

Serving Task Force Marne and MND-Center



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Working dogs Back page



Photos: Sgt. J.H. French

A group of Paratroopers from Co. C, 3-509th Abn. displays the 14.5mm anti-aircraft gun discovered during Operation Waal. Two barrels and a receiver for another anti-aircraft gun, grenades and assault rifles, among additional items, were also found.

Won't see this at your local gun show

Paratroopers capture massive gun, 9 suspected al-Qaeda militants

By SGT. J.H. FRENCH
4th BCT, 25th Inf. Div. Public Affairs

KALSU – Paratroopers captured nine suspected al-Qaeda terrorists and an anti-aircraft gun in North Babil Oct. 24.

Paratroopers with Company C, 3rd Battalion, 509th Airborne, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division captured the militants, the 14.5mm anti-aircraft gun and other weapons during Operation Waal, an early morning air assault and raid northwest of Diyarrah.

"It was a three-pronged operation," said Capt. Stew Lindsay, commander of Company C. "The main effort was the air assault, but we also conducted a mounted and a dismounted infiltration to reach the target locations."

According to Lindsay, the Paratroopers have numerous contacts and informants in the area who were providing information



One of several small caches discovered during Operation Waal is laid out neatly so it can be inventoried.

on the whereabouts of terrorists, roadside bombs and weapons caches.

"We compiled all of the tips and information we had gathered and went after several different targets simultaneously," he continued. "While the air assault was going after a man wanted for an (improvised explosive device) attack that wound-

ed five of our Paratroopers, the mounted and dismounted elements were targeting the caches we knew about through tips from concerned local Iraqis."

In addition to the militants and anti-aircraft gun, the Paratroopers also discovered two barrels and a receiver for another anti-aircraft gun, a crate of 14.5mm ammunition, two 91mm artillery rounds, pressure wire used to detonate roadside bombs, two grenades, several assault rifles and magazines, an ammunition vest and a sand table used to plan attacks in the area.

"We also discovered a bull dozer during the operation that had been stolen last month," said Lindsay, of Freeport, Pa. "The militants were using the bull dozer to construct small bridges in the area. They use the bridges to avoid main roads and checkpoints while transporting weapons

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Marne 6 sends

Celebrating you on Veteran's Day

The next "Greatest Generation" has answered the call

This weekend we celebrate Veteran's Day, which means we celebrate you – the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines of Task Force Marne.

Every day as I'm out and about the battlefield I am in constant awe of your dedication, heroism and selflessness. Many of you are already veterans, having served in Operation Desert Storm, Operation Enduring Freedom, or Operation Iraqi Freedom before this tour.

Never before in our nation's history have we asked so much of our Soldiers, and you are the next "Greatest Generation." I'm always telling Soldiers that you have a choice: you can either read history or make history, and all of you are making history every single day.

Across the battlefield we remember the sacrifices of the Soldiers who came before us. But we also carry on their legacy by taking the fight to the enemy every day.

All over the battlefield we are reminded of the great Marne Soldiers who came before us. Patrol Base Hawkes is named after Pfc. Lloyd Hawks, a medic in the 30th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division.

Hawks crawled 50 yards through a hail of machine gun bullets and flying mortar fragments to administer first aid and did it again another 50 yards away to assist two other Soldiers. After an enemy bullet penetrated

his helmet and knocked it off, Hawks dragged one of the casualties 25 yards to cover and went back for the second Soldier. Upon reaching him, a bullet splintered his left forearm, yet Hawks still bandaged his brother-in-arms and dragged him to cover.

Patrol Base Murray is named



Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch
Task Force Marne Commander

after 1st Lt. Charles Murray, another Medal of Honor recipient.

Patrol Base Salie is named after Sgt. 1st Class David Salie from 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, who died in OIF III on Valentine's Day.

COP Cahill is named after Capt. Joel Cahill from 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, who also died during OIF III.

COP Cleary is named after 1st Lt. Michael Cleary from 1-15th Inf. Regt., who died five

days before Christmas during OIF III.

At the Division Headquarters, we have a visitor's trailer dedicated in memory of Sgt. 1st Class Paul Smith, one of three Medal of Honor Winners from this war; and he was a proud Dog Face Soldier. The list goes on and on ...

Across this battlefield we remember the sacrifices of the Soldiers who came before us. But we also carry on their legacy by taking the fight to the enemy every day.

This weekend each of you should take a moment to pause and reflect on your contributions to this war. Growing up none of us feared going to the mall, playing at the local playground, or driving to work. I firmly believe that we are fighting terrorism here so that our children and their children do not have to fight it at home.

**ROCK OF
THE MARNE!**



Marne Focus

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4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division

3rd Combat Aviation Brigade

214th Fires Brigade

7th Sustainment Brigade

720th Military Police Battalion

Mobile Unit 3 Explosive Ordnance Disposal Battalion

875th Engineering Battalion

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Celebrating 3rd ID's birthday: Nov. 21



Country
singer
**Darryl
Worley**
(‘Have you
Forgotten’)
wishes
3rd ID
**Happy
Birthday**

Watch the “Marne Forward” newscast in your local dining facility to find out who else is wishing Dog Face Soldiers a Happy Birthday.

Marne Div. celebrates 90 years of service

By STAFF SGT. TONY M. LINDBACK
MND-C Public Affairs

CAMP VICTORY – Camp Greene, N.C., gave birth to one of the most battle tested and historic organizations of the United States Army 90 years ago – the 3rd Infantry Division.

While currently engaged in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the division is taking time to recognize and celebrate the contributions its Soldiers have made throughout the last nine decades.

One of the first events planned for the birthday is the Truscott Trot Nov. 17.

The Truscott Trot, here, is a 5k “fun run” that pays tribute to the 30-mile road march Maj. Gen. Lucien Truscott Jr., division commander during World War II, expected every Soldier in the 3rd Inf. Div. to complete in a set time.

Lt. Col. Steven Fischer, current division G1, said Truscott believed physical fitness was crucial to the division’s success in Europe. Truscott decided to implement a regimen of physical training that was approximate to the Ranger standards. He did so after he viewed the battle of the Kasserine Pass in Tunisia, where inexperienced and ill-led American units were mauled by Rommel’s Afrika Korps.

