

Serving Task Force Marne and MND-Center



Remembering 9/11  
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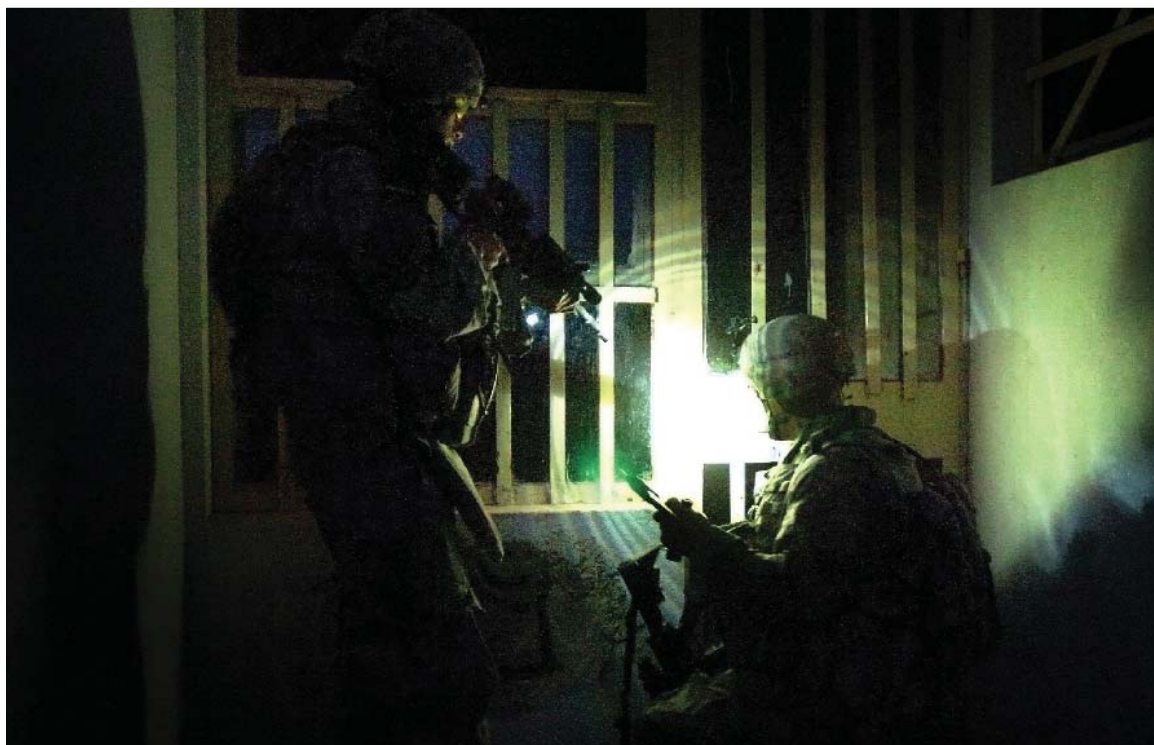
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Soldiers from Btry. A, 2-15th FA, break in to search for extremists at Mahmudiyah's al-Qa Qaa apartments.

Photos by Sgt. Ben Brody

## U.S., Iraqi troops team up for raid

### 16 suspected militants detained, murder among alleged crimes

By **SGT. BEN BRODY**  
2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. (LI) Public Affairs

**MAHMUDIYAH** — In a predawn raid on a large apartment complex here, Coalition and Iraqi troops detained 16 suspected Shiite extremists Sept. 1.

Soldiers of 2nd Battalion, 15th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry), out of Fort Drum, N.Y., along with their Iraqi counterparts from 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, conducted the combined air assault and ground operation.

Mahmudiyah's al-Qa Qaa apartment complex is about a square mile of three-story buildings housing thousands of residents, mainly lower-income Shiites.

After an Iraqi army company commander was killed by Shiite Extremist in Mahmudiyah Aug. 28, U.S. and Iraqi forces have worked together to bring the perpetrators to justice, raiding Shiite safehouses and homes.

Soldiers in UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters landed in the darkness and quickly surrounded the target buildings, ensuring no one fled the scene.

A few minutes later, U.S. and Iraqi troops arrived in Humvees and



Sgt. Carlos Tavares of Btry. A, 2-15th FA swings a sledgehammer to knock in an apartment door.

Badger armored troop carriers to search the buildings.

The force swept through the buildings, and brought all military-age males down to a central point for questioning as OH-58 Kiowa helicopters circled the area.

After the males were in military control and a cursory search had been conducted, Soldiers with bomb-sniffing dogs thoroughly cleared

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- 7:30 a.m. (Baghdad)



Marne 66 sends

## Surge progress impressive

Attacks, sectarian violence, accelerants down

**M**aj. Gen. Lynch is on R&R, taking a well-deserved break. While we press on, I know many of our thoughts are on Gen. Petraeus' testimony in Washington, D.C.

As Gen. Petraeus said in his letter to all Soldiers last week, he and the other senior leaders in Iraq are very proud of your efforts. The progress made since the beginning of the surge has been unbelievable. The success of the Concerned Citizens Program alone shows us how we effectively made the population feel secure – enough so they want to be responsible for their own security. In so many areas across our battlefield, Iraqis themselves are saying "Enough – we want to secure our own neighborhoods." I commend the work all of you are doing with the concerned citizens – coaching, teaching, and mentoring them.

We have significantly reduced accelerants into Baghdad, as attacks have decreased and sectarian violence has dropped to the lowest levels in many months. Stabilizing Baghdad

first requires stabilizing the areas surrounding Baghdad, and, for the most part, we have accomplished that difficult task. We still have some areas in MND-C where insurgents live, and over the next few months we will continue to attack those areas in order to kill or capture the enemy. Our efforts will allow the population to feel secure and further develop the Concerned Citizens Program.

The surge was developed to create the time and space for governance and economics to make progress, and as we have worked to secure the population and reduce violence, we have also made progress along those lines of operation.

In each of our brigade combat teams, our embedded Provincial Reconstruction Teams and military Provincial Reconstruction Teams are working hard to improve essential services. We are seeing a direct correlation between providing these services and quelling the violence in the surrounding areas. Just as we want to continue to take the fight to the enemy in new areas, we want to continue to connect



Brig. Gen. James Huggins  
Deputy Commanding General –  
Maneuver

the local leadership with the provincial government, and the provincial leadership with the national government. We want to continue our medical operations and create more health clinics for the Iraqis. We want to help them bring the Rule of Law back into their areas, and we want to continue allowing the Arabic media to tell the story of the Iraqi successes from their point of view.

