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Sgt. J.H. French

Staff Sgt. Thomas Carachilo and Paratroopers from Task Force Steel, 4th BCT (Airborne), 25th Inf. Div. provide security for a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter as it takes off near Patrol Base Copper during Operation Marne Avalanche.

Paratroopers take fight to insurgents

4th BCT (Airborne), 25th Inf. Div. PAO

KALSU – Paratroopers from Strike Force Geronimo captured one insurgent from a cell responsible for attacks against citizens and security forces in North Babil during Operation Marne Avalanche July 26 northwest of Iskandariyah.

Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 509th Airborne, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, conducted an early morning air assault and continued raids throughout the day in an al-Qaeda stronghold several kilometers northwest of the city.

“Our primary target was an al-Qaeda safe house being used to interrogate and torture residents,” said Capt. David Coulombe, a platoon leader with Company B, from New Lennox, Ill. “We wanted to secure that, and then push out into the town to search the area and talk to the locals.”

After securing the safe house, the Paratroopers began pushing into the town, where their mission began in earnest.

“As we were moving into the town, an



Sgt. Ernest Henry

Capt. David Coulombe retrieves a hidden AK-47 assault rifle.

Iraqi army platoon was out in front and they started taking fire from insurgents,” said Staff Sgt. John Panowich, a squad leader with Company B, from Anderson, S.C. “When we moved in, we were talking to the

helicopters flying close air support for us. We moved into a building to get better security and found the first cache hidden in there.”

In addition to capturing the insurgent, Paratroopers discovered three weapons caches during the operation. In the first cache, they found a DSKA .50 caliber heavy machine gun with 75 rounds, a rocket propelled grenade launcher with seven rounds and 100 RPK heavy machine gun rounds. In the second cache, more than 400 RPK rounds were uncovered. The third cache consisted of three AK-47 assault rifles, an RPK heavy machine gun, an ammunition vest and a can of 7.62 mm ammunition.

“Going into areas like this, where insurgents have been running around freely really makes them think twice,” Panowich said. “No Coalition or Iraqi Security Forces have been in that area for quite some time. So, for us to just pop up in his own back yard one night is going to keep him laying low and watching over his shoulder for a while.”

The insurgent is being held for further questioning.

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Marne 6 sends

Great job, more work to do

Coalition secures neighborhoods, Iraqis take stand

I get to travel throughout our operational area to meet the members of Task Force Marne. What this does is it gives me a sense of how we are progressing.

I have to tell you that you have reason to be proud of what you are accomplishing. You are doing magnificent work. Every Soldier, Sailor, Airman, and Marine, every deployed civilian is doing their part, and the sum total of all your effort makes a world of difference.

There are 16,000 members of this division task force in the area south of Baghdad. We are working in an area as large as the state of West Virginia.

There had been a cancer here. There were four areas that had become safe havens, sanctuaries for evil men. And they were indeed able to move freely, intimidate the people that live here and destabilize the government.

Your presence here, in the watch towers of our bases and outposts, in the skies above the earth, on patrols in villages, and in the command posts that control operations, has counted.

We launched operations Marne Torch and Marne Avalanche in early June. Whether you were at Victory Base near Baghdad, Forward Operating Base Kalsu, or one of the 29 outposts here, you contributed to



Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch
Task Force Marne Commander

both of these operations.

Alongside the growing Iraqi Security Forces, we have killed or detained a battalion's worth of our enemy. We have cleared over 100 weapons and ammunition caches, Improvised Explosive Devices, and over 1,000 structures that could have been hideouts for insurgents.

Iraqi neighborhoods are being secured. And as the Iraqi citizens see that we will stay to hold the ground we clear, they are

gaining confidence and taking a stand.

There is a grassroots movement in our area of operation. The tribal leaders have tired of the violence and instability and the terrorists that have caused it. There are indeed groups of concerned citizens who are offering us tips and who are in fact turning their personal weapons on al Qaeda.

The Iraqi Security Forces are gaining time and space so that they can recruit, equip, and train. Thousands have done just that. And when we eventually do leave, this region will be better off than it was before.

With security comes improvements in the quality of life. Healthcare and infrastructure, the economy are all improving.

You've seen the pictures of Soldiers working with the people of Iraq, the children greeting us in the streets. Years of neglect are being replaced with new hope for a whole new generation.

So you are making a difference and you should be proud of yourselves. I know that I am.

The days that remain will still be tough. The enemy will try to strike back. Be vigilant. Keep safety and security as the centerpiece of everything you do.

ROCK OF THE MARNE!

Working Together



Staff Sgt. Dennis J. Henry

Soldiers with 3rd Platoon, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, Ft. Drum, NY, explain to an Iraqi civilian to put a colored flag by an improvised explosive device that he found along route Tampa in southwest Baghdad July 28. Discovered IEDs are marked for explosive ordnance disposal. The 2nd BCT, 10th Mountain Div. is part of Task Force Marne, which is currently conducting Operation Marne Avalanche aimed at stopping southern Baghdad from being used as a safe haven for insurgents.



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3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division
2nd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry)
4th Brigade (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division
3rd Combat Aviation Brigade
214th Fires Brigade
82nd Sustainment Brigade
720th Military Police Battalion
Mobile Unit 3 Explosive Ordnance Disposal Battalion

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Marne7 sends

Worthy NCOs to join elite Audie Murphy club

Marne Team, this fall the 3rd Infantry Division will take the time during combat operations to recognize outstanding NCOs by inducting them into the elite Sergeant Audie Murphy Club.

That group of individuals has not been determined yet, so it's not too late to inquire about membership or to encourage one of your high-speed Soldiers with great leadership potential to apply.

The ability to lead, motivate and inspire troops is an invaluable trait. However, even the best NCOs might not be remembered in history books or become a highly decorated Soldier like Sergeant Audie Murphy. But all NCOs have the chance to make an impact in the professional or personal lives of their Soldiers.

As a squad leader, Sergeant Audie Murphy, though small in stature, consistently demonstrated the highest qualities of leadership, professionalism and regard for the welfare of his soldiers.

Those NCOs who have not only mastered their jobs, but have accepted the additional challenges of mentoring and showing genuine concern for the wellbeing of their Soldiers are the ones who I encourage to seek membership.

I tell Soldiers to get a degree -- that is, a



Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse L. Andrews Jr.
Task Force Marne
Command Sergeant Major

degree in basic Soldiering. Know the Army regulations, know what to do and where to go to make things happen and solve problems. That is what I look for as the president of the division-level SAMC board. We ask the candidates a series of questions based on varying situations. The candidates are expected to be knowledgeable and profes-

sional to the extent that they can give accurate answers in a stressful environment.