Truscott’s methods were proven sound when only 12 men in a 1,000-man battalion of the 3rd Inf. Div. fell out during a 10-mile march. There were 100 men who fell out of the same march from another battalion that had not conducted the training. The benefits of the training were realized on multiple occasions throughout World War II – one of which had Soldiers march 100 miles in five days over mountains, across poor roads, and rugged hills in temperatures often over 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

Truscott’s march was affectionately named the Truscott Trot by the Soldiers performing the training in 1943, and has carried the name since. The scheduled 5k is to pay tribute to that legacy of physical fitness leading to success on the battlefield.

Other events planned to celebrate the 3rd Inf. Div.’s birthday include: a history reading during the Battle Update Briefing, a cake-cutting ceremony during dinner at the Marne Dining Facility, a mass re-enlistment ceremony that Gen. David Petraeus will officiate, and a Michael Scott concert.

All the events, other than the Truscott Trot, will happen Nov. 21 at Camp Vic-

tory, but Michael Scott will be performing at other forward operating bases and combat outposts within Multi-National Division – Center’s footprint as well. He will perform for the 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, Freedom Rest, the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, and the 2nd Brigade Combat Team.

Michael Scott performing for the Marne division is not a first. He has performed for the division before to include a concert to thank the Soldiers before deploying.

He has bonded with the division and plans to strengthen that bond even more by performing at the many places 3rd Inf. Div. Soldiers can be found in Iraq where they continue to make history.

Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch, commander of the 3rd Inf. Div., has said while addressing Soldiers of Task Force Marne, and of the 3rd Inf. Div., “There are two kinds of people in the world: Those who choose to read history, and those who choose to make history. You have all chosen to make history by coming here. No one here was drafted. We stopped that a long time ago. You’ve all volunteered to defend your country and to be here.”

“When our history is written into the text books of future generations you will be able to say, ‘That was me. I did that. I was there,’ because it is each one of you who are making the history the world will remember here,” Lynch said.

Remembering the history of the 3rd Inf. Div.’s involvement in Operation Iraqi Freedom is easy for Soldiers now, as they are here making that history. The changes and difference that has been made in the past 90 years has been just as significant, and recognizing it is the goal of the celebration.

Fischer said, “The birthday is a way to highlight the significant contributions that this division has made throughout history – throughout the last 90 years of history. This division has been center to many of the successes, many of the things the country has done, that give us the freedoms we have today.”

He also said he feels Soldiers in the 3rd Inf. Div. in Iraq can see the differences they are making that will be tomorrow’s history, but isn’t sure they know about the differences the 3rd Inf. Div. Soldiers before them made – which is why it is so important to teach them. This birthday is a great opportunity to show today’s Dog Face Soldiers how their predecessors created the lineage they are now a part of.

“The birthday is a way to highlight the significant contributions ... The division has been center to many of the successes, many of the things the country has done, that give us the freedoms we have today.”

— Lt. Col. Steven Fischer
Division G1

**3RD INF. DIV.
90TH BIRTHDAY
EVENTS**

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| Nov. 17 | Nov. 21 |
| -Truscott Trot 5k | - Mass re-enlistment ceremony |
| | - Cake cutting at dinner |
| | - Michael Scott concert |

Collapse of caches yield irreversible momentum

MND-C Public Affairs

CAMP VICTORY – 3rd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment assigned to Task Force Marne held what's called a "tailgate" Medical Operation June 28. Tailgate MEDOPs are highly mobile, basic medical care visits to villages, during which Coalition medical staff provide care to the Iraqi people.

As the cavalry was rolling into town, a few citizens stopped the Soldiers to show them where a bomb was hidden.

In the not too distant past, the weapon would have been tolerated by an intimidated population. It would have detonated and killed military and civilians alike. Today though there is a change of heart and renewed cooperation, which allowed U.S. Soldiers to deal with the threat. Later the Soldiers posed for photos with locals who'd protected the Americans and directly facilitated the tailgate MEDOP.

Since June, new Concerned Local Citizens programs have come forward and taken a stand against violence and that which perpetuates instability in their communities. Events like the one described above have become common in the area where Multi-National Division - Center now operates.

This October, one-third of improvised explosive devices or component finds by Coalition Forces have come from tips from citizens such as these. The result has been a steady decline in the number of IED events in the MND-C area of operations, improved security, stability, and public health and a decrease in casualties.

This is a huge development. In terms of casualties here southeast of Baghdad, casualty-producing events among Coalition Forces, Iraqi Security Forces, and civilians are a fraction – one-third – of what they were just five months ago. That's a reduction of over 60 percent.

Where there once was an average of three casualties per day, now there is barely one casualty-producing event for U.S. military per day. Among Iraqi security forces, the downward trend is similar and encouraging to many.



Spc. Ben Hutto / 3rd HBCT Public Affairs

An Iranian-made 107mm rocket in good condition, recovered by 3-1 Cav. Regt. after five similar rockets were fired at Combat Outpost Cashe, Oct. 23.

The IED has been the main strategic weapon employed by insurgents, amplified by their use of media coverage. IED use against Iraqi and Coalition Forces has become well known through international press coverage, allowing terrorists to appear strong enough to challenge the government of Iraq.

History shows how devastating these attacks can be. On August 19, 2003, a truck bomb primed by assorted munitions and placed around explosive ordnance detonated at the Canal Hotel in Baghdad. The bombing killed Sergio Vieira de Mello, the United Nations' High Commissioner for Human Rights. A second such bomb, a few days later on September 22 had even more devastating consequences for Iraq.

Those two IEDs triggered a major strategic change in Iraq. These were large explosives requiring time and energy to employ. But history has also shown that terror could come in small packages as well.

See **MOMENTUM**, page 6

SEXUAL ASSAULT, HARASSMENT

Provided by Task Force Marne
Office of the Staff Judge Advocate

Task Force Marne is committed to fostering an environment free of sexual harassment and sexual assault through comprehensive programs that center on education, prevention, reporting, rapid response, victim advocacy, and accountability.

As we learned from the Prevention of Sexual Harassment Training (POSH) that all Task Force Marne Soldiers receive, Sexual Harassment is a form of gender discrimination. Sexual harassment involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature between persons of the same or opposite sex when it unreasonably interferes with the work environment. Sexual Assault encompasses intentional sexual contact, characterized by use of force, physical threat or abuse of authority or when the victim does not or cannot consent. Sexual assault can occur without regard to gender, spousal relationship, or age.

Sexual harassment and sexual assault are criminal offenses that degrade morale as well as Soldier performance. Ultimately, these offenses adversely affect our mission readiness by degrading our ability to work as a team. Sexual harassment and sexual assault are incompatible with the Army Values.