We want to do everything we can to empower the Iraqis and allow them to stand on their

own. We are continuing to develop the Iraqi Security Forces, and while our Iraqi army partners are good, we want to help make them even better.

Across Iraq we have made incredible progress attacking al-Qaeda in Iraq, and we are beginning to effectively target Shia extremists and Iranian influence. As the 3rd Georgian Brigade begins to build its checkpoints in Wasit, we will have an even better ability to block illegal munitions from Iran.

Over the next few months we will continue to build on our progress and maintain the positive momentum your extraordinary efforts have created. As I look into every foxhole, I am proud of your efforts – from the dismounted infantryman to the medic to the tactical psychological operations team. Every Soldier has brought us this far, and I am proud of each and every one of you and HONORED TO STAND IN YOUR RANKS.

**ROCK OF THE MARNE!**



**Marne Focus**

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# Faith in wartime: Understanding Ramadan

By RENANAH MILES  
MND-C Public Affairs

In Iraq, the soundtrack of long days can blur together. The familiar blend of helicopters, indirect fire, and the call to prayer echoing from beyond the wire becomes a kind of environmental white noise. But for a month's time between September and October, that latter sound – the Muslim Adhan – takes on a special significance. During the month of Ramadan, when Muslims shift their focus from the physical to the spiritual, the call reawakens many Iraqis to the responsibilities of their faith.

For Coalition troops, the call to prayer is a reminder that they are living in a foreign land. But during Ramadan, the call is also an implicit invitation to outreach to the Iraqi people, as well as a warning of potential threats from extremists who distort religion to political ends. Understanding Muslims' beliefs on Ramadan, and how they celebrate this holy time, can assist Coalition forces in making inroads and staying safe.

This type of understanding of customs and culture is a pillar of the counter-insurgency doctrine put forward by Multi-National Force – Iraq commander, Gen. David Petraeus. It is a way of thinking that has gained traction throughout the Defense Department.

In April, Deputy Defense Secretary Gor-

don England emphasized the importance of respect and communication among people of different faiths.

England told representatives of the Islamic Society of North America, "We need to understand that almost all people of the Muslim faith, except for the extremists, are valuable members of our society and societies around the world."

For Muslim members of society, Ramadan is an integral part of their faith. It is a holy month of fasting, when Shia and Sunni alike focus on God, family and friends in place of mundane physical preoccupations. Together they reflect, pray and read the Quran, the Islamic holy book. Ramadan commemorates the first revelation of the Quran to the Prophet Mohammed.

The holiday is observed with ritual abstinence. From dawn until dusk each day, Muslims abstain from food, drink, smoking and sex. And though children under the age of puberty are not required to fast, even little kids enjoy trying to see how long they can hold out each day.

In addition to fasting, Muslims give charity, known as Fitra, an amount prescribed locally to feed one needy person in their region for one day. Fitra is usually given to correspond with the end of Ramadan and the beginning of the Eid.

Timed around the phases of the moon, Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. This year, Ramadan will begin on approximately Thursday, Sept. 13. It con-

cludes around Oct. 13, with Eid al-Fitr, the holiday which marks the end of fasting.

The significance of Ramadan is found in the core of the religion; fasting is one of five pillars of Islam, the basic tenets around which Islam is constructed. Through the focus on the spiritual, Ramadan becomes for Muslims a holy time, when angels are believed present doing God's will on earth.

As an integral part of the religion, understanding Ramadan and respecting those who celebrate it, is an important step for interfaith consideration. However, for Iraqi citizens and U.S. Soldiers operating in the grip of conflict, good intentions are pitted against a precarious security situation.

The realities of war can cast a shadow on Ramadan celebrations in some vulnerable Iraqi communities. Security conditions and fear of attack may keep people in their homes during what would otherwise be evenings of communal joy, and anxiety can heighten the stress of an already physically difficult month.

All too often, the fear is justified; to a would-be suicide bomber, Ramadan is an attractive time to strike. Muslims believe God will forgive their sins during the holy month. Thus for religious extremists who consider themselves martyrs, the perceived assurance of rewards in the afterlife serves as an extra incentive for launching suicide attacks. As a result, existing targets of violence, both Iraqi and American, may see increased risk throughout the month.

Army Brig. Gen. Richard Sherlock, deputy director for operational planning for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, recently warned of the increased risk of attacks.

"Overall, violence in Iraq has continued to decline and is at the lowest level since June 2006," he said. "However, for the last few years, the Ramadan period has tended to be the most violent time of the year in Iraq."

Each year since the U.S.-led invasion in 2003, Ramadan has been marked by an escalation in violence, and attempts at spectacular, coordinated attacks.

For Coalition troops, however, increased risks are mitigated by increased opportunities for winning the support of the Iraqi people. Simple forms of consideration include not eating, drinking or smoking in front of Muslims, and not offering them food or drink. Offensive language should also be avoided.

These strict observances end with the close of Ramadan, giving way to the celebration of Eid. This three-day feast is an appropriate time to congratulate the Iraqi people, and work with the Iraqi Security Forces to ensure a peaceful holiday.

With our troops at the crossroads of religion and war in Iraq, Ramadan stands as a double-edged sword for Coalition Forces. Understanding the holiday will help Soldiers stay safe and make inroads with the populations they're seeking to protect and assist.

## Task Force Marne Web site Cyber-connections for family and friends

By TIM KILBRIDE  
MND-C Public Affairs

Family and friends of deployed Task Force Marne Soldiers gained a new resource this month for keeping track of their loved ones with the launch of the Task Force Marne Web site: [www.taskforcemarne.com](http://www.taskforcemarne.com).

A compilation of stories, video, audio and photos from the frontlines of Iraq, the site is first and foremost a service for the mothers and fathers, husbands and wives, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, friends, neighbors and loved ones of the men and women living and working in Multi-National Division – Center.

It is also a resource for the American public and media, with press releases, print reports from the battlefield, and radio newscasts available for download.