Corporals through sergeants first class are eligible for membership. The selection process has four phases -- commander's nomination; performance test; initial selection board and then the final selection board. All 3rd Inf. Div. brigades will hold their boards the last week in August. The final division-level board will be held Sept. 3-8.

Go to U.S. Army Forces Command Regulation 215-7, The Sergeant Audie Murphy Club (SAMC) Program, to search the history and find more about the eligibility requirements.

Membership should not be taken lightly. Leaders who are inducted have made a commitment to be ambassadors for the Army's NCO corps. It's about more than wearing the medallion at special events to show that you can appear before a board. When we redeploy I expect to see members exemplifying the Army's values by showing selfless service in the local communities.

We have a responsibility at the 3rd Infantry Division to uphold the honor and history of the club. Sergeant Audie Murphy is one of our 51 Medal of Honor recipients.

He was assigned to the famous 15th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Inf. Div., where he fought in North Africa, Sicily, Italy, France and Germany.

Just as Sergeant Audie Murphy's contributions to the music and movie industries live on, his achievements in the Army will always be remembered. That will happen with the help of an everlasting SAMC. So I expect members to continuously coach, mentor and prepare other candidates to appear before the board.

I just want to thank the SAMC members at the division for remembering their commitment and discussing ways they can have a positive impact on Soldiers deployed to Iraq.

Special thanks to:

Sgt. Maj. Richard Gardner, 1st Sgt. Mark Barnes, 1st Sgt. Melanie Brooks, Master Sgt. Reynaldo Castellano, Sgt. 1st Class Rietta Owens, Sgt. 1st Class Jacqueline Gassop, Staff Sgt. Thomas Kupsh, Staff Sgt. Deoneza Payne, Staff Sgt. Aaron Bryany and Staff Sgt. Mike Middleton.

Anyone who is interested in membership, and would like to join a study group can contact any of the members above.

ROCK OF THE MARNE!

Live to fight another day: Staying safe on EML

STAFF SGT. TONY M. LINDBACK
TF Marne Public Affairs Office

CAMP VICTORY -- Active duty Soldiers on 15-month deployments are now being allowed 18 days at home during environmental morale leave.

This allows plenty of opportunities for disaster while at home.

Time at home spent with family and friends is important. Soldiers enjoying their time at home, while keeping safety in mind, is important to Chuck Fitzpatrick, 3rd Infantry Division safety manager.

"There are a few main things that can hurt Soldiers while on EML," Fitzpatrick said. "(Vehicle) accidents, alcohol and recreational activities are the leading causes of off duty accidents."

He said for most Soldiers, Iraq is a harsh, somewhat restricted area.

"Over a period of time, I think, some Soldiers go a little stir crazy, and when they finally do get home it's almost like being released from confinement," Fitzpatrick said. "After what seems like an eternity, they are finally back home with their family and fiends."

"One of the most common mistakes that

we all make is attempting to make up for lost time," Fitzpatrick said. "Some of our Soldiers will try to pack all the things they couldn't do for the last

several months into a 15- or 18-day period ... and return from EML more exhausted than when they left."

Knowing it's impossible to pack that much freedom into such a short time, Fitzpatrick and fellow safety specialist Harley Chase offered some words of wisdom about EML.

"Leaders should encourage their Soldiers to take advantage of their EML, to reunite with their families, and use their EML for rest and relaxation," Fitzpatrick said.

If Soldiers do decide to consume alcoholic beverages they should do so in moderation, Fitzpatrick said. He also reminds Soldiers they should not attempt to drive.

"The problem with alcohol is that it

slows our reactions and our thought processes. Drinking in moderation is the key, and always have a plan to get home safely

if you're out on the town" Fitzpatrick said.

"Remember," he said, "you have to consider the broad reaching effects and consequences of drinking and driving. It's often the drunk driver that walks away unharmed ... and the occupants in the other vehicle who pay the ultimate price."

— Chuck Fitzpatrick
3rd Inf. Div. safety manager

Another thing to consider on EML is driving, even while not under the influence, Fitzpatrick said.

"Driving skills may have diminished. Even a couple months of not driving can dull your reactions and driving skills."

A good plan is having a spouse, friend or family member do the driving for the first few days to allow time to get reacquainted to daily life and surroundings, Chase said.

"If it should become necessary to drive, be cautious, alert and drive slower than you normally would, and always wear your seatbelt," Fitzpatrick advised.

Motorcycle accidents are another concern for the command safety section here.

"Riding a motorcycle is fun," said Fitzpatrick. "The adrenaline rush and wind in your face is great. But generally speaking, you don't get a second chance for an accident."

To date, Fitzpatrick said there have been 31 motorcycle crashes Army-wide during fiscal year 2007. Of those, 29 have been fatal.

"It doesn't matter who's at fault in the accident, the results are the same," Fitzpatrick said.

In addition to motorcycle accidents, Chase said the number of boating and drowning accidents are also high this year.

"Regardless of what activities Soldiers plan to do while at home on EML we encourage them to use the composite risk management process," Fitzpatrick said. "This process saves lives daily on the battlefield, and it can also help prevent off-duty accidents while our Soldiers are home on EML."



Telling the Task Force Marne story
One Soldier at a time...

Every Friday on DVIDSHUB.net
under audio/news cast

El Salvador teams up with U.S.

STAFF SGT. CARLOS J. LAZO
MND-C PAO

FOB DELTA — A lack of basic needs, such as food, fresh water and shelter can cause hostility and chaos among any population. Once those needs are filled, hostility ebbs and the possibility of peace arises.

For the people of Wasit province, wartime needs are being filled by the soldiers of Cuscatlán Battalion from El Salvador, members of the Coalition Forces.

The battalion's primary mission is to provide humanitarian aid in the city of al Kut and the surrounding province, provide security for logistical convoys and quick reaction force for Forward Operating Base Delta.

"It's good to see the care and admiration that Iraqis have for El Salvadoran soldiers when they see us coming in our vehicles," said Lt. Col. Ernesto Garcia Rivera, civil af-

"Everyone has their mission, and there is a mutual respect (among Coalition Forces) ... The technology is different, but the mission is the same and is still accomplished."

— Lt. Col. Ernesto Garcia Rivera
El Salvadoran soldier

eration Iraqi Freedom, Rivera said. This is the eighth rotation of the battalion's troops to Iraq.

"We like to be better than the ones before us," said Rivera, referring to his troops' dedication to the mission. El Salvadoran soldiers work on FOB Delta with Soldiers from other Coalition countries, including Georgian and U.S. forces.

