



After assisting Army Pfc. Brandon Kruskie (right), 355th Chemical Platoon, with the decontamination process, Army Sgt. David Allen Meigs (left), 110th Chemical Battalion, instructs him to remain calm and breathe before removing his chemical protective mask.

## Students train to respond to chemicals

Story, photo by  
Army Sgt. Abel Trevino  
*28th Public Affairs  
Detachment*

Chemical response teams underwent realistic refresher training for neutralizing acids and cleaning chemical spills at Camp Stryker Feb. 22.

"There are some serious issues with units trying to move this stuff," said Army Maj. Ross Graham, Chief of the Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear officer training department at the CBRN school in Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. "We're emphasizing how to move this quickly, but safely as well to minimize injuries."

The stop at Camp Stryker was the fifth and final train-

ing location during the trainer's six-week rotation.

"This is the last group," Graham said. "We hit four training locations — one up at Camp Speicher and three down here at VBC."

The training took five days per class, with the final day cumulating in a full-scale simulation of spills and unknown chemical elements discovered at a weapons cache.

"An infantry unit found a chemical cache down range and called in their Toxic Industrial Chemical/Protective Decontamination Equipment team," said Army Sgt. 1st Class Michael Madigan, hazardous material training specialist and instructor at the course.

Madigan also said the

training is exactly what the teams are doing in the field and everything was set up to mimic the real-world scenarios and keep the students sharp.

Students reiterated Madigan's sentiments.

"The fact that all the caches we find out here have hazmat, this goes hand-in-hand with dealing with it," said Marine Cpl. Joshua Dungan, Chemical, Biological Incident Response Force, 1st Marine Expeditionary Forces. "There will be different gear as far as Army and Marine Corps go, but it's all the same response as far as handling it and dealing with it."

Dungan, who has been on chemical response teams in Iraq since August, added

that all response personnel should undergo the refresher course.

"All the people who fall under CBRN should go through this because they are the ones who actually go out and respond to this," Dungan said. "It would be nice if this training was available to them."

Graham added that a regular training rotation to theater is being looked at by MNC-I and that lessons learned here will be incorporated into future courses and schools.

"What is happening, when we come out here, is that we're learning from each other," Madigan said. "What is happening here will be reflective to what we teach at the schools."

**A word from the MNC-I Equal  
Opportunity/Human Relations Office**

# SEXUAL ASSAULT

Sexual assault is a crime that can be committed against any person, of any age or gender. It is the most underreported crime in society and the military. It is defined as intentional sexual contact characterized by the use of force or physical threats to commit rape, sodomy, indecent assault or any nonconsensual sexual act.

Sexual assault is of significant concern in deployment areas. Servicemembers can reduce their risk of being assaulted by remaining alert, assertive and prepared at all times. Servicemembers should always travel with buddies, especially in poorly lit or isolated areas.

They should also trust their

instincts. If a situation seems dangerous, find a safe place as soon as possible. Sleeping areas tend to be less secure while deployed, so be sure to report any unauthorized males or females in your vicinity.

If you are assaulted, find a safe location away from your attacker and seek help immediately. Be sure to preserve all evidence of the assault and record any information you can remember about your assailant and the assault.

There are two reporting options when a sexual assault occurs. Restricted reporting is a confidential way to receive help without starting the investigative process.

You can give a restricted report to the medical center, a sexual assault response coordinator, a chaplain or your unit's victim's advocate. Unrestricted reports immediately start the investigative process. Unrestricted report receivers include military police, the Criminal Investigations Division, the Staff Judge Advocate and your chain of command.

For more information, call the Sexual Assault Hotline at DSN 822-888 or IRAQNA 0790-110-2360. Army One Source's hotline can be reached from OCONUS at 00-800-3429-6477 or collect at 484-530-5889. Information can also be obtained via email at **equal-opportunitysexualassault-helpdesk@iraq.centom.mil**.

## Chaplain's Corner

### Developing character difficult

**Army Chaplain Jeff Houston**

*MNC-I Deputy Chaplain*

*Character grows only in the garden of  
time,*

*In the soil of years,*

*In the toil of tears.*

*God plants a garden in the furrows of  
our lives,*

*and reaps a harvest of Joy!*

Training is the lifeblood of  
the Army, but training designed to

produce character is rare in this world. The fact of the matter is, personal depth of character cannot be bought or sold. True character is like a fine hand forged knife, slowly hammered out on the anvil of life.