As the commander of Multi-National Division – Center, Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch, says in a welcome message on the site, "We have 16,000 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines here in Iraq, and every day we have 16,000 stories of bravery, loyalty, sacrifice and human kindness. Each one of these stories deserves to be told."

To tell those stories, the team at Task Force Marne Public Affairs is developing special content for the Web site, focused on what motivates Soldiers to make the sacrifices they do, and explaining how the efforts of Task Force Marne men and women translate into success on the battlefield, from a me-

chanic keeping Humvees in working order, up to the command staff making decisions on placing troops around the battlefield.

Among the features of the site are the "Soldiers' Stories" videos and articles, probing individuals on what military service means to them, and how that transfers into their work. The first segments of this series feature a father and son team, both deployed with Task Force Marne, Maj. Freddy Welborn and his son, Pfc. Joshua Welborn. Upcoming segments will feature Soldiers' reactions to Sept. 11, 2001.

Additional video series will explore what goes into a combat operation, how Soldiers keep fit when deployed, the activities that make up a day in Iraq, and even weather patterns, looking at what atmospheric conditions go into the 120 degree temperatures Soldiers sometimes face.

The photo gallery is another noteworthy feature, providing space for the combat photographers of Task Force Marne to display their work, capture the unique experiences that unfold every day in Iraq, and share with viewers the intensity and emotion of life for Soldiers. Over time, photographers from around Multi-National Division – Center will be invited to submit their images for the public to see.

As with any outreach effort, the success of the site will lie in its value to Soldiers and their families and their willingness to pass this information along. Maj. Gen. Lynch challenges site visitors, "Today we have the ability to share in real-time the actions, words and accomplishments of each one of our brave Soldiers... It is a story I invite you to share."



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**Observance**



**"Hispanic Americans: Making a Positive Impact on American Society"**

**Location**  
**Task Force Marne DFAC**

**When**  
**Sunday, Oct 7, 2007**  
**From 3pm to 4pm**



**Guest Speaker**  
**SGM Jose Mercado**  
**MND-C G3 SGM**

**POC: SFC Reyes 822-7653/54**  
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# Petraeus previews Congressional report

Letter to servicemembers highlights surge accomplishments and ongoing challenges



HEADQUARTERS  
MULTI-NATIONAL FORCE - IRAQ  
BAGHDAD, IRAQ  
APO AE 09342-1406

7 September 2007



Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, and Civilians of Multi-National Force-Iraq:

We are now over two-and-a-half months into the surge of offensive operations made possible by the surge of forces, and I want to share with you my view of how I think we're doing. This letter is a bit longer than previous ones, since I feel you deserve a detailed description of what I believe we have – and have not – accomplished, as Ambassador Crocker and I finalize the assessment we will provide shortly to Congress.

Up front, my sense is that we have achieved tactical momentum and wrested the initiative from our enemies in a number of areas of Iraq. The result has been progress in the security arena, although it has, as you know, been uneven. Additionally, as you all appreciate very well, innumerable tasks remain and much hard work lies ahead. We are, in short, a long way from the goal line, but we do have the ball and we are driving down the field.

We face a situation that is exceedingly complex. Al Qaeda, associated insurgent groups, and militia extremists, some supported by Iran, continue to carry out attacks on us, our Iraqi partners, and the Iraqi civilians we seek to secure. We have to contend with the relentless pace of operations, the crushing heat, and the emotions that we all experience during long deployments and tough combat. And we operate against a backdrop of limited Iraqi governmental capacity, institutions trying to rebuild, and various forms of corruption. All of this takes place in a climate of distrust and fear that stems from the sectarian violence that did so much damage to the fabric of Iraqi society in 2006 and into 2007, not to mention the decades of repression under Saddam's brutal regime. Tragically, sectarian violence continues to cause death and displacement in Baghdad and elsewhere, albeit at considerably reduced levels from 8 months ago, due, in large part, to your hard work and sacrifice together with our Iraqi counterparts.

In spite of these challenges, our operations – particularly the offensive operations we have conducted since mid-June – have helped produce progress in many areas on the ground. In fact, the number of attacks across the country has declined in 8 of the past 11 weeks, reaching during the last week in August a level not seen since June 2006. This trend is not just a result of greater numbers of Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces; it also reflects your determination, courage, and skill in conducting counterinsurgency operations. By taking the fight to the enemy, you have killed or captured dozens of leaders and thousands of members of Al Qaeda-Iraq and extremist militia elements, you have taken many of Al Qaeda's former sanctuaries away from them, and you have dismantled a number of their car bomb and improvised explosive device networks. By living among the population with our Iraqi partners, you have been holding the areas you have cleared. By helping Iraqis reestablish basic services and local governance, you have helped exploit the security gains. And by partnering closely with Iraqi Security Forces, you have been strengthening Iraqi elements that will one day have sole responsibility for protecting their population. Indeed, while Iraqi forces clearly remain a work in progress, Iraqi soldiers and police are very much in the fight, and they continue to sustain losses that are two to three times our losses.

We are also building momentum in an emerging area of considerable importance – local reconciliation. Local Iraqi leaders are coming forward, opposing extremists, and establishing provisional units of neighborhood security volunteers. With growing Government of Iraq support, these volunteers are being integrated into legitimate security institutions to help improve local security. While this concept is playing out differently in various areas across Iraq, it is grounded in a desire shared by increasing numbers of Iraqis – to oppose extremist elements and their ideologies. This is very significant because, as many of you know firsthand, extremists cannot survive without the support of the population. The popular rejection of Al Qaeda and its ideology has, for example, helped transform Anbar Province this year from one of the most dangerous areas of Iraq to one of the safest. The popular rejection of extremists has helped Coalition and Iraqi Forces take

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away other areas from Al Qaeda as well, and we are seeing a spread of this sentiment in an ever-increasing number of Sunni areas. Now, in fact, we are also seeing a desire to reject extremists emerge in many Shi'a areas.

The progress has not, to be sure, been uniform across Baghdad or across Iraq. Accomplishments in some areas – for example, in Ramadi and in Anbar Province – have been greater than any of us might have predicted six months ago. The achievements in some other areas – for example, in some particularly challenging Baghdad neighborhoods and in reducing overall civilian casualties, especially those caused by periodic, barbaric Al Qaeda bombings – have not been as dramatic. However, the overall trajectory has been encouraging, especially when compared to the situation at the height of the sectarian violence in late 2006 and early 2007.