The Salvadorans work with 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, Ga., and the 214th Fires Brigade, Fort Sill, Okla., in conducting the civil affairs mission in the province, including the city of al Kut, said Cavalry Col. Victor Manuel



Staff Sgt. Carlos Lazo

El Salvadoran soldiers pose at FOB Delta.

Bolanos Carvalho, commander of the Cuscatlán Battalion.

"Everyone has their mission, and there is a mutual respect (among Coalition Forces)," Rivera said. "We are the same in the context of what we are here for. There is no difference, from a soldier from the U.S., Poland, El Salvador, no difference. The technology is different, but the mission is the same and is still accomplished."

As of this month, soldiers with the Cuscatlán Battalion have provided security for 39 convoys and completed 48 civil affairs missions in the area, providing help and support to various communities.

"Our work was always important, we came with knowledge," said Cabo-Dionisio Ceren Ramos, a soldier in the Cuscatlán Battalion. "Here we saw the suffering and a struggle for better just like in our country."

El Salvador underwent a civil war in the 1980s until 1992, when leftist guerrillas and the government signed a cease-fire treaty. The Central American nation has undergone much reconstruction since.

Soldiers came prepared not only for the social relationships they encountered here, but also for the risks that may arise from providing help.

"We received training on convoy security, humanitarian aid training, responding to improvised explosive devices," Rivera said. "When the next rotation comes, we will train them and they will have training and briefings with us."

This will ensure that residents of the Wasit province continue to receive their basic needs.

"It's one of the most important missions," Carvalho said. "We are here fighting an unseen enemy and helping the people."

nomenal," said Staff Sgt. Kory J. West, career counselor with 4th BCT (Abn.). "It goes to show the commitment and dedication of the Paratroopers within the brigade, and the leaders the brigade has as well. As for the retention team, we set a goal for ourselves when we arrived in theater, and like all goals it feels great to accomplish."

As a devoted father and husband, Chapman can definitively distinguish the difference between his hometown and his new home in Alaska.

"Anchorage is a much smaller city than where I grew up," Chapman said. "Not as much traffic, pollution or crime. It is so much more personal and perfect for my family."

Retaining quality Soldiers is one of the Army's top priorities. For Chapman, the decision of re-enlisting came rather easily.

"I know what direction I want to go and the one that is best for my family," Chapman said. "I wanted to advance as a Soldier, become a great leader for

my unit and the Army."

"The Army offers a stable life and teaches valuable leadership skills, responsibility and morals," Chapman said. "No matter what direction someone takes in life, the Army lays an awesome foundation."

Easy or not, this decision still required counseling from someone who has been there and done that. For Chapman, the guidance came from his platoon sergeant, Sgt. 1st Class John Ernst.

"Sgt. 1st Class Ernst played a vital role in understanding my abilities and what it meant becoming a Soldier," Chapman said. "He always encouraged me to be the best at whatever I wanted to do."

Before coming to Alaska, Chapman knew nothing of the state other than that it was cold. Now, the outlook is much different.

"All of the outdoor activities and cleanliness just makes it so attractive. I could very much see my family and I settling down here," Chapman said.

3rd CAB reaches re-enlistment goal

3rd CAB PAO

BAGHDAD — Combat Aviation Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, became the first brigade of the surge forces in Multi-National Division Center to meet its re-enlistment goal for fiscal year 2007.

The goal was reached when Pfc. Precious Haynes, Company D, 4th Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment, raised her right hand and agreed to wear the Army uniform for another six years.

Fourth Battalion Command Sgt. Maj. David Perkins said morale is an important part of why his battalion, and ultimately the brigade as a whole, reached its goal.

"I think it has to do with (Soldiers) in good units who want to re-enlist," he said. "We've got (Soldiers) on their third rotation to Iraq and expect to be back, and they still sign up."

Master Sgt. Barry Norris, brigade senior career counselor for 3rd CAB, attributed the successful completion of the re-enlistment mission to leadership and command involvement.

"It's easier (to meet the re-enlistment mission) when you have a good brigade commander who supports you," Norris said.

He said the command team at the top of the brigade, Col. Daniel Ball, and Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Stidley, set the tone for the emphasis on meeting the re-enlistment goal.

"Sergeant Major Stidley gets out there talking," he said. "He gets some good re-enlistments himself."

An extra push from the top of the division helps, too, said Lt. Col. Adrian Farrall, commander, 4-3 Avn. "The extra 'umph' from (Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch, commander, 3rd Inf. Div.) was enough to get things moving for us," he said.

Haynes' career counselor, Staff Sgt. Angela Hill, said incentives also had a big hand in the amount of Soldiers re-enlisting.

"Money has a lot to do with it," she said. "Plus there are the other incentives" such as education incentive, stabilization and airborne or air assault school eligibility.

4th BCT, 25th Inf. Div. re-enlists 1,000th Paratrooper

By SGT. MARCUS BUTLER
4th BCT (Airborne), 25th Inf. Div. PAO

KALSU — From the sunny streets of Texas to the arctic trails of Alaska, one Paratrooper has welcomed the changed and now craves the snow and winter ice, proclaiming it home.

Spc. Larry Chapman, a Houston native and medical care specialist assigned to 725th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division joined the Army a little less than three years ago alongside his brother and has now come to another milestone in his life by re-enlisting to stay with Company C for five more years.

However, Chapman's re-enlistment ceremony was no ordinary one. Chapman unknowingly set a milestone for his unit and the entire Brigade by becoming the 1,000th Paratrooper to re-enlist.

"Being a newly-formed brigade, then deploying and being able to accomplish 1000 reenlistments is phe-



Sgt. Marcus Butler

Spc. Larry Chapman became the 1,000th Paratrooper to re-enlist in the 4-25th. He is a medical care specialist assigned to the 725th BSB.

F-16 destroys truck bomb

4th BCT (Airborne), 25th Inf. Div. PAO

KALSU — A precision air strike destroyed a tanker truck loaded with explosives during Operation Marne Avalanche northeast of Haswah July 20.

An F-16 fighter jet flying in support of the operation dropped two 500-pound bombs on the truck and destroyed it.

Marne Avalanche is designed to root out Sunni and Shia extremists operating from safe havens in the Euphrates River valley.

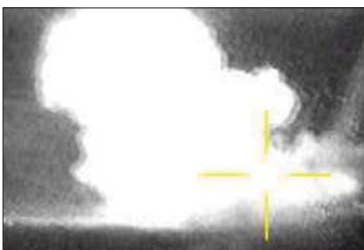


DOD photos

An F-16 targets the tanker trailer prior to destruction.



The tanker trailer after the first 500-pound bomb.



The tanker trailer after the second 500-pound bomb and secondary explosion from the explosives packed inside the tanker trailer.



The tanker trailer is completely destroyed after the second 500-pound bomb and secondary explosion.



