people of the world work together to prevent future wrongs. Hope for a better world is what keeps us moving forward, both as a country and as a world community. Hope is the currency with which progression is bought. Wiesel (1986) poignantly asserts his position in saying, "For me, hope without memory is memory without hope." If we cannot remember the mistakes of the past, we are doomed to fail in the future; we must vow as a people to stop any such atrocities, such as Auschwitz, to occur again.

"A person cannot defend against a wrong already perpetrated, although he or she can defend against its continuing consequences." (Boyle, 1996, p. 47) Wrongs past committed cannot be shielded against, although the memory of those wrongs serves to remind us the capabilities that we must guard against in the future. Taking a stand that atrocities, such as those of the Holocaust, will never occur in our lifetime, or in the future lifetimes of those after us, is a position that we need to take to ensure the survival of humanity. Wiesel (1986) eloquently sums up this position in stating, "Mankind must remember that peace is not God's gift to his creatures, it is our gift to each other."



By Senior Airman Jamie Gutierrez

332nd Expeditionary Medical Squadron Laboratory

Tooooo!!! Tooot!! The train zips along the tracks with a steady crescendo of clickety-clacks. A train with several boxcars so innocently moving in a steady line like a mother duck with her ducklings. Only a select few know of the ominous intentions awaiting the oblivious cargo at the end of this journey. The train stops with a loud grating of steel on steel as it slows to a halt. To the cargo inside the boxcars time seems to stop as well. Immediately soldiers run to the boxcar doors and throw them open with enough force to make the wind crack as it hits its limit of opening. Hundreds upon hundreds of people are hoarded like cattle out of the boxcars afraid, uncertain...unsuspecting. As the soldiers guide the civilians to different buildings, they pull some of the few strong men and women to the side. The rest were told to strip off their belongings and remove all clothing and put it in front of them and remember where it was put for later retrieval, another lie to add to the many. Then the naked civilians were escorted into huge chambers that read "Delousing" or "This way to the Baths: Disinfecting Room", another elaborate lie to subdue mass hysteria. Who honestly would walk willingly...willingly to their death?

Once the chamber was full of enough people the doors were closed as innocent human beings looked around nervously for the ornamental shower heads to spray water. The water would never come, only the fog of death that would kill everybody without prejudice. The fog of death permeating from cyanide gas which was lethal and efficient. Once the chambers finished their duty, soldiers would supervise the few pulled to the side to put the lifeless bodies in elevators for transfer downstairs to the furnaces for burning. The time is 1944. The place is known as Auschwitz, a premier death camp in Germany. The dead... thousands upon thousands of Jews.

It has been over 50 years since WWII, but to imagine what the world expe-

rienced so long ago is unfathomable. Something Hollywood concocted for pure entertainment. Unfortunately this is no faire tale and to the 70+ million that lost their lives, there is no happy ending. We should always commemorate and remember the past and the sacrifices many people made in order to make this world a better place today. For to forget the past would allow history to repeat its twisted ways. To not remember would allow other extremist like Hitler to freely enforce their ideals and corrupt the minds of many into thinking genocide is righteous. That forced labor, mistreatment, segregation, sterilization, merciless killing, and almost extermination of a race is just and substantiated through self-righteous beliefs and standards. It is this type of tyranny and treachery that must never be allowed to be repeated.

We are now in the present and even though many do not understand the sacrifices made by thousands of soldiers today, it is necessary. As a human race there must be a voice of reason and an enforcer of justice. This great model and voice is the United States of America and the enforcers of justice are the United States Military. Like the many that sacrificed their lives in WWII, many soldiers have gallantly given life for country and family. You may ask, but why? To enforce justice and peace. To stand up to the tyrants and abusers of power that would repeat history. To prevent senseless destruction and chaos and to allow millions around the world to rest easy at night because there is a guardian angle watching over the world. Because without this guardian it would allow your Saddam Husseins, Kim Jong-ils, Osama Bin Ladens, Fidel Castros and many other villainous few to spread fear and subjugate the masses to ideals and beliefs that supersede law and order. We must never forget the past or its dire outcomes. That what we do matters or even what we don't do matters just as much in a world of choice and consequence.

Finance Soldiers beat military pay accuracy rate

BY 2ND LT. ANDRES LEON
UPAR, 101st FM Co.,
16TH SUST. BDE.

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq — Finance Soldiers from the 101st Financial Management Company, deployed as five detachments across Multi-National Division – North, since arriving in theater in September

2008, strive to improve the accuracy of military pay transactions.

Maj. Claude A. Barfield, commander, 101st FM Co., set a goal to exceed the 98 percent Defense Finance and

Accounting Service (DFAS) coding standard for all military pay transactions.

The DFAS standard for coding military pay transactions is a challenging standard to obtain, and one that is rarely achieved, Barfield said. On a consistent basis, detachment noncommissioned officers conduct multiple audits with their detachment commanders to meet the stringent goals set for the unit, he said.

“MILPAY is one of the most important missions that a financial company has, whether deployed or in a garrison environment,” Barfield said. “Miscoded documents or transactions will cause a ‘reject’ and could cause financial hardship on Soldiers and their Families.”

Financial management detachments process several thousand transactions each month, and if finance Soldiers make mistakes, Soldiers and their Families don’t get paid. For every 10,000 documents processed, a one percent drop in accuracy impacts 100 Soldiers and their Families.

“I take great pride in ensuring my finance Soldiers are properly coding documents,” said Sgt. Daniel Epperson, military pay noncommissioned officer in charge, Charlie Det., 106th FM Co., at Contingency Operating Base Speicher. “We trust combat arms Soldiers to keep us safe, they should be able to trust that we will make sure their pay is on point.”

As the finance Soldiers continue to improve their business for the War-

fighters, it allows their fellow service members to focus on operations outside the wire and not worry about their pay issues, said Barfield.

To date, the finance company has consistently exceeded the 98-percent accuracy rate and continues to work toward closing the less-than-two-percent accuracy gap before completing their deployment.

The 101st FM Co. is composed of five detachments based throughout northern Iraq: Charlie Det., 106th FM Co. is at COB Speicher; Delta Det., 106th FM Co., is at COS Marez-East; Bravo Det., 126th FM Co. is at FOB Warhorse and FOB Sykes; Echo Det., 208th FM Co., is at FOB Warrior and COB Q-West; and Echo Det., 398th FM Co. is at Joint Base Balad.