When I was a kid I wanted a very expensive musical instrument. My father, though not a wealthy man, could easily have purchased the instrument for me. But instead he told me that I would have to earn the money myself to pay for it. I worked an entire year at odd jobs, finally saving enough money to buy the instrument. Forty years later, it is still one

of my most treasured possessions. But even more valuable, is the character my father instilled in me by making me work to earn the money myself.

In the Romans 5: 3 - 4 we read, "We also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance character; and character, hope."

Everyone needs some hope in his life, but are we willing to pay the price to produce the character that results in this much needed hope? In our culture we want the hope without the suffering and perseverance. We want

See CHARACTER, page 4

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The Victory Times welcomes columns, commentaries, articles and letters from our readers. Send submissions or comments to [joy.pariante@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:joy.pariante@iraq.centcom.mil). The editorial staff reserves the right to edit for security, accuracy, propriety, policy, clarity and space.

# First class graduates from academy

Story, photo by  
**Army Spc. Elvyn Nieves**  
 MND-B PAO

History was made when the inaugural class of more than 1,100 Iraqi police recruits graduated from a two-week Basic Recruit Training Course Feb. 21 at the Furat Iraqi Police Training Academy in Baghdad.

During the initial phase of their training, the graduates successfully completed training on weapons familiarization, law, ethics, crime scene investigation, handcuffing and various additional skills during the course.

"Today's graduation makes us very happy because this will provide security and control to this area," said Nihad Mahmud Taha, an Iraqi police graduate. "We're all very excited about it. I joined the IP because I've seen how much damage the extremists did to our country, and I wanted to provide protection to my people."

Following the ceremony, the graduates were issued orders to report to their respective districts," said Capt. John Soto, a native of Manhattan, N.Y., who serves as officer-in-charge of the Furat Police Academy. Soto is assigned to Headquarters Support Company,

18th Military Police Brigade, Multi-National Division - Baghdad.

Once in their districts, the new IPs will undergo additional training in vital police techniques, such as self defense and weapons training to prepare them for their next step in their training, which will be an eight-week course.

"This is the first of many steps to help the Iraqi people take control over their country," said Soto. "We're getting more recruits out to the streets, so when people are walking out their houses, they see these Iraqis in the blue uniform providing security to them."

## Plunging in



Photo by Army Maj. Randall Short

Members of Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 192nd Ordnance Battalion out of Fort Bragg, N.C., participate in a Polar Bear Plunge at the Australian pool Feb. 16. The unit raised more than \$500 in donations for the EOD Wounded Warrior program at Fort Bragg, N.C.

# BDUs bow out as ACUs take center stage

Story by Elizabeth M. Lorge

Army News Service

The Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for G-1 (Personnel) announced this month that the final wear-out date for the Army Battle Dress Uniform and Desert Battle Dress Uniform will be April 30 for both active-duty and reserve-component Soldiers.

The Army began phasing out the woodland and desert-pattered uniforms on June 14, 2004 with debut of the digital-patterned Army Combat Uniform.

"Our Army is always looking to constantly improve on everything we do, both on and off the battlefield," said Sgt. Maj. Katrina L. Easley, uniform policy sergeant major at G-1.

"We took a look the combat usability of what was once a good uniform, and based upon feedback from the field, decided to improve it and fix the many problems reported. There were at least 20 changes made and the result is the current ACU.

"Response has been fantastic. Soldiers have adapted well to the new uniform and they tell us they truly appreciate the improvements that were made. This uniform was designed by Soldiers for Soldiers."

All brown T-shirts, black combat boots and green and black jungle boots, woodland and desert-camouflage caps, olive-drab-green name and U.S. Army tapes, subdued-olive-green shoulder-sleeve insignias and the black rigger belt and web belt with open-faced black buckle will also become obsolete on April 30.

Active-duty and reserve-component Soldiers can continue to wear the black-knit cap and the black micro-fleece-knit cap with the cold-weather woodland-camouflage field jacket until Sept. 30.

The Army Reserve Officer Training Corps wear-out date for these items is April 9.

According to Easley, there haven't been any official surveys to determine how many Soldiers still have the BDUs or Desert BDUs, but she said it's probably hard to find many who aren't wearing the ACU.