Many of us had hoped this summer would be a time of tangible political progress at the national level as well. One of the justifications for the surge, after all, was that it would help create the space for Iraqi leaders to tackle the tough questions and agree on key pieces of "national reconciliation" legislation. It has not worked out as we had hoped. All participants, Iraqi and coalition alike, are dissatisfied by the halting progress on major legislative initiatives such as the oil framework law, revenue sharing, and de-ba'athification reform. At the same time, however, our appreciation of what this legislation represents for Iraqi leaders has grown. These laws are truly fundamental in nature and will help determine how Iraqis will share power and resources in the new Iraq. While much work remains to be done before these critical issues are resolved, the seriousness with which Iraqi leaders came together at their summit in late August has given hope that they are up to the task before them, even if it is clearly taking more time than we initially expected.

In the coming months, our coalition's countries and all Iraqis will continue to depend on each of you and on our Iraqi counterparts to keep the pressure on the extremists, to help improve security and strengthen the rule of law for all Iraqis, to work with the Government of Iraq to integrate local volunteers into local security and national institutions, to assist with the restoration and improvement of basic services, and to continue the development of conditions that foster reconciliation. For our part, Ambassador Crocker and I will continue to do everything in our power to help the Prime Minister and the Government of Iraq achieve the meaningful results that will ensure that your sacrifices and those of your comrades help produce sustainable security for Iraq over the long term. A stable and secure Iraq that denies extremists a safe haven and has a government that is representative of and responsive to all Iraqis helps protect the vital interests of our coalition countries. A stable and secure Iraq will also benefit Iraq's citizens and Iraq's neighbors alike, bringing calm to a region full of challenges and employing Iraq's human capital and natural resource blessings for the benefit of all.

As I noted at the outset of this letter, over the next few days, Ambassador Crocker and I will share with the U.S. Congress and the American people our assessment of the situation in Iraq. I will also describe the recommendations I have provided to my chain of command. I will go before Congress conscious of the strain on our forces, the sacrifices that you and your families are making, the gains we have made in Iraq, the challenges that remain, and the importance of building on what we and our Iraqi counterparts have fought so hard to achieve.

Thanks once again for what each of you continues to do. Our Nations have asked much of you and your families. It remains the greatest of honors to serve with you.

Sincerely,

*David H. Petraeus*

David H. Petraeus  
General, United States Army  
Commanding

## Soldiers save base from VBIED attack

Vehicle is engaged, bomb detonates outside base

4th BCT (Abn.), 25th Inf. Div. Public Affairs

**KALSU** — A Coalition patrol base was attacked by a truck-borne improvised explosive device, Sept. 1 in the Chaka III region.

As the vehicle attempted to enter the patrol base, Paratroopers from Company C, 3rd Battalion, 509th Airborne, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division engaged the vehicle with heavy machine-gun fire.

The bomb detonated, destroying a portion of the perimeter wall.

"I told him to stop and he started going for a hard right turn, and then at that time I began to engage him," said Spc. Tyler Watson, a Paratrooper from Jasper, Ala. "I got

about two or three rounds off with my (M-249) SAW, and that is when he blew it. After that, I wound up on the ground, unconscious for about a minute and a half."

The patrol base also received heavy enemy mortar and small arms fire.

"We immediately returned fire to the palm grove to our southeast. We saw the mortar team launch there, and machine-gun fire ... so they put a lock on with .50 cal," said Capt. John Henry, a Company C platoon leader from Vero Beach, Fla.

One Paratrooper sustained minor injuries while repelling the attack.

Paratroopers from Company C use the patrol base as a staging point for vehicle and foot patrols in the Chaka III region.

Workers, visitors, and others in uniforms may be in secured areas but are non-cleared personnel.

Check your area before discussing classified or sensitive, and cover up classified.

...IT'S EVERYONE'S JOB.



A resident of the al-Qa Qaa apartments in Mahmudiyah waits in a hallway during the raid Sept. 1, as U.S. and Iraqi troops search the building for members of a Shiite militant group.



Photos by Sgt. Ben Brody

## RAID: AK-47, pistols, gas masks found in search

From Page 1

the apartments and put evidence into plastic bags marked with the apartment's number.

Although the dogs did not sniff out any explosives, among the items confiscated were two Iraqi police pistols, 120 Iraqi-style gas masks and an AK-47 assault rifle.

"It was a well-executed mission — we quickly isolated the objective and surprised our targets," said Capt. Nick Ziemba of Battery A, 2-15 FAR. "The Iraqi soldiers have made great progress acting professionally and getting the job done."

Ziemba, from Wilbraham, Mass., said his unit has a good rapport with the Mahmudiyah soldiers and that they are growing together as a joint force.

"By operating alongside us, they pick up a lot of our tactics, while we pick up on their cultural knowledge," he said. "They remind us that we're not always dealing with the enemy — a lot of the people in Mahmudiyah are becoming familiar, friendly faces."

After 16 suspected Shiite extremists were identified by informants and Iraqi troops, the rest of the men were released to their apartments.

"One of the guys we picked up today is wanted for multiple murders and forcing people from their homes," said Capt. Dustin Walker, intelligence officer for 2-15 FAR. "Within two hours of the operation, I received five phone calls from Iraqis asking us not to release him. The people of Mahmudiyah do not support Shiite extremists and just want to live in peace."

The 16 males detained were taken into IA custody for further questioning.



Sgt. 1st Class Jeffery Klein, platoon sergeant for Btry. A, 2-15th FA, waits for an Iraqi woman to open a gate during the search of the al-Qa Qaa apartments.



Sixteen members of a Shiite militant group were detained by U.S. and Iraqi troops during the joint raid at the al-Qa Qaa apartments in Mahmudiyah.



# In their own words . . .

## 3rd ID troops reflect

### Lt. Col. Gilbert Huron, G-8



"9/11 was a unique event for our family because I have a little sister who lived in Battery Park City ... My sister and my brother-in-law and my two nieces were some of those

people you saw running through the streets to get away from the Towers ...