At Multi-National Division - Center, all allegations of sexual harassment and sexual assault will be taken se-

riously and thoroughly investigated. Below are recent examples of the repercussions for those found guilty of sexual harassment and sexual assault:

The sexual harassment of a subordinate resulted in a Sergeant receiving a letter of reprimand and being transferred to a different unit.

A Sergeant received an Article 15 and administrative discharge for sexual harassment. At his Article 15, the Soldier was reduced to Specialist, forfeited \$943.00 per month for two months, and received 45 days restriction with 45 days of extra duty.

A substantiated EO investigation resulted in an Article 15 and an administrative change of assignment for a Sergeant. The Article 15 resulted in the Sergeant forfeiting \$1,036 per month for two months and 45 days of extra duty.

In *United States v. Wright*, SPC Wright pled guilty to violating General Order #1 and committing indecent acts with two Soldiers. He was reduced to E-1 and sentenced to 30 days hard labor and a reprimand.

In a separate court-martial of *United States v. Burnette*, PFC Burnette, 2/10, was convicted of the rape of a fellow Soldier. PFC Burnette pled guilty to rape and was sentenced to 10 years confinement, reduction to E-1, forfeiture of all pay and allowances, and a dishonorable discharge.

MARNE JUSTICE

COURTS-MARTIAL RESULTS

Provided by Task Force Marne
Office of the Staff Judge Advocate

Several Summary Courts-Martial concluded recently with the following results:

A Private (E-1) received 30 days confinement and forfeiture of \$867.00 for disrespect and disobeying an NCO.

A Private (E-1) was convicted of failure to report and disrespectful behavior toward an NCO. He received 30 days confinement.

A Private (E-1) received forfeiture of \$934.00 and 45 days hard labor without confinement for misbehavior as a sentinel.

A Private (E-2) was reduced to Private (E-1) and confined 30 days for malinger, dereliction of duty, disobeying an NCO, as well as disobeying and disrespectful behavior toward a commissioned officer.

A Private First Class (E-3) received a reduction to Private (E-1) and 45 days hard labor without confinement for disrespectful behavior toward an NCO and making provoking speeches and gestures.

A Specialist (E-4) was sentenced to reduction to Private First Class (E-3), forfeiture of \$1,219.00, and confinement for 22 days for assault, reckless endangerment, and disrespectful behavior toward an NCO.

A Sergeant (E-5) was tried for sodomy and adultery and reduced to Specialist (E-4) after being found guilty of adultery.

A Sergeant First Class (E-7) was reduced to Staff Sergeant (E-6) for unauthorized wear of a ribbon and making a false official statement.

The following General Courts-Martial were tried with the following results:

In *United States v. Wright*, SPC Wright pled guilty to violating General Order #1 and committing indecent acts with two Soldiers. He was reduced to E-1 and sentenced to 30 days hard labor and a reprimand.

In *United States v. Slobodian*, SPC Slobodian pled guilty to possession of child pornography and was sentenced to reduction to E-1 and one year confinement.

In *United States v. Gifford*, SGT Gifford was found guilty of making two false official statements and larceny of military fuel. He received a dishonorable discharge, 2 years confinement, reduction to E-1, total forfeitures and a \$4,000 fine.

In *United States v. Williams*, SGT Williams was acquitted of all charges at a General Court Martial.

Rakkasans take reins from Commandos

Joining Task Force Marne, 101st Abn. Div. brigade swaps with 10th Mtn. Div. brigade

By Sgt. 1st Class KERENSA HARDY
3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT) Public Affairs

CAMP STRIKER – The Army's most-deployed brigade traded seats with the brigade with the highest percentage of multiple deployers at a ceremony on Camp Striker Nov. 2.

Iraqi army generals and prominent tribal sheiks of southern Baghdad were among the dignitaries who attended the ceremony that marked the official transfer of authority from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) to the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

Third Infantry Division commander Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch bid the Commandos adieu and welcomed the Rakkasans.

Lynch lauded the 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. (LI) for their work with the Concerned Local Citizens and for the seizure of the Yusufiyah thermal power plant, which became Patrol Base Dragon.

He referenced the 48 medical operations that helped 11,000 Iraqis and the 397 Commander's Emergency Response Program projects that employed 18,000 local citizens.

"Commandos, you have fought the good fight, you have kept the faith and never wavered," said Col. Michael Kershaw, commander of 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. (LI). "You have suffered, bled and yet reached out when others would have struck."

"But you have been able to see the fruits of your efforts in the faces of the children in south Baghdad, and the lives whom you've helped to make better," Kershaw continued.

After his remarks, Kershaw joined Command Sgt. Maj. Anthony Mahoney, 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. (LI) command sergeant major, in casing the brigade's colors, which was followed by the uncasing of the 3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT) colors.

"Today we have with us warriors of the highest caliber, with the nobility of missions," said Col. Dominic Caraccilo, 3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT) com-



Photos: Sgt. 1st Class Kerensa Hardy

Col. Dominic J. Caraccilo and Command Sgt. Maj. Gregory Patton, 3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT), uncasing the brigade colors at the transfer-of-authority ceremony Nov. 2 at Camp Striker.

mander. He said although some Soldiers wear uniforms that bear American flags and some wear the Iraqi flag, they are all united by a common cause: to see an independent Iraq for future generations.

"What (Commandos) have accomplished with their Iraqi army partners has given us the momentum to carry on those missions to the next level without letting up the pressure on our enemies," Caraccilo said. "With our Iraqi friends, we are destined to make Iraq an independent nation."

The Rakkasans' Civil-Military Operations Officer, Maj. Robert Bertrand, said the attendance of Iraqi leaders at the ceremony demonstrated the combined works of tribal sheiks, Iraqi army division and brigade commanders, and Iraqi government and Coalition Forces to create a safe, secure and growing Iraq.



The Task Force Marne band performs at the transition-of-authority ceremony.

GUN: Banner day for 3-509th Abn. during Op. Waal; bulldozer added to list of captured items

From page 1

and planting IEDs."

Taking the militants, weapons and equipment off the street has made the area a safer place, Lindsay noted.

"We definitely disrupted, if not destroyed, that IED cell," he continued. "It also decreases the risk to aircraft flying over the area."

The biggest benefactor of this find is the Iraqi

Security Forces in the area though.

"The militants use the huge guns to shoot at the ISF and concerned citizens securing the area," said Lindsay. "Thanks to a tip from one of the local citizens, the area is now a much safer place."