Charlie Daniels Band performs at Q-West

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. KEITH M. ANDERSON
16TH SUSTAINMENT BDE.
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq – The Devil went down to Q-West, with Charlie Daniels in tow, during a live performance for more than 600 Soldiers, Airmen and civilians at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation base complex here April 18.

The performance was part of a six-stop tour through Kuwait and Iraq, said Lt. Col. Sandra Burt, chief of programs, Multi-National Corps - Iraq.

“Q-West doesn’t always get the shows that tour through Iraq, but our priority is to get entertainment to the outlying bases,” Burt said. “We know that the mission is tough, and these shows break up the monotony and put smiles on Soldiers’ faces.”

Soldiers’ rocked out to classics like “The Devil went down to Georgia,” and Johnny Cash’s “Folsom Prison Blues.” Daniels then stunned the room with his version of the Star Spangled Banner, something he hadn’t played at any of the other stops in Iraq. The rendition garnered Daniels a standing

ovation from the packed room.

“The only reason [I didn’t play it at the other bases] was I hadn’t thought about doing it,” Daniels said.

This was Daniels’ third trip to Iraq, one he commemorated with a three-stanza song, “When I get back from Iraq,” with one stanza written for each trip.

Daniels said he was proud of the work that military servicemen and women were doing, and always made it a point to go where the Soldiers are.

“We came because you guys are here,” Daniels said. “I believe in what you’re doing. I can’t carry a gun, but I can come out and play music.”

Maj. Bill Keltner, chief financial management officer, 16th Sustainment Brigade, said he’d been going to see Charlie Daniels since 1976, when Charlie Daniels would open for Lynyrd Skynyrd.

“I’ve seen this band more times in concert than any other,” said Keltner, a native of Mobile, Ala. “There’s that special showmanship that Charlie Daniels has. I felt it when I was 15 years old, and I still feel it today.”

Keltner got his Iraqi-made six-string acoustic guitar signed by members of the Charlie Daniels Band.

Daniels told the audience of service members how important they are.

“We have been among you in many



Sgt. Don Carlson, truck commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, 146th Field Artillery, and Raymond, Wash., native, hands his guitar to Charlie Daniels for an autograph after a performance at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation base complex at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq, April 18. The Charlie Daniels band performed a two-hour show for more than 600 Soldiers, Airmen and civilians at Q-West. Soldiers rocked out to classics like “The Devil went down to Georgia,” and even a cover of Johnny Cash’s “Folsom Prison Blues.” Daniels then stunned the room with his version of the Star Spangled Banner, something he hadn’t played at any of the other stops in Iraq. The rendition garnered Daniels a standing ovation from the packed room.

parts of the world,” Daniels said. “The more I go among you, the more I’m convinced you’re the finest we’ve got.”

Task Force Muleskinner

10th Sustainment Brigade





10th Sustainment Brigade, Camp Taji <http://www.taskforcemuleskinner.army.mil/mm.asp>

Iraqi Police Academy, Sustainers partners to purify water using ROWPU

1ST LT. MARY LOU DRILLING
UPAR, 20TH QM CO.,
304TH SUST. BDE.

CAMP ASHRAF, Iraq — Three Soldiers from the Fort Campbell, Ky., based 20th Quartermaster Company have been educating and training Iraqis from the Iraqi Police Academy on how to purify water and maintain their water systems.

The 20th QM Co. provided the IP Academy with more than four million gallons of water, while teaching them about the flow of water, basic math skills, and operating the civil-

ian reverse osmosis water purification units.

“The training that the men have is great and I am very happy with the way they are applying what they have learned to work anywhere in Iraq purifying water,” said Iraqi Army Lt. Col. Aiad Abood Shehab, from Khalis, Iraq.

Teaching the Iraqis to use water purification equipment is important to ensuring Iraqi self-sufficiency. Initially, the training goal was to teach three selected members of the academy to learn how to operate their ROWPU. An electrician, a plumber and a generator operator were selected for the project.

Sgt. William Ramos, a native of

Orlando, Fla., and the Iraqi training NCOIC and two water purification specialists, maintained a good rapport while training the Iraqis.

Ramos said the most important things the Iraqis had to learn was how to calculate the amount of chemicals within the water to ensure the water is clean.

The students were taught the difference between well-water and drinking water, and taking the proper steps to make water potable through boiling and adding chlorine. Ramos trained the Iraqi students on all the functions of the ROWPU equipment.

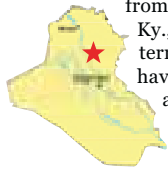
“I used a lot of pictures, slide show presentations and had an interpreter with me at all times,” Ramos said

when dealing with the language barriers. “I almost felt like the interpreter could have taught the class because she learned how to run the ROWPU too.”

The Army provided the IP academy with a civilian ROWPU that purifies 7,500 gallons of water per hour.

Ramos said his main goal is to help the students become more self-sufficient, and learning to purify their own water is one more way to accomplish that.

Their high level of professionalism and determination to educate the Iraqis on water purification has empowered the Iraqis and given them more opportunities for their future, Ramos said.



Highland Games in the Desert?

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
CAPT. GEORGE HURD
UPAR, 2/142 INF., 321ST SUST. BDE.

AL ASAD AIR BASE, Iraq — Lonestar State Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 142nd Infantry Regiment (Task Force Avalanche), caused vehicle and pedestrian traffic jams here during their much anticipated Tartan Day festival, April 6.

tish and Celtic heritage held throughout the year in Scotland and descendent enclaves around the world.

Tartan Day marks the anniversary of the Declaration of Arbroath establishing Scotland's Independence.

Maj. Mike Wallace, master of ceremonies, and 2nd Bn., 142nd Inf. Regt. battalion executive officer, ignited the Tartan Day idea and inspired Soldiers of Scottish descent to requisition their respective kilts. Tartan patterned kilts are distinct and correspond to a specific Clan (extended family) or military organization.

After a long day participating in heavy sports, flying objects, and surprisingly - no injuries, all gathered for a sunset sampling of Haggis with lamb hearts and onions, Iron Brew – a carbonated water drink tasting like bubble gum, butter shortbread, followed by a showing of Braveheart starring Mel Gibson as Sir William Wallace.

During weeks of preparation, Wallace and Staff Sgt. Jeff Hardin built the 80 pound, 16 foot long caber – it became 15 feet long after a practice flip broke its snout. On the morning of the event, Scotland's Lion Rampant replaced the Texas flag – an occasion seldom seen.