When the Towers fell, some of the debris from the South Tower actually damaged the building my sister lived in, so my brother-in-law, sister and my two nieces ended up living in New Jersey all the way until the following February ... It's a big deal for our family, as I'm sure

it is for every family.

I thank my brother-in-law for his strength and his ability to take care of the family and take care of my sister and nieces, and I'm real proud of them ...

Personally it made me angry, I guess you could say, and shortly after 9/11 happened, I left Hawaii and went to the Pentagon, so I worked in the Pentagon while they were reconstructing it ... Being in that area for seven or eight months after 9/11 you could still sense the pride and the fear and the resentment and the anger about 9/11. You could still see it in people, you could see it in the Soldiers at the Pentagon ... The military in that area took on a different air to itself, so for me I guess it brought to bear the seriousness of the nature of our job and how quickly life can change when something like that happens."

### Spc. Amie McClintic, STB



Spc. McClintic is from Shiremanstown, Pa. She was living at Lajes Field, Azores, Portugal on 9/11.

"I had just gotten home from the commissary. One of our neigh-

bors—I knocked on her door and asked her to watch my baby ... and my neighbor was crying, and I said, 'Are you okay,' and she said, 'You don't know what's go-

ing on do you?"

She brought me and sat me in front of the TV, and I thought it was just a bad movie. I didn't believe that's what it was, and as we watched it was just shocking.

I was sad and frightened when I found out. We couldn't get back through the phone lines to get in touch with our families for a few days ... It gave me a deeper pride in my country, and I joined the Army after that ...

I just think I needed a better way of life for my son (on why she joined the Army); but also, I'd rather be here fighting the war on terrorism than let them keep coming to where we are and where my son plays and lives."

### Master Sgt. Marcia Triggs, STB



Master Sgt. Triggs was working at the Pentagon the morning of 9/11.

"I remember sitting in a meeting hearing something that sounded like glass breaking.

We all thought

it was a bomb because the meeting I was in started before the Towers fell. It was chaos, but I was very fortunate to get to my son before the train stations and all

communication was cut off. But I didn't stay away long. I'm an Army journalist; the very next day, my story was titled, 'Pentagon, still open for business.'

It was a very emotional, draining time for me. I wrote about people who gained heroic strength that saved lives. There were the extremely sad stories, like the Navy chief who was off that day and not only lost half his staff, but his son was on the plane that crashed in Pennsylvania. I saw another side of the Old Guard Soldiers. They were the main effort during search and recovery; they were just as respectful and methodical in that effort as they are in ceremonial duties.



Photo illustration by Staff Sgt. Tony Lindback

### Lt. Col. Timothy Whalen, G-4



Lt. Col. Whalen grew up in Brooklyn and has family and friends throughout New York City. He was stationed at Fort Stewart, Ga., during the attack.

"Right out our front door where my mother lives (Queens), (she was) watching the

Towers collapse ... I had several friends that worked around the Wall Street area that ran from the scene, thankfully ...

Within our neighborhood ... you really rally around things like fire stations and police stations .. they're embedded within neighborhoods. We lost 16 firemen from our neighborhood. I go back now and street names are named after firemen, just very difficult still for these people to

get over this ...

Manhattan and things like the World Trade Center are kinda like your backyard when you grow up in that area--very accessible--and not uncommon to get on a train and go to Manhattan and go on top of the World Trade Center. That's what we used to do.

It (the attack) redefines what we do. There's more of a sense of urgency ... I just felt that much more committed to what I chose as a career ...

I think it taught us how vulnerable we are. How precious a place we call home is, but how quickly that could be taken away. I think we felt pretty safe until then--that nobody could come and do something like that, but now, unfortunately, I feel, and I think a lot of people feel these bad guys probably have the means of doing it again.

And we can't forget; that's why it's important that we remember every time this comes around.



# Remembering September 11

## A time line of events

Sept. 11, 2001, started out as a beautiful day across most of the eastern United States. Blue skies and pleasant temperatures belied the impending tragedy.

At 8:46 a.m., American Airlines Flight 11 slammed into the 96th floor of the 110-story North Tower of New York's World Trade Center, instantly shattering the earlier promise of a placid day.

Sixteen minutes later, United Airlines Flight 175 slammed into the South Tower. The 110,000 tons of steel and concrete above the point of impact on the South Tower proved too much to bear by 9:59, and it collapsed. Within thirty minutes, the North Tower also collapsed.

At the Pentagon, crisis action teams were just standing up to deal with the emerging catastrophe when American

Airlines Flight 77 roared into the western face of the building at 9:38.

Over the next several hours details would emerge of yet another plane, United Airlines Flight 93, which crashed under mysterious circumstances into a field in Pennsylvania.

A total of 2,435 workers, 343 firemen, and 23 policemen died in the Twin Towers and another 125 employees and servicemembers in the Pentagon.

A chilling story emerged: In an organized scheme each plane had been seized by a team of terrorists purporting to be passengers. These imposters had overwhelmed the crews, substituted one of their own for each pilot, and flown into their chosen targets with the exception of United Airlines Flight 93.

The passengers on Flight 93 had learned by cellular phones of the fate of earlier hijacked aircraft. It is believed that some passengers fought back against the terrorists. In the resulting tumult, the plane crashed headlong into a field in Shanksville, Pa. The 33 passengers, seven crewmembers, and four hijackers died together, but the unknown target was spared.

Those who gave their lives on Sept. 11, 2001 were the first heroes in what President George W. Bush would later call The Global War on Terrorism; and today, the fight continues ...

(Source: *American Military History, Volume II* available from the U.S. Army Center of Military History, [www.army.mil/cmh](http://www.army.mil/cmh))



## Civil Affairs helps farmers

Farmers Union receives seeds including tomato, watermelon

By SGT. JASON STADEL  
2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div.  
Public Affairs

**AL RASHEED** – Soldiers and community leaders distributed thousands of pounds of garden and farming seeds to the al-Rasheed Farmers Union Sept. 6.

The civil affairs team from 1st Squadron, 40th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, currently attached to 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, coordinated the distribution with the members of the farmers union.

Seeds included tomato, pepper, and watermelon. The seed distribution was the first in more than a month, and the civil affairs team stepped back to let local union leaders run most of the distribution.