First Sgt. Karl Zaglauer and his Paratroopers conduct an equipment check after wading through mud and waist-deep water chasing fleeing militants. Paratroopers (far left) wait for a Black Hawk on the way back.

Photos: Sgt. J. H. French

Taking dead aim, working with CLC, IA

During checkpoint attack in Hawr Rajab, coordinated effort repels insurgents

By SGT. LUIS DELGADILLO
2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. Public Affairs

FOB KALSU – Coalition Forces saw a possible glimpse of the future in Hawr Rajab Oct. 27 when they observed Concerned Local Citizens at a checkpoint come under attack from insurgents, defend themselves and then receive reinforcements from Iraqi army troops.

Paratroopers of Troop A, 1st Squadron, 40th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division currently attached to 2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. observed the event from a rooftop.

Everything kicked off with a bang.

Paratroopers were en route to the concerned citizens' southern-most checkpoint just outside of Hawr Rajab, when their casual conversations were shattered by the thunderous sound of a mortar landing nearby.

The Paratroopers moved into a building to avoid any potential threats.

From inside, Paratroopers began to hear bursts of small arms fire coming from the south.

"Get to the roof, go, go," one Paratrooper shouted.

In a flurry of movement, they ascended the stairs to the second floor and in seconds they were on top of the action, weapons drawn and at the ready.

The momentary confusion of the gunfight cleared up as soon as communication was established with the checkpoint.

Initial reports from concerned citizens indicated the insurgents were attacking



Sgt. Luis Delgadillo

Sgt. Carlos Guerrero (right), of Las Vegas, and Spc. Walter Epert, of Chicago, both scouts with 1-40th Cav. Regt., 4th BCT (Abn.), 25th Inf. Div. position themselves on a rooftop and prepare to engage insurgents in Hawr Rajab.

from a position behind a canal, approximately 400 meters from the checkpoint.

As 1-40th Cav. Regt. troops saw the events unfold, 1st Lt. Daniel L. Doverpike, a platoon leader for Troop A, contacted the Iraqi army troop commanders in the area. He asked IA commanders to move the tanks belonging to the newly arrived IA mechanized company into po-

sition and assist the concerned citizens at the checkpoint.

When the tanks arrived, they engaged the enemy forces, alongside their concerned citizen counterparts.

Soon an Apache attack helicopter air weapons team from 1st Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment, 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade arrived on site and was scouring

the nearby canals for enemy forces.

The insurgents retreated after a 45-minute "cat and mouse" game with IA and concerned citizens, which resulted in no injuries.

The determination and teamwork of the IA and concerned citizens showed Paratroopers that both groups could work together effectively.

MOMENTUM: Steady IED decline

From page 4

The bomb that destroyed Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, weighed only one pound. A hand grenade, which can kill someone at five meters, has barely six ounces of explosive.

In October alone, Coalition Forces aided by Iraqi security forces and concerned citizens captured and destroyed materials that could have made over nine hundred IEDs. In October the Multi-National Division Center destroyed over 3,000 pounds of explosives this month alone, preventing death or injury of what could have been hundreds of Iraqi and Coalition Forces.

So, why is this happening?

To be sure there are a number of factors. First, in June there was a change in Coalition Force structure. That month marked the arrival of the "surge" forces. Surge units like 3-1 Cav., of the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, brought sufficient forces to clear terrorist safe havens. They were able to direct additional Soldiers and resources to stop the flow of accelerants to the conflict, including smuggled munitions.

The surge forces also began to enact the new counterinsurgency strategy crafted by General David Petrae-

us and his advisors. As part of that strategy, Coalition Forces worked to stand up concerned citizen groups in a program that aids Iraqi security forces, and serves as a "stepping stone" for bringing insurgent forces into the fight against al-Qaeda, a common enemy. These programs allow citizens to participate in securing their homes and families. The programs also offer tribes or social groups that previously may have been involved in the insurgency an opportunity to reconcile with other Iraqis and the government.

The combined effect of increasing Coalition Forces and increased confidence among citizens has led to information sharing and the undermining of key insurgent tactics, techniques and procedures. One example has been the reduction of insurgent logistics.

For centuries insurgents have relied on caches, stockpiles of supplies to sustain their ability to launch attacks. These caches are a primary vulnerability for insurgents, and they know it.

A captured manual on cache-building begins, "My brother Jihadist, more than others you know the cost of these materials in money and in the effort it took to get them to us. For that reason, we must do everything in our powers to keep them from falling into the hands of our enemies."

Caches include ammunition, pistols and rifles and

machine guns of all sizes, silencers, grenades, communications gear, armor, night vision equipment, everything that the enemy needs to perpetuate instability.

Today though, concerned citizens are handing it in. Almost daily, they lead Soldiers to dangerous weapons that have no use among peaceful communities.

With improved security come the bonds of trust between Iraqi citizens, their security forces, and Coalition Forces. Now they are even surrendering their own caches of war materiel.

This month concerned citizens in Hawr Rajab turned in a huge cache of arms that had once been used by Jaish al Islami (JAI), a Sunni insurgent group.

MND-C units have enjoyed a declining number of attacks as they stabilize their areas of operation. 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div., now finishing their 15-month tour in Iraq, reported that attacks have fallen from over 100 per week to fewer than 30. As Coalition and Iraqi security forces strengthen relations with concerned citizen groups, former insurgents are turning in their bombs and standing watch alongside Coalition Forces instead.

History may show that the surge ignited Iraqi confidence to turn on insurgents. Certainly as more caches crumble there are more opportunities for Iraqis to reconcile and pave their way to reconciliation through irreversible momentum.

Eroding insurgents' resources

Bountiful fall harvest of weapons caches in Iraq's countryside for 2nd BCT Soldiers

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

FOB KALSU – The month of October was a fruitful one for the Soldiers of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division. More than 30 enemy weapons caches were discovered in the brigade's area of operations – Arab Jabour and Hawr Rajab.

U.S. Soldiers, Iraqi army forces and Concerned Local Citizens were all involved in finding the caches.

The caches found consisted of a variety of different bombs and bomb-making material. Mortars, homemade explosives, rockets, fire extinguishers (used to make improvised explosive devices), IED triggers such as pressure plates and pressure wire, and rocket-propelled grenades were just a few of the items found in the caches.

From Oct. 19-23 the CLCs, working with 1st Squadron, 40th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, currently attached to 2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. in Hawr Rajab, found and reported to Coalition Forces more than 15 IEDs and numerous mortars, rockets, pressure plates and other bomb-making materials.