Texas Governor Rick Perry dispatched a proclamation to Task Force Avalanche. His message reads in part, “Texas has been deeply influenced by settlers of Scottish descent. Scottish surnames, such as Houston, Austin, Dallas, Crockett and Bowie – are literally all over the Texas map.”

Lt. Col. Mark L. Burkett, 2nd Bn., 142nd Inf. Regt., battalion commander and career “roughneck” infantryman, had an indescribable look when his chain of command, Col. Samuel Bethel and Col. Lee Henry, showed up at the games and saw his staff warriors dressed in kilts.



Texas Army National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 142nd Infantry Regiment Chaplain Terry Callis, shot putts a 40 pound boulder during the Tartan Day festival at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, April 6.

Onlookers converged from all directions in response to post-wide rumors of men wearing dresses – Soldiers of Scottish descent wearing kilts and conducting the Highland Games. The games were a celebration of Scot-



Texas Army National Guard's, Maj. Mike Wallace, 2nd Battalion, 142nd Infantry Regiment positioned to launch a caber during the Tartan Day festival at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, April 6.

Maintenance Soldiers learn to 'CLEAR' casualties

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. 1ST CLASS JENNYANNE CANLAS
UPAR, 18TH CSSB, 16TH SUST. BDE.

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE MAREZ-EAST, Iraq — Soldiers from the 158th Maintenance Company, 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, were taught the company-level evacuation and recovery (CLEAR) training here March 24.

Sgt. Shon Scott, 158th Maintenance Company, 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, tags and takes inventory of the partial simulated casualty during the company-level evacuation and recovery team training at Contingency Operating Site Marez-East, Iraq, March 24.



"As the subject-matter-expert of mortuary affairs, my duty is to ensure that the CLEAR teams are trained," said Sgt. Jerome Gisclair, mortuary affairs noncommissioned officer, 18th



CSSB. The CLEAR teams are necessary, especially in a mass casualty situation on the base, he said.

Gisclair, a native of Golden Meadow, La., provided realistic training scenarios. Before a casualty is turned into the casualty collection point, Gisclair taught how to properly process a casualty and the personal effects.

"The training is important because it gives us the skills needed to make sure the [fallen service member] returns home to the Family," said Sgt. Shon Scott, 158th Maint. Co., and a native of Prattville, Ala. "The training by the 18th CSSB was very informative. Sergeant Gisclair is very knowledgeable and stressed the need for much respect when handling a fallen comrade," he added.

"The duties of the CLEAR team may not be the most desirable job, however it is a necessary job," said Gisclair.

**Stressed?
Relax and go
see a movie.**



**See page 21 for
movie schedule**

Reenlistments surge at Speicher

BY 1ST LT. KEN GRACE
UPAR, 1ST ICTC, 16TH SUST. BDE.

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq — Four Soldiers from the 1st Inland Cargo Transfer Company, 391st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, re-enlisted in the first week of April here.

This brought total re-enlistments for the small company to 16 for the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, surpassing the goal by 145 percent.

The following Soldiers from the 1st ICTC re-enlisted: Spc. Malree Frisby, mechanic, and Penns Grove, N.J., native; Sgt. Elizabeth Jones, retention noncommissioned officer, and Sykesville, Md., native; Sgt. Latroy Reed, aerial control group arrival and departure NCO in charge, and Tallahassee, Fla., native; and Staff Sgt. Gerardo Cordero, central receiving and shipping point NCO in charge, and Chicago, Ill., native.

Sgt. 1st Class Sean Cook, company forward detachment NCOIC, 1st ICTC, said the re-enlistments were due to the efforts of Sgt. Elizabeth Jones, retention NCO, and Sykesville, Md., native.

"Sergeant Jones is doing an outstanding job; her efforts have made this company surpass its re-enlistment objectives," said Cook, a Boson, Mass., native.

Some Soldiers re-enlisted despite not receiving a bonus.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Alicia Slate

Sgt. Elizabeth Jones (right), retention noncommissioned officer, 1st Inland Cargo Transfer Company Forward Detachment, 391st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, takes the oath of re-enlistment from 1st Lt. Ken Grace, detachment commander, 1st ICTC, 391st CSSB, at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, March 31.

"I just got a handshake from Lt. Col. (Ronald) Pacheco, (commander, 391st CSSB), and that was perfectly fine by me," said Frisby.

Another company in the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 391st CSSB also had a spike in re-enlistments in April.

"I'm not sure if it is the warm spring weather, or the motivation and presence of these (retention) NCOs that is driving

Soldiers to re-enlist," said Capt. Merna Morris, commander, HHC, 391st CSSB. "But I'm pleased to retain good and motivated Soldiers."

The following Soldiers from HHC, 391st CSSB re-enlisted in April: Sgt. 1st Class Travis Smith, equipment readiness branch NCOIC, and Horseshoe Bend, Ark., native; Staff Sgt. Jeremy Catron, motor sergeant, and Wichita, Kan., native; Sgt. Natasha Silva, supply special-

ist; and Sgt. Tanishia Thompson, intel analyst.

None of these NCOs reenlisted for bonuses, but a couple of Soldiers requested their duty station of choice, Morris said.

Retention NCOs are appointed to assist the commander in the retention of quality Soldiers and help them understand what the Army can do for them if they choose to extend their service, Morris said.

The Army has improved its options making it more appealing for Soldiers to continue serving, offering assignment location of choice and also providing retention bonuses.

These benefits have encouraged Soldiers to re-enlist to stay in the Army for various reasons, ranging from wanting to continue to serve their country, financial stability, educational opportunities, and the many adventures the Army provides them. The Army is happy to retain Soldiers who have done the right things and served honorably.

Staff Sergeant Gabriel George, retention NCO, HHC, 391st CSSB and Worcester, Mass., native, said he appreciated the opportunity to help young Soldiers and NCOs in their careers.

"I enjoy guiding 'high-speed' Soldiers to re-enlist to stay Army," George said. "Soldiers are always hunting me down to re-enlist."

George said he posts up-to-date information concerning retention in the company and battalion areas, to give Soldiers an idea of the options that are offered in different military occupational specialties.

On the Web 16th Sustainment Brigade "Knights" at
COB Q-West
<http://www.16sustainment.army.mil/>

Orange County's Hollowell rocks Q-West

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
MAJ. SCOTT COOLEY
181ST BSB, 16TH SUST. BDE.

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq — The rock band, Hollowell, jammed for Soldiers at the Favors Outdoor Theater here April 10, in the first outdoor show of the year at this remote Army logistics base in northern Iraq.