But if Soldiers are hanging on to any of these uniforms, they can save them for posterity. They aren't required to turn them in. The only requirement is that they know the



Photo by USAMHI

**The Battle Dress Uniform in woodland camouflage was first issued in 1981 and has a wear-out date of April 30. The Desert Battle Dress Uniform and many of the uniforms' matching accessories are also being retired. They have been replaced by the digital pattern Army Combat Uniform.**

wear-out date and report for duty in ACUs May 1.

"Thousands of our great Soldiers spent many years defending our country wearing that honorable uniform. I know it means something to them, just as wearing the ACU will mean something to today's Army," said Easley.

## CHARACTER, from page 2

immediate gratification without any of the real work of character development. It seems so easy to sidestep the painful stuff like perseverance, but the truth is, there is no character development without it.

I am firmly convinced

that those of us who faithfully suffer and persevere as we work to accomplish our mission in Iraq will find that we will develop a depth of character that will mature into the hope that the New Testament talks about. I am also firmly convinced that

our suffering and perseverance have also resulted in the beginnings of a new national character and hope for Iraq that most Iraqis, up until now, could only dream of.

Someone once said, "Our character is who we are when no one else is looking."

Instead of complaining about the deployment, take some time when no one is looking to take the measure of your own depth of character.

If you are like me, you may decide that fifteen months of suffering and perseverance is just about right.

# 'The Sun' shines on Victory Main Stage



Photos by Army Sgt. Laura M. Bigenho  
**Tanel Padar, lead vocalist and guitarist of The Sun, rocks out during a concert at Camp Victory on Feb. 22. The Sun has a reputation as being the greatest Estonian rock band and has performed alongside rock legends Metallica and Aerosmith.**



**Danel Pandre, bassist and backup vocalist for The Sun, performs during the concert. The band has released four top selling albums in their native Estonia and collected 13 local awards.**



**Marilyn Kongo, The Sun, background singer, performs during a concert at Camp Victory. The band formed in 2003.**

# Hill praises African-American heroism

Story by Pfc. Eric J. Glassey  
13th Public Affairs Detachment

Multi-National Corps - Iraq held a Black History Month celebration Wednesday at the Al Faw Palace rotunda.

The presentation featured two separate performances. The first was by the Victory Gospel Experience Praise Dancers. It was followed by the Victory Gospel Experience.

Army Command Sgt. Maj. Marvin Hill, Multi-National Force-Iraq command sergeant major, gave a speech about the first African-Americans in the U.S. Army who made monumental steps in American History.

"Black History Month is a time to celebrate our diversity," Hill said. "It is also a time to reflect on the accomplishments African-Americans have made throughout history and to think about what diversity will mean to us in the future. For more than two hundred years, African-Americans have participated in every conflict in America's rich history," he said. "They have not only fought bravely against the common enemies of the United States, though. In addition to fighting — and in some cases, dying — for the Red, White, and Blue, they have also had to confront the individual and institutional racism of their very own countrymen."

Hill recounted the accomplishments of several African-American heroes. Army Sgt. William Carney, 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, who fought in the Civil War, was the first black man to receive the Medal of Honor. He finished out with Army Command Sergeant Major Michelle Jones who became the first woman to serve as class president at the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy,

as a division Command Sergeant Major and as Command Sergeant Major of the Army Reserve.

While he mentioned the first individuals of the African-American history, he also stressed, "the power to distinguish yourself from the crowd by being great — even if you're 2nd, or 3rd, or 9th."

"Black History Month is not just a celebration for African Americans," Hill said. "It is a celebration for all Americans, because black history is also American history — it is part of our unique history as a nation."

"We all are able to serve proudly, standing on their shoulders and standing on their accomplishments, because they stood proudly first," Hill concluded.

Army Staff Sgt. Elijah Davis, 0632 Military Transition Team communications chief, addressed Hill's comments following the ceremony.

"The Army came a long way," Davis said. "A lot more African-Americans and Hispanics are in the military. Everything is based off knowledge."

Davis added his own suggestion for pursuing greatness.

"Be great upon your individual skill to distinguish yourself," he said. "Work hard and you get what you need. For no matter how diverse we are, we are all part of the same team, with the same goals — to fight and win our nation's wars, to safeguard freedom at home, and to build it abroad."

Army Col. Robert P. Ashley, 525th Battlefield Surveillance Battalion commander, closed the ceremony by awarding the participants with coins and certificates.

"Our nation is stronger and more hopeful from the truth that all people are created equal," Ashley said.