The Paratroopers of 1-40th Cav. Regt. have also made an impact finding weapons caches. One cache, found in Hawr Rajab, consisted of enough artillery rounds, homemade explosives, and electronics to make more than 200 improvised explo-

sive devices.

Troop C, 1-40th Cav. Regt. was re-sweeping an area where a weapons cache was found the week before. Just a few meters away from the prior week's cache find, the Paratroopers uncovered two buried barrels filled with mortars and rocket propelled grenades, and they dug artillery rounds out of a canal.

"Anytime you can find as big of a cache as we did the other day, it makes it worth it," said Capt. Derrick Goodwin, Troop C commander. "There are fewer weapons and less IEDs on the battlefield (because of the find). When we can go out and have a successful mission like we did the other day, it's good for the Soldiers' morale," added Goodwin, a San Diego native.

Concerned Local Citizens have been active in the 1-40th Cav. Regt. area when it comes to finding weapons caches. The CLCs provide tips of where to find caches or bring the munitions to Coalition Forces at checkpoints or patrol bases.

"They've been really helpful, especially in the last month, identifying caches, IEDs and al-Qaeda," said Goodwin.

IA patrols and missions are also increasing in Hawr Rajab. In mid-October, an IA mechanized company became a permanent presence in Hawr Rajab, and right away the Iraqi troops made an important find.

Forward Operating Base Falcon had been receiving indirect fire from a point of origin near the FOB. The Iraqi army troops planned a mission to investigate



Photos: Sgt. Jason Stadel

An Army explosive ordnance disposal team Soldier passes a rocket to another Soldier to be placed at a central point for destruction in a controlled detonation.

the indirect fire and found a cache believed to be the source of some of the recent indirect fire attacks.

"The cache that was found (near) Falcon, the IA had gone through that area and didn't find anything. But that area is where a lot of the mortar attacks come from, so they went back out on their own and found the rockets and stands," Reese said.

In Arab Jabour, the area of operations of 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div., finding caches has become nearly a daily occurrence as numerous caches were found in October.

"With the large number of caches that we have found in a relatively small area, we have significantly disrupted the enemy's ability to conduct attacks against Coalition Forces and local nationals," said Capt. Eric Melloh, Company A, 1-30th Inf. Regt. commander. Melloh and his company are stationed at Patrol Base Murray in Arab Jabour.

Melloh, from Huntsville, Texas, said finding the caches is a credit to the troops on the ground every day providing security in the area.

"We have been very successful finding caches due to the hard work and attention to detail by the Soldiers in the company. Their motivation in eroding the enemy's resources is amazing," Melloh said.



A buried weapons cache in a bucket.

Staff Sgt. Mike Teske, Troop C, 1-40th Cav. Regt., carries a propane tank filled with homemade explosives. The propane tank was part of a weapons cache in Hawr Rajab.



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Crawford triumphs in Rising Star

Final Camp Victory competition produces surprises including DQ of top challenger



Photos: Staff Sgt. Tony M. Lindback

Tulsa, Okla., native, Master Sgt. Kevin Crawford, sings "We Must Praise," by J. Moss to win Camp Victory's Operation Rising Star competition at the Oasis Stage Oct. 26. Everyone else was fighting for second, said one of the contestants.

By STAFF SGT. TONY M. LINDBACK
MND-C Public Affairs

CAMP VICTORY – Applications, rehearsals, moments of disappointment and of triumph culminated into one glorious moment for Master Sgt. Kevin Crawford when he was named the 2007 Camp Victory Operation Rising Star winner Oct. 26.

Crawford's victory did not happen easily, however. Stiff competition, some controversial decisions and fierce judging made the road to glory an obstacle course for all the competitors.

Much like Simon Cowell, from the show "American Idol," is known to rip into contestants for not only their voices, but also their song selection, the judges of Camp Victory's Operation Rising Star took no mercy on the singers. Comments like "You're not singing, you're screaming," and "we expected to see a little more diversity in your singing," got reactions from the crowd, but the contestants remained polite and professional.

Crawford, the information operations noncommissioned officer in charge at Task Force Marne headquarters, was not deterred by the critiques of the

judges. Having been in singing competitions before, his song selection reflected what he is most inspired by – Gospel music. His winning performance was "We Must Praise" by J. Moss.

"I knew that I had to sing a song that represents who I am every day as opposed to just picking a song that sounded good," Crawford said. "I knew I had to represent my Gospel roots somewhere. So, I just made up my mind that, no matter what happens, I was going to sing a song

that represents who I am."

No one in the crowd questioned who he was, or what he believed in, by the time Crawford let go of the microphone. The judges' comments, however, stirred many comments and questions.

Chief Warrant Officer John Edmond, one of the judges for the final round of competition, let Crawford know he did not agree with Crawford's song selection.

See STAR, page 10



Staff Sgt. Tara Williams is all smiles after her crowd-pleasing performance of "Ribbons in the Sky" by Stevie Wonder. She was later disqualified when it was determined that her use of a keyboard was in violation of competition rules.

Rising Star judges offer their perspective

By SGT. MICHAEL CONNORS
Editor, Marne Focus
MND-C Public Affairs

CAMP VICTORY – When the local Rising Star competition here wrapped with Master Sgt. Kevin Crawford finishing on top, pressure turned to joy, not just for the contestants, but for the judges as well. For they too had an exhilarating journey in the limelight.

Now was the time for the judges, alongside the contestants, to give interviews to reporters, to mingle with the crowd, and to enjoy refreshments in a small tent – an improvised green room – where they gave some final words of encouragement to the contestants.

It seems trite to say in the end it wasn't about winning or losing, but then again how many "American Idol"-style competitions occur in the midst of a war? If the saying were ever true, it was true this night at the Oasis Stage. It was about, for instance, contestants who got the rare



Sgt. Michael Connors

chance to wear civvies. It was about audience members who got the rare chance to heckle judges who, in most cases, outranked them. And it was about, most shockingly, one of the frontrunners who disqualified herself during the most rousing performance of the night.

Midstream into her performance, Staff Sgt. Tara Williams stopped singing and said, "Cut the music ... I have to sing this song my way." She strode to the corner of the outdoor stage and commandeered a keyboard belonging to Premium Blend, the Task Force Marne band's R&B band,

which was there to entertain the crowd between performances. Williams proceeded to accompany herself for the balance of "Ribbons in the Sky" by Stevie Wonder. She would have given Alicia Keys a run for her money, but instead she lost a chance at the \$500 prize – it was against the rules to play an instrument. But her prize was the admiration of the crowd of about 300, who cheered the unexpected twist.