Courtesy photo

An M109 Paladin Howitzer belonging to 1-10 FA fires during a mission at FOB Hammer.

1-10 breaks out the Big guns

Sgt. NATALIE ROSTEK
3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO

FOB HAMMER — The Soldiers say their job is fairly simple.

The effects, however, will leave a lasting impact on everything in their path.

The platoon-sized element from 1st Battalion, 10th Field Artillery working on FOB Hammer is responsible for three main tasks, said Staff Sgt. Michael Clark of Greenville, N.C., an artilleryman for 1-10 FA. The unit's duties include conducting counter-fire missions, terrain denial missions and fire for effect missions.

"We kill bad guys," said Sgt. Ralph Harrison, of Columbus, Ga. "We conduct counter-fire operations which are, when we get mortared; we shoot back at the point of origin."

Sgt. Christopher Shores, of Winston-Salem, N.C., an artilleryman for 1-10, said terrain denial missions consist of firing on an area to deter insurgents from conducting enemy activity in that location.

"Fire for effect missions," he said, "are

missions where we are aiming at one specific target and we hit that target and destroy it."

Harrison said his unit is responsible for destroying boats on the Tigris River.

The 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team suspects these boats are used to transport weapons and munitions into Baghdad. The residents told Coalition Forces they do not use the river.

To effectively complete a mission, Soldiers must take the proper steps in a short period of time. On any operation where a 155 mm round is fired from the M109 Paladin Howitzer, the air and ground must be cleared of any friendly forces and unintended targets, Harrison said. When the area is cleared a call is made to the line crew on FOB Hammer.

When the Paladin crew receives the mission, they assume their positions. Information that the team needs for an accurate shot pops up on a screen inside the Paladin. The crew loads a 155 mm round into the tube, the gunner puts powder in to expel the round and verifies the data. The

chief reads the data and sets the gun on the target.

"The chief overlooks everything in the operation on the ground," said Clark, a crew chief. "If anything goes wrong, it all comes back to me."

Each crew spends anywhere from 12 to 24 hours on the line. They are always on their toes, prepared for any mission from the 3rd HBCT headquarters.

The job requires each crew to be stationary, but the product of their efforts can be seen through the camera of a patrolling unmanned aerial vehicle. Shores said he prefers that the crew stays on FOB Hammer to get their job done.

"The best part about our job is we can destroy a target without actually having to be there," he said.

Sometimes the unit is overlooked because they are such a small element, but Clark said 1-10 FA is wanted and needed in 3rd HBCT.

"They see us hit the target from the UAV, they hear the boom," he said. "I think they are happy to have us around."



Spec. Olanrewaju Akinwunmi

Capt. Ricardo Swenness, HHC, 1st Bn., 30th Inf. Regt., 2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div., listens to a woman's heartbeat in Arab-Jabour in southern Baghdad at a medical aid mission July 23.

The pulse of the people



Air Force Staff Sgt. Shawn Weismiller

A child waits by an access control point at a combined medical operation triage site July 16. Soldiers of 3rd Sqdrn., 1st Cav. Regt., 3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div., conducted a humanitarian mission to bring medical care and assistance to Iraqis in the city of Hollandia.



Spec. Olanrewaju Akinwunmi

A girl waits with her family to be seen by medical personnel with 3rd Infantry Division at a makeshift clinic in Arab Jabour in southern Baghdad during a medical aid mission July 23.



Spec. Olanrewaju Akinwunmi

Pfc. O'Neal of Co. B, 1st Bn., 30th Inf. Regt., 2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. and a local Iraqi assist a woman up the stairs at a makeshift clinic in Arab Jabour in southern Baghdad during a medical aid mission July 23.



Air Force Staff Sgt. Shawn Weismiller

A Soldier gives a toy to a child during a combined medical operation July 16 in the city of Hollandia. Soldiers of 3rd Sqdrn., 1st Cav. Regt., 3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div. conducted a humanitarian mission to bring medical care and assistance to the citizens of Hollandia.

Gen. Petraeus visits 214th

STAFF SGT. CARLOS J. LAZO
MND-C PAO

FOB DELTA — Gen. David H. Petraeus met with senior leaders and Soldiers at Forward Operating Base Delta July 21. Petraeus, commanding general of Multi-National Force - Iraq, talked with senior leaders including members of the 214th Fires Brigade.

Afterwards, Petraeus thanked Soldiers and awarded his personal coin to various members of the 214th FB for their service in Iraq.

Among the recipients were Staff Sgt. Valerie G. Morris, S4 noncommissioned officer in charge, and Pfc. Phillip N. Hawkins, forward observer and fire support coordination specialist, both with the Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 214th FB.

"You must not sleep much," said Petraeus to Morris, who manages two supply positions within the 214th FB, as the battery supply sergeant and as the S4 NCOIC.

Additionally, Morris manages 10 property books for six coalition countries including the U.S.

Morris is one of many Soldiers that kept operations at FOB Delta going by covering down and filling higher-ranking positions. The 214th FB is based out of Fort Sill, Okla.



Gen. David H. Petraeus, MNF-I commander, awards his personal coin to Sgt. 1st Class David J. Lukasik, 214th FB, at FOB Delta.

Staff Sgt. Carlos J. Lazo

Families connect with shout-outs

By SGT. KEVIN STABINSKY
2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO

FOB KALSU — Family members of deployed servicemembers will now have a new way to see their loved ones each week.

Despite being separated by an ocean and thousands of miles, friends and loved ones will be able to see videos of their servicemembers on the Internet at www.dvidshub.net.

The Digital Video and Imagery Distribution System (DVIDS) center in Atlanta, a civilian-based enterprise that transmits news from the armed services to local media outlets, offers shout-outs as one of their products.

"It gives Soldiers a chance to send a message home, show family members how they look and how they are doing," said Spc. Randall Townsend, with the 302nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment out of Bell, Calif.

Townsend, who records shout-outs, said it's also a good opportunity to see the environment where the Soldiers are staying. Townsend is currently attached to 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division and plans to record Soldiers all around forward operating and patrol bases.

"I just wanted to say hi to the folks back home: my mom, dad, son, daughters and girlfriend," said Capt. Shane Williams, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd BCT commander. "I think this is a great way (for Soldiers) to keep their loved ones informed and a chance to be on TV."

Currently, the brigade has plans to film 10-15 Soldiers every Sunday. The video will then be uploaded onto the DVIDS



Staff Sgt. Timothy Eye, 2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. chaplain assistant, sends a video greeting to his wife Jennifer and two children Kyle and Sabrena.

Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

homepage on Mondays.