Photos by Sgt. D. A. Dickinson

**Army Command Sgt. Major Marvin Hill, Multi-National Forces-Iraq command sergeant major, address the audience of the MNF-I/Multi-National Corps-Iraq Black History month celebration.**



**Victory Gospel Experience Praise Dancers perform a dance routine at the MNF-I/MNC-I Black History month celebration at Al Faw Palace Feb. 27.**



## Announcements

### IMO training

Training for information management of-ficers is held Sundays at 3 p.m. in the Eu-phrates Conference Room in Al Faw Palace.

### Tae Kwon Do

Take lessons from Grand Master Sung Bok Nam 8th Degree Blackbelt, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 8 - 9 p.m. at Camp Victory Gym Bldg 24M.

Nam coached the 1993 United States Tae Kwon Do Team and the 2003 Iraqi National Olympic Tae Kwon Do Team. All are invited to attend.

### RCIA Classes

Right of Catholic Initiation for Adults class meets Friday at 7 p.m. in the MNC-I Chaplain's office, Bldg. 24.

### ROCKS Interest Group Officer Professional Development

All Victory Base Complex Officers are invited to attend the ROCKS Interest Group, an Officer Professional Development association. The next meeting will be March 6 at the Camp Victory Mini-Chapel, Building 24-F from 7 - 9 p.m.

The guest speaker will be Chaplain Darryl Hollowell, who will speak on spiritual

growth. For more information, contact Capt. Pamela Lewis at 822-8720 or [pamela.lewis@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:pamela.lewis@iraq.centcom.mil).

### Georgia Asian Times Interviews

The Georgia Asian Times is seeking to conduct newspaper interviews with Asian American servicemen and women serving in Iraq. The newspaper would like to profile Asian Americans and their dedication to their country. Interviews will be conducted via telephone and/or e-mail from the MNC-I Public Affairs Production Cell, which is located in the Overflow Trailers in Trailer H-14. If you are interested and meet the criteria, please contact Pfc. Eric Martinez, MNC-I Public Affairs, 822-1414/1421.

He will forward you more information and schedule you for all interviews.

### Camp Striker Poetry Experience

Camp Striker's MWR North will host the Poetry Experience every Wednesday at 8:30 p.m.

### BJJ/Mixed Martial Arts

Victory's Mixed Martial Arts class meets at the SFC Paul R. Smith Gym every night except Friday from 9-11 p.m. Wednesday night classes begin at 9:30 p.m.

## Tobacco Cessation

Victory Combat Stress Center offers a tobacco cessation class Saturdays at 10 a.m. For more information, call 822-2781.

### Camp Victory Bible Studies

Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
Women's Bible Study 7 p.m. Bldg 24F	Smoke & Joe Bible Study 12 p.m. Victory Chapel Porch	Young Adult Bible Study 5:30 p.m. Victory Chapel	Spanish Bible Study 7 p.m. Mini Chapel	Foundations Bible Study, Mini Chapel 6:30 p.m.	SeventhDay Adventist 10 a.m. Victory Chapel	Men of the Bible Study 5 p.m. MLB Room, Oasis DFAC

**Do you have an announcement about an event of interest to the Camp Victory community? Contact Staff Sgt. Joy Pariente at [joy.pariente@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:joy.pariente@iraq.centcom.mil) with the information. Information for community announcements needs to be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event to allow for timely publication.**

### Operating Hours

**Coalition Cafe**  
Breakfast 5:30 - 8:30 a.m.  
Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Dinner 5 - 8 p.m.  
**Midnight Dining** 11 p.m. - 1 a.m.  
**Sports Oasis**  
Breakfast 5:30 - 8:30 a.m.  
Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Dinner 5 - 9 p.m.  
**Education Center**  
8 a.m.-midnight  
**Camp Liberty Post Exchange**  
8 a.m. - 10 p.m.  
**Fitness Center**  
Open 24 Hours  
**Victory Main Post Office**  
Monday-Friday 7 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Saturday 8 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Sunday 9 a.m.-3 p.m.  
**MNC-I STB Mailroom**  
9 a.m. - noon  
5 - 7 p.m.  
**Al Faw Palace Post Office**  
Wednesday and Sunday  
1-6 p.m.  
**Golby Troop Medical Clinic**  
Sick Call  
Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - noon  
Saturday & Sunday 9 a.m. - noon  
Dental Sick Call  
Monday - Friday 7:30 - 10:30 a.m.  
Saturday 9 - 10:30 a.m.  
**Mental Health Clinic**  
Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Saturday 9 a.m. - noon  
**Post-Deployment Health Briefings**  
Monday, Wednesday and Friday 1 p.m.  
Pharmacy  
Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - noon;  
1 - 4:30 p.m.  
Saturday & Sunday 9 a.m. - noon  
Legal Assistance/Claims  
Saturday-Monday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