Hollowell, a progressive rock band out of Orange County, Calif., performed here for the second time, though it was the band's fourth trip to the Middle East. Band members included Joe Denges, lead vocals and guitar; Matt Hulet, lead guitar; Justin Dike, drums; and Dusty Schiefelbein, backup vocals and bass guitar.

drums; and Dusty Schiefelbein, backup vocals and bass guitar.

Upon arrival, the band went to work setting up equipment for the show and going through sound checks with tour manager and sound-tech Jeffery "Rug" Western. The venue prepared, members of the band took a few minutes to meet with the base Mayor, Lt. Col. Alan Dorow, commander, 181st Brigade Support Battalion, and Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Lane, command sergeant major, 181st BSB.

That left time for dinner and a short break before the show. The evening was cool and clear with a full moon, good weather for an outdoor concert. The band took the stage just after dark. They played primarily original material, but did throw in a few covers, includ-



California Guardsmen from Echo Company, 1st Battalion, 185th Armor, use their armored security vehicle as seating during the Hollowell concert at the Favors Outdoor Theater at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq, April 10. Hollowell, a progressive rock band out of Orange County, Calif., band members included Joe Denges, lead vocals and guitar; Matt Hulet, lead guitar; Justin Dike, drums; and Dusty Schiefelbein, backup vocals and bass guitar.



ing crowd-favorite "Another Brick in the Wall," by Pink Floyd.

More than 150 Soldiers and civilians came out to see the concert.

"I hadn't heard of them before, but they had a real good sound," said Spc. Chris Baumgart, a native of Seattle,

The Orange County Calif., rock band, Hollowell, jammed for Soldiers at the Favors Outdoor Theater at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq, April 10, is the first outdoor show of the year at this remote Army logistics base in northern Iraq.

Wash. "It was an excellent concert."

Those Soldiers that went to the concert were glad they did.

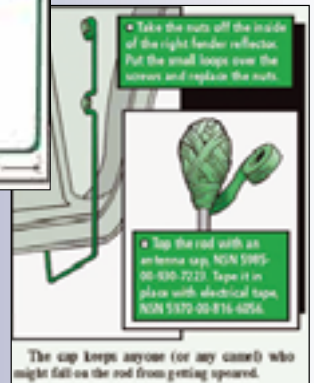
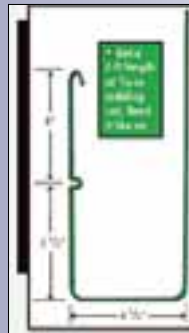
"I wasn't planning on going to the show, but then I had some time off, so I went," said Spc. Shane Sotocole, a native of Rainier, Wash. "I was really surprised; they were great. The lead guitar player was great, inspiring."

Hollowell band members ended the concert with a tribute and prayer for U.S. Service members, and met with Soldiers after the show to sign tour posters.

MAINTENANCE & SUPPLY

Maintenance and Supply Topic of the Week

Courtesy of PS Magazine. Soldiers using Army equipment needing more information for on-going equipment issues and challenges, visit PS Magazine online: <https://www.logsa.army.mil/psmag/psonline.cfm>



Judging the right distance between the front bumper and an obstacle (like a curb, camel or another vehicle) when you can't see the bumper is an on-going problem with the HMMWV—especially when it has add-on armor!

What you need is a bumper guide rod on the curb side of the vehicle. First, get your commander's OK, then have your mechanic make and install the guide rod like so:

JBB Religious Service Schedule

PROTESTANT

TRADITIONAL

Sunday 0200 Air Force Hospital Chapel
 0930 Provider Chapel
 1030 Freedom Chapel (West side)
 1100 Castle Heights (Bldg 4155)
 1400 Air Force Hospital Chapel
 1730 Gilbert Memorial Chapel
 2000 Air Force Hospital Chapel

GOSPEL

Sunday 1100 MWR East building
 1200 Freedom Chapel (West side)
 1230 Gilbert Mem. Chapel (H-6)
 1900 Provider Chapel

CONTEMPORARY

Sunday 0900 MWR East building
 1030 Gilbert Mem. Chapel (H-6)
 1400 Castle Heights (Bldg 4155)
 1900 Freedom Chapel (West side)
 Wednesday 2000 Gilbert Mem. Chapel (H-6)

LITURGICAL

Sunday 1500 Gilbert Chapel (H-6)

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

Saturday 0900 Provider Chapel

CHURCH OF CHRIST

Sunday 1530 Castle Heights (Bldg 4155)

LATTER DAY SAINTS (MORMON)

Sunday 1300 Provider Chapel
 1530 Freedom Chapel (West side)
 1900 Gilbert Mem. Chapel (H-6)

ROMAN CATHOLIC MASS

Saturday 1700 Gilbert Mem. Chapel (H-6)
(Sacrament of Reconciliation Sat 1600 or by appointment)

Sunday 2000 Freedom Chapel (West side)
 0830 Gilbert Mem. Chapel (H-6)
 1100 Provider Chapel
 1100 Air Force Hospital Chapel
 Thursday 1100 Air Force Hospital Chapel
 Mon, Wed, Fri 1700 Gilbert Mem. Chapel (H-6)
 Mon - Fri 1130 555th Eng. Bde. Bldg 7200

JEWISH SHABBAT SERVICES

Friday 1700 Gilbert Mem. Chapel (H-6)
 Saturday 0930 Gilbert Mem. Chapel (H-6)
 1700 Gilbert Mem. Chapel (H-6)

ISLAMIC PRAYER

Friday 1230 Provider Chapel

PAGAN/WICCAN FELLOWSHIP

Thursday 1900 The Shack
 Saturday 1900 The Shack

GREEK ORTHODOX

Sunday 0900 Provider Annex

HISPANIC CHURCH SERVICE

Saturday 1930 Provider Chapel

For more information, call

Gilbert Chapel: 433-7703
 Provider Chapel: 433-2430
 Freedom Chapel: 443-6303
 AF Hospital Chapel: 443-2547/2546

JB BALAD ACTIVITIES

INDOOR POOL

Swim Lessons:
 Mon., Wed., - 6 p.m.
 Tue., Thu., Sat., -
 6:30 p.m.
 Aqua Training:
 Tue., Thu., - 7:30 p.m.,
 8:30 p.m.