All Task Force Marne brigades conduct their versions of shout-outs. Third Infantry Division brigades are currently shooting "Thank You" greetings to show the Columbus and Savannah, Ga., areas that Soldiers appreciate their support.

Besides shout-outs to family members, Soldiers are also encouraged to do interviews with their hometown news outlets.

"Anytime family members see you, well it is a good thing," said Staff Sgt. Timothy Eye, chaplain assistant, who sent a shout-out to his wife Jennifer and children Kyle and Sabrena. "It allows me to let them know I think and care about

them."

Families can view the video of their Soldier by logging onto the Internet: www.dvidshub.net.

Once on the site, family members can access videos by expanding the video link on the left-hand side of the page.

Once expanded, viewers need to click the greetings sub folder to be linked to the videos.

A handy search key is located on the top of the video screen to help family members locate their loved ones.

More information about shout-outs can be found by contacting a local Public Affairs Office.

Golden Dragons kill terrorists in river ambush

2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. (LI) PAO

AL-OWESAT — Troops of 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment "Golden Dragons," set an ambush on a small island off the Euphrates River near al-Owesat July 21 to prevent anti-Iraqi forces from escaping across the river.

Two insurgents were killed in the ambush by Soldiers from 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry), out of Fort Drum, N.Y.

A raft came toward their position, but because of vegetation along the banks, Soldiers could not be sure the people in the raft were insurgents. However, when the raft landed and two men came toward the Soldiers' position, one was wearing an explosive-laden suicide vest. The troops killed both men.

As the Soldiers prepared to leave the island, they came under heavy small-arms fire from two directions.

"The scouts were there to stop traffic across the river," said Maj. Joel Smith, 2-14 operations officer, originally from Queensland, Australia. "They executed their mission perfectly. The terrorists came to the island thinking they were safe, and walked right up to the Soldiers' position."

"The scouts were able to get out without incident. It's a demonstration of the professionalism of our elements operating in small teams, doing what light infantry Soldiers do."

Smith said the mission had a twofold effect.

"First, it was very consistent with what we were expecting — anti-Iraqi forces are using the river for transportation. Secondly, it will make the enemy think twice about hiding there. Their hiding places are shrinking rapidly."



Courtesy Photo

Pfc. Douglas K. Phillips of 1-15th Inf. Regt. shows damage to his face and eye protection from a small-arms fire attack in Durai'ya.

Eye protection saves infantryman's vision

STORY BY SGT. NATALIE ROSTEK
3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO

COP CLEARY – Ballistic eye protection is the reason one Task Force Marne Soldier is able to see today.

Pfc. Douglas K. Phillips, Company A, 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, received minor injuries when a bullet struck his rifle and face during a combat operation May 14 in Durai'ya.

Soldiers of 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team live by the "Marne Standard," the uniform standard Soldiers are required to wear during any given task or operation.

During combat patrols and missions requiring Soldiers leaving the base, this standard includes the complete Army Combat Uniform, body armor complete with all attachments, helmet, and ballistic eye protection.

While conducting Operation Beach Yellow, a battalion-sized mission to disrupt enemy activity in the 1-15 Inf. Regt.'s area of operation, Phillips' unit was conducting a cordon and search of buildings in the area.

According to Sgt. Rory Seppanen, Company A, 1-15 Inf. Regt., Phillips had his weapon at the "high ready." He had the butt stock of his weapon to his cheek and was looking through the sight ready to fire when necessary.

As the unit came under small-arms fire, a bullet from the enemy pierced the lower receiver of Phillips' weapon and struck him, causing shrapnel wounds and powder burns to his face.

The noticeable marks and damage to his protective goggles show the importance of eye protection.

Spc. Raquel Martinez, of El Campo,

Texas, a medic in Headquarters Company, 1-15 Inf. Regt., said she sees a lot of injuries that would have been much worse had the Soldier not abided by the Marne Standard. She believes in the value of eye protection.

"You only have two eyes," Martinez said. "It's very hard to replace them."

"Without eye protection, Pfc. Phillips would have received not only the wound to his cheek, but also to his eye," Seppanen said. "This would have resulted in the loss of his right eye."

Seppanen, of Lansing, Mich., said Phillips was unwilling to acknowledge his own injury and moved calmly about to help treat other wounded Soldiers and aid in the evacuation of his fellow squad members.

"His platoon sergeant pointed out the deep gash on his cheek exposing muscle and bone," Seppanen said. "It was at this point he allowed himself to be moved to the casualty collection point and later evacuated."

Because of his dedication to helping his fellow Soldiers while putting his own medical needs behind him, Phillips received the Army Commendation Medal with Combat "V" for valor.

"Pfc. Phillips distinguished himself through his actions that day," Seppanen said.

Phillips, of Los Angeles, also received a Purple Heart, his first of two in a two-month time span. Phillips earned his second Purple Heart July 11 after Forward Operating Base Hammer came under rocket attack. During that attack, Phillips received shrapnel wounds and was evacuated to a hospital in Landstuhl, Germany, for further treatment.

3rd HBCT nabs top insurgent

MAJ. JOE SOWERS
3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO

FOB HAMMER — Soldiers from 3rd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment detained one of Multi-National Division-Center's most wanted insurgents, along with four other individuals early Friday morning near Jisr Diyala.

Leaders from 3-1 Cav. gained intelligence early Friday morning that the known insurgent and a number of his associates were within their area of operations.

Soldiers conducted a surprise raid and captured the individual with no U.S. forces injuries or damage to equipment, by surrounding the house following a two-mile walk into the suspected insurgent's neighborhood. It was

well-known to the Soldiers that the individual would move if he heard helicopters.

The detained "high-value individual" is believed to be responsible for the recent increase in explosively formed projectile improvised explosive devices and indirect fire attacks against Coalition Forces east of Baghdad. He is also suspected of intimidating Iraqis that work with U.S. forces, as well as, kidnapping and murdering rivals of his cell.

In addition to his terrorist activities, the detainee is a member of an organized crime network in the Mada'in Qada, which is part of the Baghdad province. Coalition Forces believe the detainee has extorted the local population through his water distribution company and gas station enterprises.

Op. Four Brothers nets large cache

2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO

ARAB JABOUR – Task Force Marne Paratroopers detained two insurgents and discovered a large weapons cache buried in eastern Awaniyah.

The cache was one of the largest discoveries to date found by Paratroopers of Troop B, 1st Squadron, 40th Cavalry Regiment. Troop B, 1-40th Cav. Regt. is attached to 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division in Iraq. The unit's home station is 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division.

The massive find yielded one rocket-propelled grenade launcher with two sights, three rounds, six propellant chargers and fins.