"The goal is to get (Farmer's Union members) independent and doing this without us,"



Courtesy photo

Sgt. Mike Kennington, Co. D, 725th Brigade Support Battalion, provides security during the seed distribution.

said Capt. Kenneth Guglielmina, 1-40th Cav. Regt. civil affairs team leader.

To be eligible to receive seeds, residents had to have an identification card and show proof that they were landowners.

About 20 al-Rasheed residents showed up to receive seed; the rest will be sold by the Farmers Union.

The leadership of 1-40th Cav. Regt. is hoping the al-Rasheed Farmers Union will develop into a self-sustaining business that grows in the

community.

"This is important to the economy," said Maj. John Hixson, 1-40th Cav. Regt. executive officer. "If they manage their resources it can be effective to all the members of the union."

If the al-Rasheed union is successful, the civil affairs team is hoping more unions can be formed in nearby communities.

"The intent is to get a separate farmers union in Arab Jabour and perhaps Hawr Rajab," Guglielmina said.



By Staff Sgt. Sean Riley

**Desert Rock:** Wilson Gil and the Willful Sinners perform for servicemembers at FOB Hammer Sept. 6.

## Enemy passage blown

2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. Public Affairs

**HAWR RAJAB** — An AH-64 Apache attack helicopter supporting Paratroopers of the "Denali Squadron" found and engaged an illegal crossing point here Sept. 4.

The helicopter's crew observed and engaged the illegal crossing point with two hellfire missiles, rendering it impassable.

Insurgents often use illegal bridge crossings like the one in Hawr Rajab to avoid Coalition checkpoints.

Paratroopers of 1st Squadron, 40th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, currently attached to 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, are conducting operations in Hawr Rajab to eliminate insurgents' ability to maneuver and transport weapons and explosives into Baghdad.

## City residents, mayor stand up to terror

By SGT. MARCUS BUTLER  
4th BCT (Abn.), 25th Inf. Div. Public Affairs

**ISKANDARIYAH** – With civilian-manned checkpoints every 75 meters along the roads of Jurf as Sukhr, citizens have made a statement to the enemies of a united Iraq: You are not welcome here.

Evidence of this bold stand could be seen as Paratroopers from Company A, 1st Battalion, 501st Airborne, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, conducted a combat patrol through the city Sept. 5 and were met by crowds of Iraqis eager to help out in any way they could.

"Our mission was just to check up on the people of the neighborhood and talk about the Concerned Citizens Program to the Iraqis who were out and about," said 1st Lt. Michael Kelvington, of Akron, Ohio, Company A platoon leader.

Given the power to take back their neighborhood, the citizens of Jurf as Sukhr set up checkpoints, secured critical infrastructure, and give information to Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces when an enemy threat is present.

"On our patrol through the city, one of the local concerned citizens pointed out the location of three IEDs," Kelvington said. "Receiving help from this city makes it seem really surreal for the simple reason that a few months ago, this was something that I could never imagine happening."

In a positive turn of events for both Soldiers and concerned citizens, a local leader who has been involved in the Concerned Citizens Program since its inception, Sheik Sabah, was recently named mayor of Jurf as Sukhr.

"I feel much more comfortable working with the citizens of Jurf as Sakhr now that everything is beginning to take a turn in the right direction," Kelvington said. "Seeing all of the children waving and people smiling, when they used to go and hide when Coalition Forces came through, gives me a really positive outlook about the future of this city."



Photos by Sgt. Marcus Butler

A Paratrooper (above) speaks to an Iraqi boy from the city of Jurf as Sakhr. 1st Lt. Michael Kelvington shakes the hand of a concerned citizen from Jurf as Sukhr. Kelvington, a platoon leader in Co. A, keeps tabs on civilian checkpoints and sees what can be done to improve the city.





Courtesy photo

Soldiers from the 3rd Georgian Brigade practice unarmed self-defense moves during a weeklong detention operations training class.

## Georgians get lock on detention ops

214th Fires Brigade Public Affairs

**FOB DELTA** – Coalition and U.S. Soldiers received training in detention operations to ensure all detainees are treated with dignity and respect.

Thirty soldiers from the 3rd Georgian Brigade and three U.S. Soldiers with the 984th Military Police Company from Fort Carson, Colo., were trained on the 37 critical detention operations tasks directed by the Multi-National Corps-Iraq policy, said Sgt. 1st Class T.J. Stoica, the 3rd Infantry Division's detention operations NCO in charge. The training is required for anyone working in a detention facility. FOB Delta has short-term detention capabilities.

"The tasks were set forth to ensure the Laws of War and the Geneva Convention are followed and that there is humane

treatment of prisoners," said Stoica, who is assigned to the 720th Military Police Battalion from Fort Hood, Texas. "The tasks help to ensure that detainee operations run without incidents."

Among the classes taught were unarmed self-defense, tower guard, prisoner escort,

movement of detainees inside and outside a detention facility, apprehension, frisk searching a detainee, the Geneva Convention, Law of War, and safety classes.

The weeklong class usually combines classroom instruction with hands-on practical exercises, said

Stoica. However, this class was geared toward hands-on training.

"I created scenarios to guide the learning objectives versus the classroom environment because of the language barrier," said Stoica. "The (Georgian) soldiers are very hands-on. They learn easier seeing it as they do it."

*"The tasks were set forth to ensure the Laws of War and the Geneva Convention are followed and that there is humane treatment of prisoners."*

— Sgt. 1st Class T.J. Stoica,  
3rd Inf. Div. detention ops NCOIC



Courtesy photo

Sgt. 1st Class T.J. Stoica demonstrates an unarmed self-defense move.

## Cholera outbreak not epidemic

By Sgt. Abel Trevino  
28th Public Affairs Detachment

**BAGHDAD** — Initial reports of an outbreak of Cholera in the northern Iraqi province of Sulaymania may have been overstated.

Since Aug. 10, there have been 70 confirmed cases of the disease and more than 4,000 reports of severe diarrhea and vomiting, said Col. Glynda Lucas, Multi-National Corps-Iraq Clinical Operations Chief.

"Right now, this appears to be an outbreak," she said. "It is not an epidemic. It is typical for these areas in Iraq to have Cholera at this time of year." Cholera is a disease marked by vomiting, cramps, dehydration and diarrhea.

Lucas added that cases of severe vomiting and diarrhea are also common, but are not necessarily Cholera.