EAST FITNESS

CENTER
 Open Court Volleyball:
 Sunday- 6 p.m.
 Aerobics:
 Mon., Wed., Fri.-
 5:30-6:30 a.m.
 Yoga Class:
 Mon., Fri.- 6-7 a.m.
 Step Aerobics:
 Mon., Wed., Fri.-
 5:30 p.m.
 Conditioning Training
 Class:
 Mon., Wed., Fri.-
 7:15-
 8 p.m.
 Brazilian Jui-Jitsu:
 Mon., Wed., Fri.-

8-9 p.m.
 Abs-Aerobics:
 Tue., Thu., 6-7 a.m.,
 5-6 p.m.
 Edge Weapons & Stick
 Fighting Combative
 Training:
 Tue., Thur., Sat., -
 8-10 p.m.

EAST RECREATION

CENTER
 4-ball tourney:
 Sunday- 8 p.m.
 8-ball tourney:
 Monday- 8 p.m.
 Karaoke:
 Monday- 8 p.m.
 Swing Class:
 Tuesday- 8 p.m.
 Table Tennis:
 Tuesday- 8 p.m.
 9-ball tourney:
 Wednesday- 8 p.m.
 Dungeons & Dragons:
 Thursday- 7:30 p.m.
 Poetry Night:
 Thursday- 8 p.m.
 6-ball tourney:

Thursday- 8 p.m.
 Caribbean Night:
 Friday- 8 p.m.
 Chess & Dominoes
 Tourney:
 Friday- 8 p.m.
 Salsa Class:
 Saturday- 8:30 p.m.
 Poker:
 Saturday- 7:30 p.m.

H6 FITNESS CEN-

TER
 Spin:
 Sunday- 9 a.m.
 Mon., Wed., Fri.- 2
 a.m., 8 a.m. 2 p.m., 7
 p.m.,
 9 p.m.
 Tue., Thu., -5:45 a.m.,
 9 a.m., 8:30 p.m.
 Saturday- 9 a.m., 7
 p.m.
 Boxing:
 Sunday- 4 p.m.
 Tue., Thu., - 2 p.m.
 Boot Camp:
 Sunday- 8:45 a.m.
 Tue., Thu., - 7 p.m.

Power Abs:
 Mon., Tue., Thu., - 8
 p.m.
 Friday- 9 p.m.
 CC Cross Fit:
 Monday-Saturday-
 10:30 p.m.
 Cross Fit:
 Mon., Wed., Fri., - 5:45
 a.m., 7 a.m., 3 p.m.,
 6 p.m.
 Tue., Thu., - 7 a.m.,
 3 p.m.
 Sunday- 5:45 a.m.,
 7 a.m., 3 p.m.
 P90x:
 Monday- Saturday-
 4:30 a.m., 4 p.m., 10
 p.m.
 12 a.m.
 Soccer:
 Tue., Thu., - 8 p.m.
 Yoga:
 Wednesday- 8 p.m.
 MACP Level 1:
 Friday- 8 p.m.
 5 on 5 Basketball:
 Saturday- 8 p.m.

H6 RECREATION

CENTER
 Bingo:
 Sunday- 8 p.m.
 Texas Hold'em:
 Mon., Fri., - 2 p.m.,
 8:30 p.m.
 8-ball tourney:
 Tuesday- 2 a.m.,
 8:30 p.m.
 Ping-pong tourney:
 Tuesday- 8:30 p.m.
 Spades:
 Wednesday- 2 a.m.,
 8:30 p.m.
 Salsa:
 Wednesday- 8:30 p.m.
 9-ball:
 Thursday- 2 a.m.,
 8:30 p.m.
 Karaoke:
 Thursday- 8:30 p.m.
 Dominos:
 Saturday- 8:30 p.m.
 Darts:
 Saturday- 8:30 p.m.
WEST RECRE-
ATION CENTER
 Green Bean Karaoke:

Sun., Wed., 7:30pm
 9-ball tourney:
 Monday- 8 p.m.
 Ping-pong tourney:
 Tuesday- 8 p.m.
 Foosball tourney:
 Tuesday- 8 p.m.
 Jam Session:
 Tuesday- 7:30 p.m.
 8-ball tourney:
 Wednesday- 8 p.m.
 Guitar Lessons:
 Thursday- 7:30 p.m.
 Game tourney:
 Thursday- 1 p.m., 8
 p.m.
 Enlisted Poker:
 Friday- 1 p.m., 8 p.m.
 Officer Poker:
 Saturday- 1 p.m., 8
 p.m.
 Squat Competition:
 Saturday- 8 p.m.

WEST FITNESS

CENTER
 3 on 3 basketball
 tourney:
 Saturday- 7:30 p.m.

6 on 6 volleyball
 tourney:
 Friday- 7 p.m.
 Aerobics:
 Monday, Wednesday,
 Friday- 7 p.m.
 Body by Midgett Ton-
 ing Class:
 Tue., Thu., - 7 p.m.
 Dodge ball Game:
 Tuesday- 7:30 p.m.
 Furman's Martial Arts:
 Mon., Wed., Sun., - 1
 p.m.
 Gaston's Self-Defense
 Class:
 Fri., Sat.- 7 p.m.
 Open court basketball:
 Thursday- 7 p.m.
 Open court soccer:
 Mon., Wed., - 7 p.m.
 Zingano Brazilian Jui
 Jitsu:
 Tue., Thu., - 8:30 p.m.

CIRCUIT GYM

Floor hockey:
 Mon., Wed., Fri., -
 8-10 p.m

Sudoku

Level: Medium

The objective is to fill the 9x9 grid so that each column, each row, and each of the nine 3x3 boxes contains the digits from 1 to 9 only one time each.

	8					7	5	1
2		4				6	3	
	6			3	7			
	3	2	5					
7								2
					9	5	7	
			1	8			9	
	4	8				3		7
1	2	9					8	

Last weeks answers

7	8	5	6	9	3	1	2	4
9	6	4	5	2	1	3	8	7
2	1	3	8	4	7	6	5	9
3	5	6	7	8	9	2	4	1
8	4	9	2	1	6	5	7	3
1	2	7	3	5	4	8	9	6
5	7	1	9	6	8	4	3	2
4	9	8	1	3	2	7	6	5
6	3	2	4	7	5	9	1	8