"Any kind of respite that we can give people is a good thing," said Chief Warrant Officer Stephen Campbell, one of three judges and commander of the Task Force Marne band. "So the overall idea was not so much who wins the contest – I don't care ... the bottom line for me is to give everybody including the performers a little bit of a change in daily routine, something else to focus on."

Everybody, throughout the competition, certainly had something else to focus

See JUDGES, page 10



Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

FOB Kalsu Rising Star winner Spc. Amanda Fox (right) and runner-up Sgt. Wakenya Ruffin smile before taking the stage during the final round of competition. The two survived six elimination rounds to make it to the finals.

Kalsu chooses Rising Star

By **SGT. KEVIN STABINSKY**
2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. Public Affairs

FOB KALSU – After six weeks of stiff competition and elimination, judges and voters at FOB Kalsu have selected a winner; Spc. Amanda Fox will take a trip to the next round in the Operation Rising Star competition.

On Oct. 25, Fox, a supply specialist in the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, out of Fort Richardson, Alaska, was chosen to represent FOB Kalsu in the military-wide Operation Rising Star competition.

Fox waged the final competition round against fellow supply sergeant, Sgt. Wakenya Ruffin, HHC, 2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div.

"I didn't expect to get this far," said Fox, who has been singing since the third grade.

The competition format is similar to the popular "American Idol" contest, where contestants sing and are judged by three judges. The audience also cast votes on paper slips, with their votes holding equal weight in the decision.

Fox gave a lot of credit for her success to her fellow Paratroopers' votes and support.

"They rock. It was fun to see them rock with me," Fox said, adding she plans on treating them with a big celebration courtesy of her prize money.

As winner, Fox received \$500, and her unit had \$500 deposited in their unit account.

Fox, a Holly, Mich., native, also credited her success to good song choice. For the final event, Fox chose "Young and Beautiful," by Carrie Underwood.

The battle wasn't easy for Fox.

"Everyone who participated is phenomenal," said Col. Terry Ferrell, commander, 2nd BCT. "We got a lot of talent here."

Talent helped propel Ruffin into the finals as well. Ruffin, from Augusta, Ga., said her talent ranges back to before she was talking.

"Since before I could talk, my mother said I was singing," the 24-year-old sergeant said.

That dedication continued even through the deployment, said Ruffin, who sang "If I Ain't Got You" by Alicia Keys in the final round.

"I practiced really hard; at work, I practiced all the time," she said, adding she also relied on God to get her through.

Though she didn't win, Ruffin said she got a lot out of the competition. She said she was also pleased with her final prize of \$250.

Ruffin said she is happy about the possibility of opening new doors for herself in the music industry and the Army.

Although the loss was hard, Ruffin exchanged pleasantries with Fox, wishing her luck in the future.

The competition provided a big morale booster for the base.

"We're all in a combat zone; you too can have a great time," Ferrell said.

Fox will face a new battle in the next stage of the competition. As an installation winner, Fox will compete against other installation winners in an online contest. Installation winners will be narrowed down to a final 12 via online voting at www.opRisingStar.com. People can view videos of the performers on the site and vote for their favorite.

"It has been fun," Fox said of the journey so far. "It was good having something fun to do, something I love."

Arab Jabour police station on horizon



Sgt. Luis Delgadillo

Sgt. Jeffrey Passwaters from the 153rd MP Co. out of Delaware City, Del., prepares to leave Mahmudiyah's Iraqi Police Headquarters Nov. 1. Soldiers of the 153rd are assigned to 2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div.

First steps of plan put in motion; once open, station will employ 229 Iraqis

By **SGT. LUIS DELGADILLO**
2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. Public Affairs

FOB KALSU – Plans to open the first police station in Arab Jabour commenced with meetings held at Mahmudiyah Iraqi Police Headquarters and Forward Operating Base Falcon Nov. 1.

Though the police station is still months from establishment, the first steps were taken in Mahmudiyah, when Soldiers of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, out of Fort Stewart, Ga., and the 153rd Military Police Company, out of Delaware City, Del., met with Mahmudiyah's district Iraqi police commander, Brig. Gen. Abbed.

Capt. Lauren Glaze, provost marshal, 2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div., and 1st Lt. Daniel A. Deflaviis, platoon leader for 3rd platoon, 153rd MP Co., worked with Abbed to finalize the purchase of a land deed and to request a recruitment drive in Arab Jabour.

The site of the future police station in Arab Jabour sits on land donated by Concerned Local Citizens.

Abbed is assisting Glaze, from Woodbridge, Va., and Deflaviis, from Wilmington, Del., to expedite transferring the land deed over to the Ministry of Interior in order to begin contracting work for the station's construction.

The entire process remains a convoluted web of negotiation, favors, deals and the all-encompassing philosophy of "Insh'Allah" (God willing), an Arabic phrase used to address a myriad of uncertainties.

Nonetheless, Abbed was happy to help speed up the process. Abbed said his hope was that opening the police station in Arab Jabour would promote peace and security in the area.

Though his jurisdiction does not include Arab Jabour, Abbed said if people know police are there to help, they will be proactive in their own neighborhoods. He said if people perceive the police as indifferent, it creates the potential for more criminal activity.

Learning that the deed paperwork was just three days away from being finalized, Glaze and Deflaviis left Mahmudiyah and headed to FOB Falcon where they met the man who will be responsible for the Arab Jabour police station, Col. Fattel, Al Rashid district commander.

Glaze explained to Fattel that before work can begin on the site in Arab Jabour, 2nd BCT leaders need to find out if the Ministry of Interior will hold an Iraqi police recruitment drive in Arab Jabour.

Fattel said that he would assist in requesting the recruitment drive, adding that the police station will bring the total of planned police stations in his district to six.

Deflaviis said the opening of a police station in Arab Jabour would add 229 jobs to the local economy and that 2nd BCT leaders have already identified 304 potential candidates.

The pool of potential candidates would come from Arab Jabour and Al Buaytha, an area north of Patrol Base Murray along the Tigris River.

STAR: Crawford advances to Rising Star national competition

From page 8

Edmond said, "First of all, I do respect the Lord, okay? But again, this is the final. I think you do have a great voice, but I was expecting something exciting. I think the crowd was probably expecting something exciting as well."