Also included in the discovery were six sticks of dynamite, two blasting caps, 15 pounds of homemade explosives inside fertilizer bags, one fragmentation grenade, two homemade grenades consisting of a bottle filled with explosives with an attached fuse, a partially buried cooler with a long-range cordless telephone and an IED initiator, one cell phone, three long-range cordless telephone base stations, five rolls of command wire, 25 feet of detonation cord, 24 155mm primers, one 105mm artillery round, one unknown size tank round, one AK-47 automatic rifle, 2,500 7.62mm rifle rounds, 400 12.7mm rounds, and one box of about 24 12-gauge shotgun shells.

The munitions were destroyed by an AH-64 Apache helicopter.

The detainees were taken back to Forward Operating Base Falcon for questioning.



Courtesy photo

The cache included rocket propelled grenades, dynamite and an AK-47.



Courtesy photo

Paratroopers found Rolls of command wire in the cache.

The Freedom Report

Check it out on
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A weekly radio program about troops serving in

Operation Iraqi Freedom

PRTs help Iraqis with governance, business

Spc. CHRIS McCANN
2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. (LI) PAO

CAMP STRIKER — The Army has recently been bringing embedded provincial reconstruction teams to brigades in Iraq in order to help teach Iraqi businessmen and local officials how to improve their marketability and function as part of a democratic government.

The EPRTs are teams of about 10 people who work closely with a brigade's civil affairs teams, engineers, and other staff sections to help Iraqi governance and economic development. The idea, while used in Afghanistan, is relatively new to Iraq. The first wave of EPRT personnel arrived in Iraq in April.

Lou Lantner, a native of Washington, D.C., was on his second tour in Vietnam as a public affairs officer with the U.S. State Department when he attended a public affairs conference and heard Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice speak. She mentioned opportunities for State Department employees in Iraq, and Lantner pursued the chance.

The pursuit didn't take long, he said. A month later he left Vietnam for four weeks of training in the United States and another week in Kuwait and Iraq.

Now he heads the EPRT that works with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) out of Fort Drum, N.Y., helping with projects in Mahmudiyah, Yusufiyah and other villages southwest of Baghdad.

"We have civilians, active reserve and active-duty service members with us," Lantner explained. "Together, we try to identify the moderates in Iraq, people who are supportive of the United States, and help them stand up their local governments. We also help the local government work with the national government."

Local input is a new concept here. Saddam Hussein funded what he took a personal interest in, and most villages in the country had no say, Lantner said.

"National government is new for them," he said. "People are getting used to this new way of doing things. They're not used to dealing with planning projects, doing budgets, submitting them to government, getting them funded—it's our job to help that happen."

One of the primary responsibilities of an EPRT is refining the plans brigades already have, Lantner said. For example, the 2nd BCT already had planned a micro-loan clinic in Mahmudiyah. The EPRT helped make it functional. They also assist Iraqi businesspeople who take advantage of the micro-loans.

Jeff Kaufman works with the U.S. Agency for International Development and is a member of the EPRT. He



Courtesy photo

Members of the embedded provincial reconstruction team working with 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. (LI) meet with the Mahmudiyah council chair in Mahmudiyah.

helps local business owners with marketing and networking to increase sales, and looks for ways that they can increase their efficiency and marketability.

"It's not just about making things; it's marketing, too," Kaufman said. "The caveat is that it's difficult to operate in a different country," said Kaufman. "Adapting U.S. marketing culture to Iraqi modes of doing business is different. I have to adapt myself to how their culture does business."

Ultimately, what starts as a simple micro-loan has a huge ripple effect.

"They improve their business, which makes more jobs," said Kaufman. Jobs are critical; many people who plant improvised explosive devices do it not because of a terrorist ideology, but simply because they were offered money to do it, and needed to feed their families."

A second benefit is even more subtle, Kaufman said.

"If we have a micro-finance clinic, then the banks ask, 'Why can't we do that too?' Maybe they start offering loans and have a more competitive interest rate, and that makes credit more available for more people."

The EPRT is trying to guide and teach without providing concrete assets, Kaufman explained.

"If we insert ourselves into the process, then when we

leave, it falls apart," he said.

He cited the example of a canal being shut off during a May search for two missing Soldiers of the 2nd BCT. The shutoff was necessary, but it affected the town of Mahmudiyah, which depends on the canal for much of its water. The incident, while unfortunate, had a benefit.

"The government became really energized," Kaufman said. "The EPRT, the 2nd Battalion, 15th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd BCT, and the mayor of Mahmudiyah got together and worked out ways to react next time. The local government was engaged and really realized that they were responsible for helping the people."

In the countryside, the EPRT has been helping farmers form cooperatives and associations, which will help them survive when the Iraqi government phases out subsidies.

The fact that the EPRT's successes are not as visible as kinetic military operations — they don't result in captured terrorists, for example — makes it difficult, even for the team, to determine what success is, but they can feel it.

"We're trending in the right direction," Kaufman said.

"I think we'll know in the next three or four months if we're successful," Lantner said. "We've seen a lot of gains, but it's too early to tell if it will continue. I like to think it will."

Money as a Weapon on battlefield explained (part II)

By PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS
TIMOTHY R. ZWIGART
3rd CA Bn., G-9 SWET Coordinator

(This is part two of a two-part series on Money as a Weapon. Refer to the July 19 "Marne Focus" for part one)

There are various types of funds available for use on the battlefield including Commanders Emergency Response Program funds, Transition Team Integration Funds, Quick Response Funds, the Rewards Program, and Operations and Maintenance funds.

CERP enables commanders to respond to urgent humanitarian relief and reconstruction requirements within their area of operations by carrying out programs that will immediately assist the indigenous population. These funds are very flexible with few limitations and can be used in 19 different categories. CERP funds can also

be used to pay released detainees for lost wages; condolences for injury, death and damage caused by Coalition Forces; martyr payments to Iraqi Security Forces who were killed as a result of U.S. or Coalition military operation; and micro-grants for small businesses.

TTIF is used by U.S. Military Training Teams to purchase emergency requirements for their Iraqi counterparts to ensure that they sustain a minimum level of readiness. Any units in the Iraqi Security Force are eligible to have a team support their emergency needs with a cash purchase or a project for repairs.

Quick Response Funds (QRF) are also dedicated to the Iraqi Security Forces. These funds are requested by U.S. Military Training Teams for projects that typically cost more than \$50,000.

The Rewards Program has grown significantly while 3rd Infantry Division has been



File photo

on station. This program allows commanders at all levels to pay money for valid intelligence. It is very similar to Crime-stoppers back in the states. This program has proven its worth more than any others. Several tips on al-Qaeda operatives have led to their capture and caches of munitions.