### Worship Hours

**Victory Chapel (Bldg. 31)**  
Sunday  
7 a.m. .... Collective Protestant  
8:45 a.m. .... Collective Protestant  
10 a.m. .... Catholic Confession  
10:30 a.m. .... Catholic Mass  
2 p.m. .... Latter Day Saints  
4 p.m. .... Episcopal/Lutheran  
6:30 p.m. .... Contemporary Protestant  
Saturday  
11 a.m. .... Seventh Day Adventist  
8 p.m. .... Catholic Mass  
**Al Faw Palace Sunday**  
noon. .... Gospel Protestant

**Mini Chapel (Bldg. 24F)**  
Sunday  
8:00 a.m. .... Eastern Orthodox Divine Liturgy  
9:30 a.m. .... Breaking of Bread  
3 p.m. .... Church of Christ  
7:30 p.m. .... Latter Day Saints  
7 p.m. .... Knights of Columbus (1st & 3rd Sundays)  
Tuesday-Friday  
11:30 p.m. .... Daily Mass  
Friday  
6:30 p.m. .... Jewish Service

### AFN Freedom Radio

Al Asad ..... 107.3      Kirkush..... 107.3  
Ali Base ..... 107.3      Mosul ..... 105.1  
Ar Ramadi.. 107.3      Q-West ..... 93.3  
Baghdad ... 107.3      Taji ..... 107.3  
Balad ..... 107.3      Tal Afar..... 107.3  
Fallujah ..... 105.1      Taqqadum.. 107.3  
Kirkuk..... 107.3      Tikrit..... 100.1

All stations are FM

# Army wrestlers take silver, bronze

Story, photos by Walt Johnson

Fort Carson Mountaineer

Army wrestlers earned two silver medals and a bronze in the 2008 Dave Schultz Memorial International wrestling competition at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs over the weekend.

Dremiel Byers and Keith Sieracki earned silver medals while Iris Smith earned a bronze medal in competition that saw some of the top international wrestlers competing in an Olympic-style event.

The tournament drew many of the athletes that will be in prime position to represent their country in the Beijing Olympics this year.

Byers, Sieracki and Smith certainly proved they will be in the running for a spot on the U.S. Olympic team after each of them turned in impressive showings at the competition.

Sieracki earned a silver medal Saturday in an event he said he gets geared up for because it is a chance to wrestle at home with family and friends being able to watch him. He dropped a razor-thin decision to his opponent and afterwards said he is excited to be a part of the event.

"This is a good time for me because it gives my fellow Soldiers, Family members and other people a chance to see me wrestle. I am always ready to wrestle but for some reason I get a little extra adrenaline when I can perform in

town. It's great to have everyone watching and cheering you on so it means a lot to me and this is one of my best tournaments. I moved up a weight class for this tournament and I was matched up with one of the top guys from Italy in the finals. He beat my nemesis pretty handily and it was a chess match for us as I couldn't score on him and he couldn't score on me. I beat him pretty good seven years ago and this showed me just how much he improved over that time," Sieracki said.

Byers was his usual dominant self through the semi-finals of his weight class. In the semis Byers sprained his medial collateral ligament and went into his contest against the Cuban world champion with only one good leg.

Byers said he never thought about not competing against the Cuban because "this is my home turf and I will try to defend my home turf the best I can, even if it could mean suffering a career-ending injury. That is just the fight of our team and that is what we are about (as Soldiers and members of the WCAP team)."

Byers lost a close decision to the Cuban champion but would not let the injured leg be an excuse. He said he looks forward to being able to compete against him and other wrestlers in the future.

"I hate that I lost to him but I know one thing is going to be different the next time we meet," Byers said.

The next time they meet could be in Beijing for the Olympics.



World Class Athlete Program wrestler Dremiel Byers, right, battles his Cuban opponent during gold-medal action Saturday.



World Class Athlete Program wrestler Iris Smith, left, looks to make a move on her Venezuelan opponent during action Sunday at the U.S. Olympic Training Center.