The crowd showed its disagreement with Edmond by loud booing and shouting.

Edmond eventually did get the excitement he was talking about.

The performance that won the crowd over, and may have won over the most votes as well, was Staff Sgt. Tara Williams' rendition of "Ribbons in the Sky" by Stevie Wonder, a song Crawford had sung in a previous round of competition.

In the middle of her performance, which started out to be very similar to other performances of the night, Williams asked that the music be stopped.

"Cut the music. Please – just stop the music," Williams said.

"I'm sorry. I can't continue singing this song this way. I have to sing this song my way," she said to the crowd.

Williams then walked across stage, sat at the band's keyboard, and played the song while singing. Loud cheers, praises and the look of shock riddled the crowd as well as the panel of judges.

Though her performance received more accolades from spectators and judges than any of the other performances, Williams had violated the rules of the competition by using a prop and was disqualified – not able to place.

"I chose to use the piano because the song was sung last week for the competition, and I wanted to do something different and unique for myself. I'm glad I did it," Williams said.

She showed no remorse about being disqualified, said she had enjoyed the experience, but would like to see changes to the competition in the future.

"I think the competition went great. I just think next time you should be allowed to add your own creativity as well as being judged on your voice."

The competitors sang much more than songs throughout the competition – they were also singing the praises of their competition.

Sgt. Christian Friedman, who placed third, said "There were some technical issues (about the competition) – but about the contestants – I can't say enough nice things about them. Everybody was supportive. They didn't let anybody doubt themselves, and nobody walked off stage without getting a hug."

Friedman also said it was no surprise Crawford won. "After last week I said, 'We all know who's won. We're all just fighting for second.' He was that good," said Friedman.

During the application stage of the competition, Crawford was asked if he was going to win. He said, "I hope so. I mean, whoever does the best is obviously going to win. But, I'm just going to come out and do my best. It's a fun thing to do."

When asked about his chances at the national level, which will depend on votes based off a video of his winning performance at Camp Victory, he maintained his modest opinion.

"With this performance tonight, the sound quality, and all the other factors, I don't think that would be a good video," Crawford said. "But, you know, we'll see what happens."

No matter what happens at the final level of competition, Crawford plans to keep singing the music he loves.

"This is my passion. This is what I was created to do," he said.

JUDGES: About more than winning or losing; competition offers a break from day-to-day operations

From page 8

on in Master Sgt. Eula Hartley, another judge and the 3rd Inf. Div. transition NCO. She came to be known simply as "Simon," for her harsh comments that resembled those of the villainous "American Idol" judge. Hartley became one of the most popular personalities of Rising Star, as servicemembers turned out in anticipation of what she would say.

"Everyone was critical of my comments, but that was the enjoyment of it all – to watch them be critical of my comments because just like I give out deconstructive criticism, I need to be able to take it also, so I enjoyed it," said Hartley, who's from Chicago, Ill.

Campbell, who's from Memphis, Tenn., had a gentler judging style.

"For me, I'm not the kind of person who can look at someone up there performing and say, 'You just need to go somewhere else,'" he said. "I might not recommend that they join a professional singing group, but at the same time I wouldn't tell them, 'Hey, the next time you get in the shower you oughta put a cork in your mouth.'"

The third judge, Chief Warrant Officer John Edmond, a non-lethal targeting officer with Task Force Marne Headquarters, had a style that was somewhere between Hartley's and Campbell's. Fittingly, Edmond was referred to as "Randy," after another "American Idol" judge known for his middle-ground criticism.

"Granted there are times you can be a little harsh, but at the same time ... you don't want to demoralize a Soldier," said Edmond, who's from Haiti. "As long as you give them positive criticism to where they can improve themselves, I don't see a problem."

Beyond individual judging styles, the judges explained what they were looking for in the competitors. The competition was based 50 percent on judges' rating and 50 percent on audience members' ballots.

"I was looking for polished performers," Campbell said. "I wanted to hear somebody who could really carry off the song and had the voice to match it up and knew how to use it ... Maybe it would be summed up to – if you were singing somewhere – who would pay to come see you?"

Edmond focused on the singer's interaction with the crowd.

"Are they singing for themselves or for the crowd?" he said, "I want them to sing for the crowd – facial expressions, body gestures say a lot. If they're enjoying it, if they're singing to the crowd, they smile."

Ever the stickler, Hartley emphasized technical merit. She said she was listening for pitch. She wanted to know if the singer could hold a tone and if he or she could smoothly change pitch from mid-to high range and back to mid-range again.



Photos: Sgt. Michael Connors

Chief Warrant Officer Stephen Campbell, commander of the Task Force Marne band and one of three judges in the Camp Victory Rising Star competition, smiles during a performance.

"You had to have an ear for music," Hartley said. "You had to know the difference within the pitch tones, the treble clef, the bass clef, a flat, a flat – stuff like that. You had to know whether or not a person was singing from their nose, or diaphragm or if they were using falsetto."

Campbell summed up the competition with what was probably on all the judges' minds.

"It was fun to see people have enough courage, first of all, to stand up there and sing because there were obviously a lot of people who probably wouldn't have done that," he said. "And in our small way I hope we offered some constructive help to these folks."



Chief Warrant Officer John Edmond, nicknamed "Randy" after the "American Idol" judge, critiques one of the performers during the final Rising Star competition at Camp Victory.



Iraq in the balance



Sgt. Timothy Kingston / 55th Combat Camera

Sgt. Charlie Jones from Troop B, 3-1 Cav. Regt., 3rd HBCT provides security as a woman walks by carrying a box on her head during a joint dismounted presence patrol with Iraqi National Police at a market in Narhwan Nov. 1.

Photo Contest Winner: 1st Sgt. Robert Fletcher



First Sgt. Fletcher took and submitted this photo of a UH-60 Black Hawk over Baghdad International Airport with the air traffic control tower in the background. Fletcher is the battalion command sergeant major for the 3rd. Civil Affairs Battalion.