OMA funds meet everyday operational needs. These funds pay for construction projects on forward operating bases,

air conditioners in your area, all of your equipment needs, and all consumable requirements needed for daily operations. In garrison, operations units execute budgets based on the type of unit and training to be conducted.

On this deployment, units order and pay for all stock funded items through centrally managed accounts at HQDA. For non-stock funded items, units must submit, on a monthly basis, their projected requirements with an estimate of the costs to procure those items. Multi-National Corps — Iraq then validates the requirements and distributes funding for those items in the following month. The Victory contracting office contracts vendors to fill those funded requirements.

Commanders have numerous tools to influence the battle. Money is one of those tools, that if used in concert with the others, can have exponential effects.

**Telling the Task
Force Marne story
One Soldier at a
time...**

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Riverside security



Spc. Olanrewaju Akinwunmi

Spc. Russell Bonlinger, Company B, 1st Bn., 30th Inf. Regt., 2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div., provides rooftop security at a makeshift clinic in Arab Jabour in southern Baghdad during a medical aid mission July 23.

Soldiers face serious threat of heat injuries

By MAJ. SHANNON ELLIS
MND-C Preventive Medicine

Heat injuries are increasingly becoming a challenge for our commanders, during these hottest days of summer.

Leaders at all levels must continually remind Soldiers of the serious consequences of heat stress under our current increased operational tempo.

While telling Soldiers "Drink more water!" is very helpful, it may not be sufficient by itself to prevent serious heat injuries.

Leaders must take a proactive approach to confront this enemy — heat.

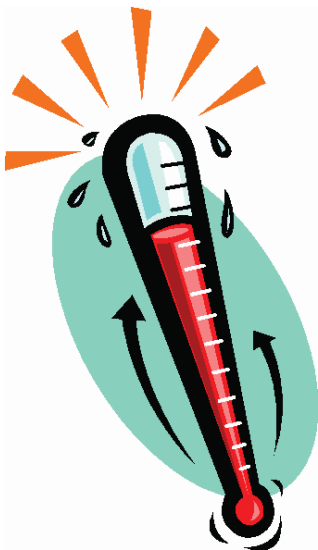
Leaders at all levels must be aware of prevention strategies and emergency medical treatment for heat casualties.

Leaders must know and practice the Five Steps of Risk Management:

Identify the Hazards, Assess the Hazards, Develop Controls, Implement Controls, and Supervise & Evaluate. More information can be found at the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine Web site, at <http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil>.

The acronym H-E-A-T should help leaders identify operations with the highest risk:

- H- Heat category V over past 3 days
- E- Exertion level high over past 3 days



- A- Acclimation/other individual risk factors
- T- Temperature/lack of rest overnight

What can the Soldier do? A lot! First, decrease your own risk factors for heat injury.

Maintain your own physical fitness. Hydrate with no more than 1.5 quarts of water

each hour, during peak periods of sweating.

Drink no more than 12 quarts/day. You can know your body's level of hydration by simply observing your urine color. Follow work/rest cycles, as much as the mission allows.

Keep in mind, some foods and vitamins can make your urine appear darker, even though you are well-hydrated.

CAUTION: Hourly fluid intake should not exceed 1.5 quarts.

One of the most important prevention strategies is to avoid over-the-counter supplements such as cold or allergy medications (they impair your body's ability to sweat), weight loss products (they increase your body's production of heat), caffeine products (they cause dehydration), and muscle-enhancing products, like creatine, (they store water in muscles to improve appearance but steal water from your body's circulation).

The key to prevention is eating a regular, well-balanced diet and drinking plenty of water. Do not wait until you feel thirsty, because your body is already dehydrated at this point.

A handful of the wrong dietary supplements could cause heat-related health issues for Soldiers.

Before starting a diet in the sweltering Iraqi summer heat, Soldiers are encouraged

to talk with a health professional first.

Finally, look out for your buddy, and make sure you can recognize the signs and symptoms of heat injuries. Heat injuries start with dizziness, headache, dry mouth, nausea, weakness, muscle cramps and unsteady walk.

If these are seen, quick action can often prevent permanent injury.

First, place the individual in shade or make shade, loosen clothing, provide fluids, and give a snack.

More serious signs of heat injury are vomiting, unconsciousness, mental changes (any abnormal behavior or change in mental awareness, for example, not knowing the day, location, or purpose of the mission).

If these are observed, the situation is a medical emergency.

Rapid cooling must take place immediately, even before medical evacuation occurs.

Place the Soldier in the shade, remove clothing down to undergarments, cool body with available water and fan continuously until medical evacuation arrives. This is the single most important step any Soldier can do to prevent a fellow Soldier from dying.

Ensure all your servicemembers know these steps in order to prevent heat injuries and prevent another serious heat injury.

3rd HBCT officer and NCO married and deployed

By SGT. NATALIE ROSTEK
3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO

FOB HAMMER – Army regulations forbid romantic relationships between officers and enlisted personnel, but one couple is making it work.

First Lt. Lavone Bell and Staff Sgt. Roy Bell, both of Gaffney, S.C., share everything, including a deployment to Iraq.

Lavone Bell serves as executive officer for Company B, 203rd Brigade Support Battalion at FOB Hammer, while Roy Bell serves as noncommissioned officer in charge of operational movement for 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, currently assigned to 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division at FOB Rustamayah. Both units are part of 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team.

Lavone Bell said she and her husband were married in April 1999, before she ever joined the Army. Regulations allow relationships between officers and enlisted personnel if the servicemembers were married prior to enlistment or commissioning.

"He was already in the military when we met and got married," Lavone Bell said. "I joined later."

Lavone Bell decided to join the Army three years ago because it was something she had always wanted to pursue, Roy Bell said. She started the Reserve Officer Training Corps while Roy was deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He said she finished up her training and was commissioned while he was deployed for a



Courtesy photo

Staff Sgt. Roy Bell stands next to his wife 1st Lt. Lavone Bell.

second time during OIF III.

"I am the only officer in the family," Lavone Bell said. "My father told me, because of my personality, I was more cut out to lead as an officer."

The Bells both agree the marriage has not been difficult as far as their ranks are concerned.

"My friends joke sometimes but there really haven't been any problems," Roy Bell said.

He said the situation has more benefits than liabilities.

"I am more informed about things that are going on. I have better connections and it's easier to network," Roy Bell explained.

He said when he and his wife attend formal events he proudly wears his uniform, as does she.

While they serve at different forward operating bases, Bells said the separation is

difficult but manageable.

"As far as the mission is concerned, it's almost better that she isn't here with me," Roy Bell said. "We would be a distraction to each other. Back at home I always found myself trying to help her with her work, and I would sometimes let mine drop."