UPCOMING SPORTS ON AFN

Wednesday 4/29/09

2009 NBA Playoffs - First Round, Game TBD: Teams TBD, Live 2 a.m. AFN/sports

2009 Stanley Cup Playoffs - Round TBD, Game TBD: Teams TBD, Live 2 a.m. AFN/xtra

2009 NBA Playoffs - Round TBD, Game TBD: Teams TBD, Live 4:30 a.m. AFN/sports

2009 Stanley Cup Playoffs - Round TBD, Game TBD: Teams TBD, Live 5 a.m. AFN/xtra

Florida Marlins @ New York Mets, Live 8 p.m. AFN/sports

Thursday 4/30/09

2009 NBA Playoffs - First Round, Game TBD: Teams TBD, Live 2 a.m. AFN/sports

2009 Stanley Cup Playoffs - Round TBD, Game TBD: Teams TBD, Live 2 a.m. AFN/xtra

2009 NBA Playoffs - Round TBD, Game TBD: Teams TBD, Live 4:30 a.m. AFN/sports

Oakland Athletics @ Texas Rangers, Live 9 p.m. AFN/xtra

Friday 5/1/09

2009 NBA Playoffs - Round TBD, Game TBD: Teams TBD, Live 2 a.m. AFN/sports

2009 Stanley Cup Playoffs - Round TBD, Game TBD: Teams TBD, Live 2 a.m. AFN/xtra

2009 NBA Playoffs - Round TBD, Game TBD: Teams TBD, Live 5 a.m. AFN/xtra
Florida Marlins @ Chicago Cubs, Live 9 p.m. AFN/sports

Saturday 5/2/09

NASCAR Nationwide Series: Lipton Tea 250 (Richmond International Raceway, Richmond, VA), Live 2:30 a.m. AFN/xtra

2009 NBA Playoffs - Round TBD, Game TBD: Teams TBD, Live 3 a.m. AFN/sports

2009 NBA Playoffs - Round TBD, Game TBD: Teams TBD, Live 5:30 a.m. AFN/sports

Los Angeles Angels @ New York Yankees, Live 8 p.m. AFN/xtra

Florida Marlins @ Chicago Cubs, Live 8 p.m. AFN/prime atlantic

135th Kentucky Derby (Churchhill Downs, Louisville, KY), Live 11 p.m. AFN/sports

Sunday 5/3/09

Real Salt Lake @ Colorado Rapids, Live 4:30 a.m. AFN/prime atlantic

2009 NBA Playoffs - Round TBD, Game TBD: Teams TBD, Live 4:30 p.m. AFN/sports

Houston Astros @ Atlanta Braves, Tape Delayed 3 p.m. AFN/sports

Monday 5/4/09

2009 Stanley Cup Playoffs - Round TBD, Game TBD: Teams TBD, Live 2 a.m. AFN/prime atlantic

NHRA Full Throttle Drag Racing Series: O'Reilly NHRA Midwest Nationals (Madison, IL), Live 2 a.m. AFN/xtra

Chicago White Sox @ Texas Rangers, Live 3 a.m. AFN/sports

Colorado Rockies @ San Francisco Giants, Tape Delayed 10 a.m. AFN/xtra

NASCAR Rolex Series: Bosch Engineering 250, Tape Delayed 5 p.m. AFN/xtra

Tuesday 5/5/09

2009 NBA Playoffs - ROUND TBD, Game TBD: Teams TBD, Live 2 a.m. AFN/sports

2009 Stanley Cup Playoffs - Round TBD, Game TBD: Teams TBD, Live 2 a.m. AFN/xtra

2009 NBA Playoffs - ROUND TBD, Game TBD: Teams TBD, Live 4:30 a.m. AFN/sports

2009 Stanley Cup Playoffs - Round TBD, Game TBD: Teams TBD, Live 5 a.m. AFN/xtra



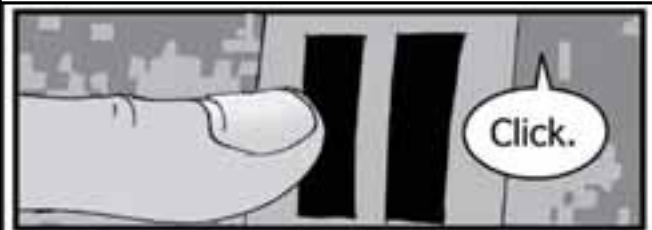
TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. What rocker's pet boa died tragically after being bitten by the rat it was trying to eat for breakfast?
2. Who persuaded Spain to pass the title "Admiral of the Ocean Sea" along to his descendants forever?
3. What did Ronald Reagan stash in a stein on his Oval Office desk?
4. What building refused Ted Turner entry during the 1996 Summer Olympics, because he lacked an I.D. badge?
5. What's slated to be encapsulated in glass, sheathed in concrete and steel, then entombed deep within Yucca Mountain, Nevada?

1. Alice Cooper's
2. Christopher Columbus
3. Jellybeans
4. CNN Center
5. Radioactive waste



PVT. MURPHY'S LAW



SIR, ONE LAST QUESTION: WHY DO YOU KEEP DOING THAT?

I'M JUST PRESSING MY PERSONAL "PAUSE" BUTTON. IT HELPS KEEP ME CALM.





U.S. Army photo by Spc. Brian Barbour

U.S. Army Reserve's Brig. Gen. Karen E. LeDoux, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) commanding general, receives a command brief from Brig. Gen. Michael J. Lally, 3d ESC commanding general at the 3rd ESC headquarters during her visit to Joint Base Balad, Iraq, April 23.



Sexual Assault Awareness Month Luncheon

JOINT BASE BALAD



Presents



April 2009

**Sexual
Assault
Awareness Month**

**DOD National Theme:
"Our Strength is For Defending"**

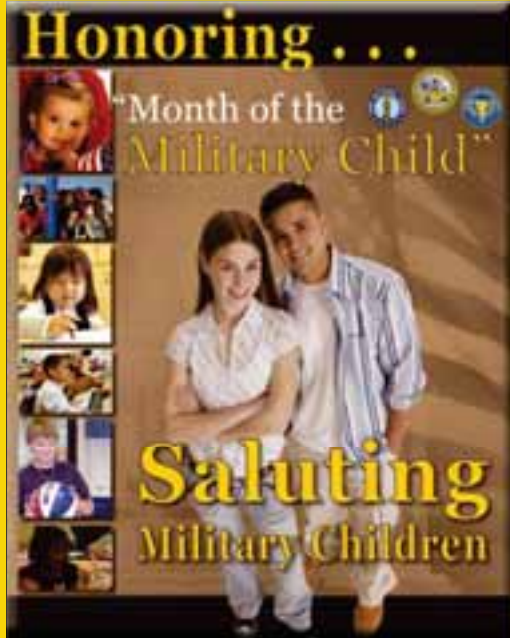
Guest Speaker: MAJ Teresa Ferguson

Women's Health Nurse
332 Air Expeditionary Wing

Contact: MSG Tuynuykua Jackson, 3rd ESC EO Advisor/DSARC @ 433-2527,
LTC Teresa Ryan, Director DCCRT @ 443-2755,
MAJ Sandra Escolas, Deputy Director DCCRT @ 443-2755
MAJ Esther Aubert, 332d AEW Victim Advocate @ 443-7162,
CW3 Dana Ahl, 304th DSARC @ 433-2935
MSG Scott Shockley, 3d ESC EO Advisor @ 433-2527,
MSG Rita Cossio, 3d ESC EO Advisor @ 433-2527,

Location: Audie Murphy Room DFAC #1
Date/Time: 30 April 2009 at 1130 Hours





Check out the <http://www.armymwr.com/portal/family/childandyouth/momc.asp> or <http://www.military-child.org/> to find latest events, activities happening on military installations, the pentagon, National Guard and Reserves Families.