The Iraqi government has taken steps to contain the disease and prevent it from spreading to other areas.

"The Iraqi Ministry of Health has a handle on this," Lucas said. "At every step of the way, they (have) responded appropriately."

Lucas added that the Ministry of Health and the Iraqi government has years of experience with Cholera outbreaks and asking for assistance is just one of the many proper steps in dealing with it.

The World Health Organization reports that Cholera is typically a waterborne bacteria transmitted from contaminated food and water between persons. This outbreak is different, as reported by the two-person MNC-I team working with the provincial government.

"This does not appear to be a waterborne outbreak," Lucas said. "Initial reports from MNC-I personnel on the ground indicate that most of the hospital patients in Sulaymania do not have other people ill who are using the same water source -- friends, families and neighbors."

"The risk of Cholera spreading to Bagh-

dad is reasonably low," Lucas said. "If it should, the government of Iraq and the Ministry of Health have trained and experienced medical personnel who, working with the WHO and the International Medical Corps, would be able to respond, identify the source and correct the issues (spreading the disease)."

Sulaymania, one of the provinces completely run by the Iraqi Provincial Government, has no U.S. military personnel stationed inside its borders.

The risk of transmission to Soldiers is low.

If anyone experiences vomiting, dehydration and diarrhea, the hallmark symptoms of Cholera, they should continue to drink fluids and rest if possible, Lucas advised.

"Anyone who has severe symptoms where they cannot keep anything down and have severe, watery diarrhea, should seek medical attention immediately," Lucas said.

She added that most cases of vomiting and diarrhea are viral and do not respond to antibacterial treatments. Cholera is caused by bacteria and antibiotics can shorten the illness.

"The most effective and important treatment is replenishing lost fluids and salts," she said. "Severe diarrhea can lead to dehydration and muscle cramps from a loss of salts. This is why oral rehydration solutions contain a small amount of sugar with the correct ratio of salts to replenish the body."

Intravenous fluids are used for the most severe cases but the body actually responds faster to oral rehydration.

Lucas advises that those with severe cases of dehydration avoid sports drinks and sodas, which have high sugar concentrations that can worsen severe diarrhea.

"When a rehydration solution is not available, a reasonable substitute is to drink water from a safe source and eat MRE crackers or saltine-type crackers," she said.

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# When 'Batphone' rings, Aviators answer call

By Pfc. Monica K. Smith  
3rd CAB, 3rd Inf. Div. Public Affairs

**BAGHDAD** — On average, three hours pass between the moment a mission is received and when a UH-60 Black Hawk's wheels leave the ground.

This includes finding the crew, pilots being briefed, loading equipment onto the aircraft, getting information disseminated to the crew, preflight inspection, and running up the aircraft.

The Division Ready Reserve Force gets it done in 14 minutes. "You need to have an aircraft ready to go at a moment's notice," said Sgt. Ben Knoepke, crew chief for Company C, 1st Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment, Combat Aviation Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division. "When the 'Batphone' rings, we all jump to answer it. We're called when they need to put infantry guys somewhere as quick as possible."

Unlike the Apache's quick reaction force, which is a comforting display of force and power to Soldiers who may be stuck in a bind, the DRRF team is used to move ground troops quickly.

"We pick up teams of infantry and take them to high value targets, and we sometimes hover around the area to secure a site," said Chief Warrant Officer Donald Brandt, the standardization pilot for Co. C. "We are also called in for 'fallen angels,' crashes, to keep the place from getting bad."

Because of the time-sensitive nature of situations when DRRF teams are used, aircraft must be maintained to fly at any given moment. Throughout the day, DRRF teams conduct preflight inspections, start-ups, and perform engine health indicator tests, checking all the mechanical parts of an aircraft.

"We run up the aircraft as soon as we come on shift," said Staff Sgt. Rafael Lopez, also with Co. C. "We check everything so if we get a call we're not finding a problem when we're trying to launch."

The DRRF uses Black Hawks of Companies A, B and C of 4th Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment. These companies rotate, with two companies serving on the DRRF team per month while the third continues its own company mission or air assaults.

The DRRF teams maintain two flight crews of two pilots and two crew chiefs per aircraft. The teams stay on shift for 14 hours



Pfc. Monica K. Smith

Staff Sgt. Rafael Lopez, a crew chief with Co. C, 4th Bn., 3rd Avn. Regt., inspects the top of a UH-60 Black Hawk.

with a two-hour overlap between the two shifts. Pilots cannot fly a helicopter until the preflight is completed, so the two hours of overlap allows the oncoming crew to conduct preflight checks and start-ups while the outgoing crew stands-by in case a call is made requiring a DRRF team.

The majority of the crew's time is spent waiting for the Batphone to ring with a mission. However, during their waiting time Soldiers maintain the aircraft and prepare for future missions.

"With DRRF there are any types of situations to be prepared for," said Chief Warrant Jeff Metter, a pilot with Co. C. "We're in here waiting for a call but we plan missions for future air assaults, we study aircraft limitations (and) emergency situations."

Anything can happen during a mission, and the Soldiers on the DRRF teams have plenty of experience.

"We're an assault battalion," Lopez said. "What we do now is what we did in the rear, so we know what to do. I love it. It's a real good feeling when you put a bunch of guys on the ground and they've got to go get a high-value target, and you come back and pick them up and they got the target — it's an adrenaline rush."

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

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## Winner: Capt. Consuela Wilds-Glover



This photo of the 3rd Infantry Division Honor Guard was taken by Capt. Wilds-Glover during Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. George W. Casey Jr.'s visit to the Task Force Marne Headquarters Aug. 11. Pictured from left to right: Spc. Jesse Harmon, Staff Sgt. Gary Curran, Staff Sgt. Tony Lee, Pfc. Zachary Robertson, and Sgt. Randell Carter, who submitted the photo to the *Marne Focus*. All members of the Honor Guard are in Headquarters and Headquarters Support Company. Capt. Wilds-Glover works in G-2 Operations.

**Photo Contest**  
Get Published!

**Want to be famous?** Email your best photo to the editor: michael.connors@iraq.centcom.mil. A photo will be chosen for the next edition of the *Marne Focus*. Include your rank, full name, unit, photo date and a brief caption with rank, full name and unit of each Soldier in the photo.