Lavone Bell said the situation was challenging at first, because there was no travel between FOB Hammer and FOB Rustamayah. Her unit now makes it a point to invite her on logistics convoys to visit her husband.

The couple also uses the telephone.

She said, at the time of deployment, the option was presented for them to deploy at separate times so at least one parent could be home with their daughter. She said she and her husband have a good family care plan and would rather not have their 7-year-old daughter, Kiara, jump between parents during their deployments. Their daughter is currently living with Lavone Bell's mother in Gaffney.

Roy Bell had a different motive to deploy with his wife.

"I didn't want to be that family member who receives a phone call, or letter, or visit from the military and I couldn't do anything about it," he said. "I wanted to make sure that if something were to happen, I would be close."

The couple plans on taking their 18-day leave in October. They said they have no set plans, but would like to work their vacation around their daughter's schedule.

Robots roll into combat, save lives

SGT. KEVIN STABINSKY
2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO

FOB KALSU — They're small and lightweight, yet their tiny bodies can carry a great burden.

The PackBot and Talon robots, industrial robots designed by iRobot Co., are tactical mobile robots used by the military for search, reconnaissance and bomb disposal.

"Robots give us the ability to do procedures on improvised explosive devices without risking Soldiers," said 1st Sgt. Dean Smith, 705th Ordnance Company, Explosive Ordnance Disposal unit. "They are tools we use to save lives."

While the robots on today's battlefield might be a long way from the Terminator, RoboCop or C3PO of science fiction films, they do provide much-needed support and safety for their operators.

"They save lives every time we go downrange," Smith said.

The robots save Soldiers' lives by investigating potential IEDs. If an object in question turns out to be an IED, the robots are also used to place charges on it, allowing its operator to safely detonate the IED.

While investigating potential IEDs might be difficult, controlling the robot is not. Sgt. James Almon, 705th Ordnance Co., compared it to playing a video game, noting that most guys handling the robots today grew up in with video games and can quickly master the art.

The portability of the robots allows them to be used with great frequency.

Each EOD team is assigned one of each robot model. The two- to three-man team can easily load and unload the robots by hand because of their small size: the PackBot weighs about 40 pounds and the Talon about 60.

Though lightweight and portable, the robots are durable.



Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

A PackBot robot disposes a mock grenade into an ammo can.

They can operate in environments ranging from urban terrain to open desert, function in any weather, day or night, and navigate virtually any terrain.

While robots might be the new stars on today's battlefield, they have been in use for some time.

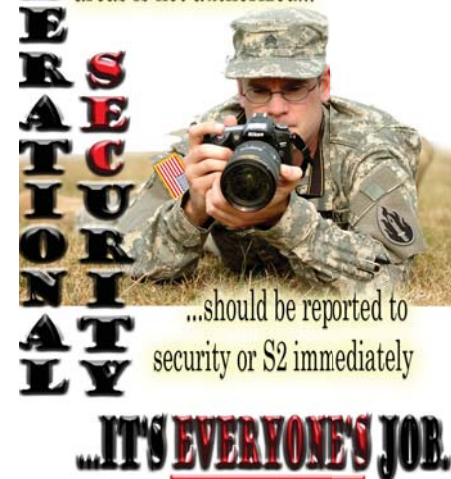
Smith said robots have been used for military operations since the late 1980s or early '90s. However, there were no IED threats then, so robots were cast in a minor role, occasionally called on to handle unexploded ordnance. As the face of war took a new identity in the War on Terrorism, the Department of Defense saw a need for more robots to do hazardous work.

"They are a remote tool that keeps us from having to go down there and (look at a potential IED) ourselves," Almon said.

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Treating Tebarek



Courtesy photo

Sgt. William Ludlow poses with Tebarek and her father during her care at Yusufiyah Aid Station.

Combat medic cares for wounded Iraqi child

By 2ND LT. ELIZABETH LOPEZ
2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. (LI) PAO

CAMPSTRIKER — The nature of Army medics' jobs requires these men and women to witness and participate in some of combat's most difficult and heart-rending situations.

Late in the day July 21 at Patrol Base Yusufiyah, the aid station's normal routine was thrown into chaos by the arrival of eight victims of a nearby mortar attack, among them seven Iraqi children ranging in age from 3 to 12.

One of the children, a 6-year-old girl named Tebarek, was placed under the care of Sgt. William Ludlow, a combat medic from Company C, 210th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) out of Fort Drum, N.Y.

Tebarek's left leg and abdominal injuries were so severe that she needed immediate evacuation to the 28th Combat Support Hospital in Baghdad's International Zone. The medics put her on a flight to the hospital and never expected to see the little girl again.

Nearly a week later, the Iraqi army senior medic at Patrol Base Yusufiyah asked Ludlow to examine a patient's wounds with him.

Ludlow recalled his surprise at his first visit.

"I saw this little, helpless girl lying there on the litter," he said. It was Tebarek, who had been released from the hospital and returned to the care of her family. Not knowing where to turn for help caring for his wounded daughter, Tebarek's father had returned to the base where Soldiers had treated her that first evening.

The little girl Ludlow saw before him had undergone several surgeries to treat the shrapnel injuries she sustained during the mortar attack. Risk of infection left her in desperate need of intravenous antibiotic medication; her wounds needed to be cleaned and her dressings changed.

Ludlow immediately set to work giving Tebarek the care she needed. He sent her home that day with instructions to return to the Iraqi army aid station for another round of medication and dressing changes.

The next day, an Iraqi interpreter brought Ludlow back to the Iraqi aid station, where he walked into the middle of an argument between Tebarek's father and an Iraqi medic.

Tebarek's father was adamant that Ludlow was the only person he would trust to care for his daughter. Touched, Ludlow treated the child just as he had done the

day before. As he worked, Ludlow spoke to Tebarek's father through the interpreter about the her medications and explained the procedures he used to clean and dress her wounds.

Tebarek's father responded, "Tebarek is your daughter now. Do what you would do to your own daughter in order to make her well."

From that day on, Tebarek was entrusted to Ludlow's care. Having raised his own little girl at home single-handedly for four years, he takes this job very seriously.

As she healed, Tebarek learned to enjoy her visits to the aid station, though they have not always been pleasant. One difficult visit was the day Ludlow had to remove the stitches and staples left over from her surgeries.

"She cried the entire time," he said. "It broke my heart."

Tebarek is well loved by everyone at the aid station. They cannot speak of her without smiling, and they often tease Ludlow about his friend. Ludlow ignores the teasing, but delight fills his eyes when she is mentioned.

Tebarek still faces a long, slow road to full recovery, but Ludlow and the medics in Yusufiyah remain dedicated to providing her the best care.