TOBYHANNA FRA

We are located at Bldg 8E28 Victory Loop 1
behind the Education Center at JBB

DSN: 312-987-8135, OPTION 1
EXT 6382/6364 HIT "W"
TTAD_FRA_Beta@omccs.army.mil

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- Batteries
- A/C Adapters
- Keyboards

We DX:

- HIIDE , PRC 112, HCLOS, TBC, CAISI

Printer Repair

****GOVERNMENT EQUIPMENT ONLY!****

SUSTAINER REEL TIME THEATER

Movie Times

- Wednesday, April 29**
 5 p.m. The International
 8 p.m. Street Fighter
- Thursday, April 30**
 5 p.m. Madea Goes To Jail
 8 p.m. Fast And Furious
- Friday, May 1**
 2 p.m. Coraline
 5 p.m. Duplicity
 8:30 p.m. Obsessed
- Saturday, May 2**
 2 p.m. Duplicity
 5 p.m. Obsessed
 8 p.m. Coraline
- Sunday, May 3**
 2 p.m. Obsessed
 5 p.m. Coraline
 8 p.m. Duplicity
- Monday, May 4**
 5 p.m. Duplicity
 8 p.m. Obsessed
- Tuesday, May 5**
 5 p.m. Obsessed
 8 p.m. Coraline

(Schedule is Subject to Change)

Duplicity



Closer co-stars Julia Roberts and Clive Owen reunite for Oscar-nominated director Tony Gilroy's drama tracing the illicit love affair between two spies-turned-corporate operatives. The Cold War has thawed, and for CIA agents seeking to make an easy mint, the real money is in multinational corporations. CIA officer Claire Stenwick (Roberts) and Ray Koval (Owen) are both racing to secure the formula for a product that will bring untold wealth to the company that

lands the patent first as the stakes begin to rise, and their passions start to flare. Meanwhile, their mutual employers, industry giant Howard Tully (Tom Wilkinson) and trailblazing CEO Dick Garsil (Paul Giamatti) start resorting to some seriously underhanded tactics in hope of gaining an advantage over the competition. Lovers by definition of their own careers, Claire and Ray engage in a series of schemes and double-crosses while contending with the fact that their mutual attraction could ultimately jeopardize their entire missions.



Coraline



A young girl walks through a secret door and discovers a parallel reality that is eerily similar to the life she already knows, yet deeply unsettling in a number of ways, in director Henry Selick's animated adaptation of Neil Gaiman's international best-seller. Eleven-year-old Coraline Jones (voice of Dakota Fanning) is fearlessly courageous, and perhaps far too adventurous for her own good. Coraline and her parents (Teri Hatcher and John Hodgman) have recently relocated to Oregon from Michigan. Bored in her new home since her parents are distracted by work and she has yet to make any new



friends, Coraline passes the time by exploring her new neighborhood with an annoying local boy named Wybie Lovat (Robert Bailey Jr.).



PHOTOS AROUND IRAQ



U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Brian L. Short

Tech. Sgt. Adrienne Brammer, a videographer with the Joint Combat Camera Team - Iraq, interacts with an Iraqi baby with Staff Sgt. Blain, a U.S. Soldier from Bravo Troop, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, while conducting a house-to-house census in Mosul, Iraq, on April 17.



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Andre N. McIntyre

An Iraqi Policeman assembles a new desk that has been delivered to the Iman Abbas School in Basra, Iraq, on April 13.



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Walter J. Pels

An Iraqi soldier from 1st Battalion, 20th Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army Division, operates a mine detector while U.S. Army Pfc. Justin Chapman from 2nd Battalion, 8th Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, provides security during a palm grove clearing operation in Esalwid, Iraq, on April 15.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Raul Elliott

U.S. Soldiers from Alpha Company, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, inspect their equipment before a joint dismounted patrol through a neighborhood of Samarra, Iraq, on April 13.

NEWS AROUND IRAQ

New Iraqi army facility taking shape in southeast Iraq

AMARAH, Iraq -- Construction on the Iraqi army's new al-Maymona Location Command in southeast Iraq is on schedule for completion by September, according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The \$35.9 million project, overseen by USACE's Gulf Region Division, will provide a base for 1,000 Iraqi soldiers.

"This location command will support Iraqi army units stationed in our area," explained Iraqi engineer Ali Abdul, who is overseeing construction for the Gulf Region Division. "It will ensure our Iraqi soldiers have the supplies they need as they improve security in our area."

Shelly Carter, a GRD construction representative, says the Iraqi contractor is making great progress. "The Maymona Location Command will support Iraqi army units safeguarding Maysan neighborhoods," she explained. "Every time I visit the site, I see the pride local Iraqi construction workers exhibit doing their jobs. Of those I've talked to, they're happy to be part of this crew building this project that will benefit their community for years to come."

The completed compound, located south of Maysan's provincial capital, Amarah, includes dozens of structures that will provide life support and operational support for the command's operations. Facilities include warehouses, barracks, a headquarters facility, fueling depot, ammunition supply point, a dining facility, ice plant, laundry, medical clinic, fire station, and water and wastewater treatment facilities.

Currently, nearly 150 local Iraqis are working at the site. "It's great to be part of this effort," said Ali Abdul, who is a lifelong resident of Maysan. In addition to his work at the location command, Ali is overseeing several other projects in Maysan, including two road projects and the construction of a new surgical hospital.

USACE projects all over Iraq are helping to build a secure and stable nation. Currently USACE has 236 military and security-related projects ongoing in Iraq, valued at \$2.1 billion.

IA, U.S. Soldiers work to end smuggling

FORWARD OPERATING BASE HUNTER, Iraq -- Iraqi and American forces work together to make Iraq a safer place. A joint operation recently was held for that purpose.