# IED hunting

Soldiers (right) from 2nd Platoon, Destroyer Company, 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, along with members of an Iraqi Concerned Citizens Program, patrol a main road looking for signs of improvised explosive devices during Operation Tuwaitha Sunrise outside Tuwaitha Village Sept. 5. A Soldier (below) from 2nd Platoon takes a knee and provides security while patrolling through a palm grove during the operation.

Photos by Sgt. Timothy Kingston,  
55th Combat Camera



Two Soldiers from 2nd Platoon along with a member of an Iraqi Concerned Citizens Program take a fighting position and look out for a sniper on an adjacent rooftop during the operation.



By Sgt. Luis Delgadillo

## Allied against al-Qaeda:

Col. Terry Ferrell (left), 2nd BCT commander, greets former Iraqi army Brig. Gen. Mustafa Kamil Hamad Shabib al-Juburi (second from left) and Sheik Toma, an Arab Jabour leader, at PB Murray Sept. 3. Shabib al-Jaburi is the leader of Arab Jabour's concerned citizens. Coalition Forces and concerned citizens work together against al-Qaeda.

## PVT MURPHY'S LAW





# Despite challenges, Soldier keeps in touch with deaf parents

With technology, Pfc. overcomes war, remote location to reach out

By SGT. NATALIE ROSTEK  
3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div. Public Affairs

**COP CLEARY** – Pfc. Patti Angel faces communication barriers with her parents that no amount of talking with them on the phone will overcome. They are deaf.

Keeping in touch back home is already tough for deployed Soldiers with friends and family members who can hear. Not being able to use conventional means of communication at her disposal makes reaching out to her parents that much harder on Angel.

The 19-year-old food service specialist from Grand Junction, Colo., Company F, 203rd Brigade Support Battalion has found a way to communicate with her hearing-impaired parents, and she explained how others can do the same. She uses the Sorenson Video Relay Service to “speak” visually to her mother and father.

“They have a screen with a web-cam on their phone,” Angel said. “I talk to the interpreter, then the interpreter signs what I say to my parents. My parents then sign back to the interpreter and the interpreter talks to me.”

Angel first started signing to her parents when she was 10 months old, before she even learned to speak. She didn’t learn to communicate vocally until her older sisters taught her English.

“We all learned to sign before we could talk,” Angel said. “My older twin sisters had to go to speech school when they were 2. Then, after my brother and I were born, our sisters taught us how to talk.”

Angel explained her parents are capable of speaking; however, those who do not talk to them on a daily basis find them difficult to understand.

Growing up in a deaf household was not as difficult as it would seem, Angel said. She compared the communication in her family to that of a Spanish-speaking family.

Everyone talks to each other in their native language, but knows how to communicate with those outside of the home.

“It’s all we knew,” she said. “We knew tricks like stomping on the floor or flicking the lights to get their attention. It really wasn’t difficult at all.”

Her parents’ house in Grand Junction is set up to facilitate their active senses. Lights are used to help identify noises, such as the phone or the doorbell, Angel said. Even the family dogs, Hunny and Toby, notify those inside when visitors knock on the door.

She explained how her mother and father used a baby monitors’ flashing lights to keep tabs on her sisters as babies. As they made noise, the lights would flash. By the time she and her younger brother were born, the twins were old enough to assist the parents.

Mirrors placed around the house also help in communication.

— Pfc. Patti Angel  
Co. F, 203rd BSB  
3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div.

“When you lose one (of your senses), all the others are heightened,” Angel said. “Having the mirrors all around the house is like having a lot of eyes all around the house. I love the mirrors, but at the same time, my parents can always catch me if I back-talk them.”

Her family has always been close, and Angel attributes her successes and those of her siblings to her parents. Her mother and father both attended the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind from elementary through high school.

Her parents met as seniors in high school. Her father was a sports fanatic and her mother was a cheerleader.

“I was fortunate to go to one of their class reunions and got to watch some sporting events,” Angel said. “It was interesting to see the differences. In volleyball, the referee blows the whistle, but also has to run out on the floor and stop the play. In football, they blow the whistle so the blind players hear it, but they also beat a drum so



Pfc. Patti Angel, a food service specialist from Grand Junction, Colo., from Company F, 203rd Brigade Support Battalion, serves Soldiers their meals from a Mobile Kitchen Trailer at Combat Outpost Cleary Sept. 6.

the deaf players feel the vibrations through the ground. They are actually very good players.”

Angel’s mother went on to Gallaudet University, a Washington, D.C., college for the hearing impaired. From there, she graduated with a degree in home economics and later excelled in taking care of her four children, Angel said.

Her father, now retired, worked as a bus driver for skiers in Aspen, and as a house construction specialist.

Angel’s sister, Jamie, made the decision to use her sign language skills as a career and currently works as an interpreter with deaf children in public schools. Her brother, Rusty, is a manager at an oil company in Colorado.

Angel is following her other sister, Jamie’s twin, Amy, a staff sergeant and recruiter in Grand Junction. Amy is directly responsible for recruiting Angel into the Army.

“At age 13, I went to my sister’s graduation from basic training,” Angel said. “After seeing what the Army was like, I told myself, ‘That’s what I want to do.’ After my senior year in high school, my sister recruited me.”

Angel said she has always liked to cook and work with her hands. She chose food service as her military occupational specialty when she found the Army had no

need for her signing abilities.

“The Army doesn’t consider me bilingual, because they don’t allow deaf people to join,” she said. “My dad said he would have joined the Army if they allowed him to.”

As of right now, Angel said she plans on staying in the Army in her current job as a food service specialist.

“I know being a private is probably one of the hardest working jobs as far as manual labor,” she said. “But I know once I get up there in rank, I’ll be leading and training Soldiers. I’ll have that pride when I see one of my Soldiers doing their job and knowing I trained them to do it.”

When she does make the decision to leave military service, Angel said she wants to go into either cosmetology or into a job working with the deaf.

“I know kids who rebelled against their deaf parents and didn’t accept their being deaf,” Angel said. “Not us, though. We’ve always been a close family. Our deaf parents raised four very successful kids.”

Company F, 203rd Brigade Support Battalion is in direct support of the 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment and is assigned to the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Benning, Ga. The 3rd Inf. Div. has been deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom since March 2007.