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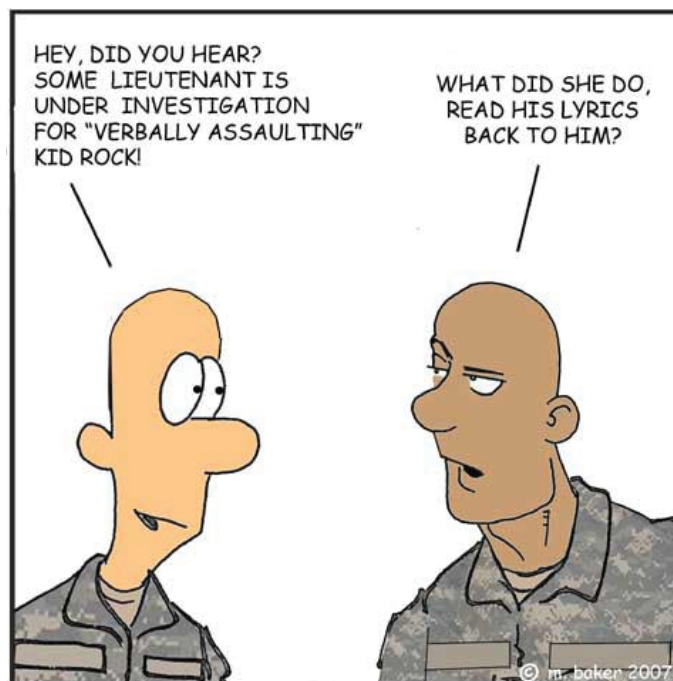
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PVT MURPHY'S LAW



Four-legged Soldiers keep noses to the ground

Military dogs root out killer bombs, all they want in return is rubber toy

By **SPC. BEN HUTTO**
3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div. Public Affairs

FOB HAMMER – The German Shepherd trots from rock to rock, ears pricked upward and nose pointed toward the earth, intent on his mission.

Several feet away, his handler, Sgt. Richard Miller, from Floresville, Texas, a military policeman with the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, silently watches as the dog gets closer to the C4 explosive he has hidden under some rubble.

The specialized off-leash search dog looks back at his handler and sits down beside the hidden explosive.

“Good boy,” Miller says, walking toward Gabriel. “Good job, Gabe.”

The dog’s tail swings back and forth as his trainer approaches. His mission accomplished, the dog eagerly awaits his reward.

Miller focuses the dog on the explosive while he reaches into his pocket and pulls out a worn-out orange Kong, a rubber toy. He tosses it in front of the dog and watches as he snatches it up and runs back to his handler.

The next few moments are filled with praise as Miller tosses the Kong and Gabriel retrieves it.

“That’s the whole reason the dog does what he does,” explains Sgt. Timothy

Kinsey, from Pueblo, Colo., a military policeman with the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team. “We work to get paid. The dogs work for their reward. Gabriel is very focused on his reward. He’ll do anything for those Kongs.”

The 3rd HBCT has three working dogs and they’ve been extremely busy since their arrival at FOB Hammer.

“They are doing a good job,” said Sgt. 1st Class Tommy Jamison, from Elmira, Ore., the provost sergeant for the 3rd HBCT. “I’ve had to learn about them, but they have been great assets.”

Jamison explained that the battalions in the 3rd HBCT had to learn how to use the dogs on combat missions.

“They were skeptical at first,” Jamison said. “The Soldiers had their TTPs (techniques, tactics, and procedures) and those needed to be changed to accommodate the dogs, so that caused some friction. It was hard to explain to leaders that the dogs needed air conditioned vehicles and tents to rest, but once they saw the benefits, everyone accommodated them.”

Kinsey explained that there are limits to what the dogs can do.

“Some Soldiers have a hard time understanding that the dogs have the mentality of a four-year-old,” Kinsey said. “When a dog is tired, they are tired. I can’t tell them to suck it up and drive on. They love what they do, but they have

A dog can register and discern 10,000 to 40,000 scents at one time.

— Sgt. Richard Miller
3rd HBCT



Sgt. Timothy Kinsey, from Pueblo, Colo., a military policeman with the 3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div., controls his patrol, explosive and detector dog, Jim, during an aggression exercise at FOB Hammer Oct. 25. Kinsey uses Jim to attack, guard, and search for munitions and weapons.

Photos:
Spc. Ben Hutto

limits.”

The dog’s sense of smell makes them perfect for detecting hidden contraband that Soldiers can overlook.

Miller explained that a dog can register and discern 10,000 - 40,000 scents at one time.

“The best way I can explain it is that if you were to walk into a fast food place you would smell the meat cooking on the grill and the mop bucket they are using to clean up a spill,” Miller said. “A dog will smell the fat in the burger charring, the meat cooking, the sesame seeds on the buns, the pickle juice, the type of perfume the cashier is wearing and a thousand different other scents all at the same time.”

That sense of smell allows dogs like Gabriel and Jim to smell a coil of detonation cord under a pile of rubble from 10 feet away.

“It takes a lot of luck and good information for the dogs to be effective,” Miller said. “We have to be in an area where there is something. Sometimes things can be buried too deep or they have been

moved, but the dogs are very accurate if something is there.”

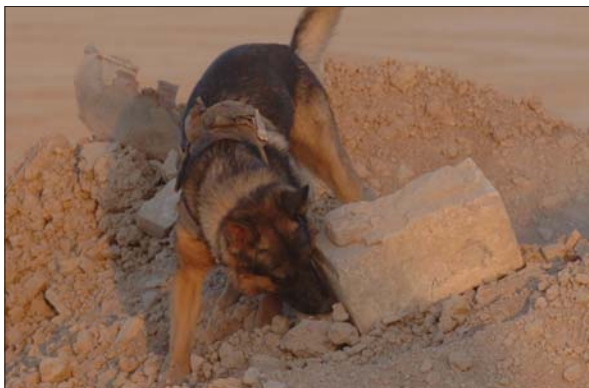
The accuracy of the dog’s ability can be directly attributed to the training that the handlers give them on a daily basis.

“Every day is a training day,” Miller said. “We conduct training as often as possible. It keeps the dogs sharp and helps us maintain our rapport with them.”

That rapport is critical out in the field. “The main thing between a trainer and a dog is their rapport,” Kinsey said. “We have to notice the dog’s behavior and make decisions based on that. A dog’s normal temperature is between 101 and 103 degrees. If its body temperature gets up to 106, the dog starts shutting down and begins to die. Out here in the desert, that is a big risk we have to monitor.”

Miller throws Gabriel’s Kong around a few more times, before calling an end to the training session. The handler roughly shakes the dog and encourages him.

“Normally, specialized off-leash search dogs stay with the same handler their entire military career so we should be together a while,” Miller said.



Gabriel, an off-leash specialized search dog looks for detonation cords during an exercise at FOB Hammer. Gabriel’s handler is Sgt. Richard Miller, from Floresville, Texas.

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