Supporting 41st Iraqi Army Brigade's mission to prevent criminal operations in the Maysan Province, Soldiers assigned to 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division traveled through areas of southern Iraq to deter suspected smuggling of lethal munitions near Forward Operating Base Hunter, Iraq, April 2.

"I really enjoy doing these missions with the Americans," said a Soldier from the 41st IA Bde.

Along the route, the Iraqi and U.S. Soldiers stopped in several villages where they handed out toys and school supplies to Iraqi children.

"The looks we get from the Iraqis are priceless," said Spc. Jesse Martin, a 4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div. Soldier.



The Soldiers also distributed flyers with contact information for citizens to report criminal activities.

The following day, the members of the joint patrol positioned themselves on busy streets to conduct random vehicle inspections. The Soldiers didn't discover any contraband or lethal munitions, but their solidarity of purpose to end the illegal smuggling continues to provide peace of mind to the citizens in the Maysan Province.

Ammunition Handlers WebManage Course

TAJI, Iraq -- The Taji Location Command hosted a three week course at the ammunition supply point. This is the first of three Ammunition Handlers WebManage Courses to be held on 2 April.

The course is a proof of a concept to introduce the ammunition handler's module of the Iraqi Army Maintenance Program. This tool is designed to help the Iraqi Army improve their ability to manage requisitions, issues and accountability for ammunition. The accountability will allow the IA to preposition ammunition assets closer to the various areas of operations.

There was a great amount of coordination between Coalition Forces, Iraqi Forces and several contractor entities to get the resources required to set up the training. The TLC transported students to and from the course and the Iraqi Army Services Institute provided billeting and meals for the students during the three week course.

There were nine students in the first course with 3 graduating with honors. The honor students were recognized for being able to grasp the information quickly and were able to help train the other students. The students attending the course came from several commands throughout the country and will utilize their new skills to improve operations at the ammunition supply points. After completing the course the students provided very positive feedback and look forward to using the system.

MNSTC-I's efforts in supporting the Iraqi Army represents a vital step towards Iraq's self-sufficiency in reaching the Security Agreement goals between the United States and the Government of Iraq.

Go on schedule in responsibility to pay Sol

BAGHDAD -- The Government of Iraq is on schedule to assume responsibility for paying all of the nation's Sons of Iraq, and is working to pay back wages to members of the group who are owed money due to a legislative oversight, Coalition authorities said.

"Time and again, the Government of Iraq and the Coalition have demonstrated a commitment to the Sons of Iraq through their actions, and that's borne out here," said Maj. Gen. John Johnson, deputy commanding general for operations, Multi-National Corps - Iraq.

Once SOI pay is on track, GOI and Coalition authorities will shift attention to transitioning the SOI into jobs. "A recent resolution by the Council of Ministers directing placement of SOI into ministry jobs and the Iraqi Security Forces is an important signal of significant movement in the months to come," Johnson said.

Iraqi paymasters currently distribute salaries to Sons of Iraq members in four provinces - Baghdad, Babil, Wasit and Diyala. They will add three more provinces to that total in late April, and by May's monthly payday, the Government of Iraq will be paying all of the group's 91,000 or so members across nine provinces, said Col. Jeffrey Kulmayer, chief of reconciliation, MNC-I.

At the same time, officials are taking measures to catch up on payments that were delayed in the first four provinces due to an inadvertent budgeting error. The corrective process is nearly complete in three of the provinces and is ongoing in the fourth, Kulmayer said, adding that the government should be caught up shortly after it takes on pay responsibilities in the remaining five provinces.

The payment delay resulted from changes to the 2009 budget by the Council of Representatives, the nation's main legislative body. Those changes inadvertently left out funding for Sons of Iraq salaries, delaying payments to some members of the group in four provinces by several weeks to a month, Kulmayer said.

"The glitch itself resulted from the sorts of issues you'd expect in a healthy democratic government: legislative deliberations over budgets," Kulmayer said. Nor was the Sons of Iraq program the only one affected by the budget adjustments, he said. An initiative to fund 200 local support councils around the country also was temporarily left unfunded by the Council of Representatives' changes.

Iraq's executive Council of Ministers acted quickly to correct the oversight and passed a measure to pay the Sons of Iraq salaries out of the Ministry of Interior's budget. That solution will remain in effect until the Council of Representatives passes a permanent resolution to dedicate funds for the SOI, Kulmayer said.

"It does take some time to achieve these transfers," he said, "but the Iraqis have dedicated themselves to compensating the Sons of Iraq for their work and sacrifice, and they are taking the appropriate actions."

The resolution of the payments was a priority for government and Coalition authorities, who have focused on the SOI program as "the leading edge of reconciliation in Iraq," Kulmayer said. The Government moved to restore funding to the SOI program even before passing the final 2009 budget.

"Working with the Iraqi Government, we are taking a population that was separate, integrating them into the new Iraq and providing them hope," Kulmayer said.

Sustaining the Line



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Brian Barbour

Multi-National Corps – Iraq Command Sgt. Maj. Frank A. Grippe, senior noncommissioned officer, speaks to many NCOs during the Joint Base Balad's 2009 celebration of the Year of the NCO forum at JBB, Iraq April 20. Grippe, guest speaker at the forum, explained the importance of NCOs as leaders and on the battlefield. Our job everyday is to mentor our NCOs and junior Soldiers. They are (your) backfill to your position and the NCO corps, he said.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Keith M. Anderson

Spc. Maithard Fontaine and Spc. Jackson Kiad, both logistics specialists, 574th Quartermaster Co., 30th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, direct unloading operations at the central shipping and receiving point (CRSP) yard at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq, April 21.



U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Dusty Sargent

Sgt. Samuel Martinez, a native of Fort Worth, Texas, receives a coin of excellence from Command Sgt. Maj. Mark Horn, an Austin, Texas native at Camp Taji, Iraq. Martinez, a Bravo Company, 949th Brigade Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade Soldier was recognized for his role in maintaining 100 percent accountability of all unit equipment for the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 949th BSB during their deployment from Fort Stewart, Ga., to Camp Taji.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Latraell Lowe

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Staff Sgt. Emilo Hernandez, native of Charleston, S.C., gives a preliminary marksmanship instruction class on the M2 .50 Cal, to a group of Soldiers on proper clearing, disassembly, reassembly, functions checks and headspace and timing at Camp Liberty, Iraq, March 30. Hernandez is a Soldier 553rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, and served as the range safety officer for the training.