

Rakkasan Review

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Rakkasan Review

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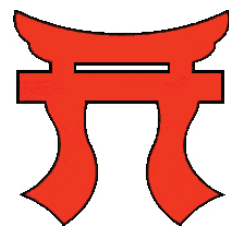
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We welcome the submission of news items, articles and photographs. Submissions should be made to the 3rd BCT Public Affairs Office via e-mail at: rakkasanspao@yahoo.com.



Sgt. 1st Class Kerensa Hardy

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston pins specialist rank on Spc. Lisa Gonzales, Company B, 626th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) when he promoted her March 15 at Camp Striker. Read more about his visit on the next page.

On the cover:

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston watches and listens as Sgt. Francis Lagat, Company A, 3rd Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) explains the role of a robot that interrogates potential improvised explosive devices while Sgt. 1st Class Jason Dodge, also of Co. A, 3rd STB, and Command Sgt. Maj. Derrick Maffett look on March 5 at Camp Striker. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Kerensa Hardy)

Mushada water plant reopens

By Capt. Allison Flannigan
3rd BCT Public Affairs

A ribbon-cutting ceremony March 26 marked the opening of the Mushada Water Treatment Plant, north of Mahmudiyah, a facility that will benefit thousands of area residents.

Col. Muhammad, commander of 3rd Battalion, 25th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, and Col. Dominic Caraccilo, commander of 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), attended the ceremony and spoke to visitors about the event.

Following the speeches, Muhammad cut the ribbon to open the plant and those present were given a guided tour of the facility, including the pumps, water tanks and administrative

buildings.

The plant restoration took five weeks to complete and was paid for by Commander's Emergency Response Program funds from the Rakkasans.

More than 30 workers and 20 skilled tradesmen worked together to complete the renovations. They replaced pumps, cleaned and sealed water tanks and fixed the electrical wiring inside the plant. Workers restored the buildings, did landscaping and installed two 5,000-gallon fuel tanks capable of powering the entire facility for six months.

One of the buildings will provide office space for an engineer from the South Baghdad Water Department and other facility employees. Another building will house the engineer and

his family.

The landscaping around the facility is designed for the family living on-site to grow their own vegetables, irrigated by the water tanks.

Capt. Gary Goodman, the project purchasing officer for 1st Squadron, 33rd Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT), and the unit's bilingual, bi-cultural adviser, Dean Mechael, met with the contractors, monitored progress and offered help throughout the process.

Mechael, an Iraqi-born professional engineer from Farmington Hills, Mich., said he's proud of the work done to repair the plant, adding the renovation will improve the quality of life and the health of the local citizens.

The facility is capable of producing 2.7 million gallons of potable water and 3.5 million gallons of non-potable water each day. Before the restoration project, Mechael said, the facility was working at only about 10 percent of its capacity.

Currently, 60,000 Iraqis are serviced by the facility. Future plans include adding a water distribution system that will provide water to 250,000 people or more.

Since the pipe construction for water distribution won't be completed for some time, Goodman, a native of Mahanoy, Penn., said part of the restoration project included adding water pipes outside the plant so people can come with jugs or water tanks and fill up for free.

Goodman said the water is safe to drink.

"They did a water test to test the hardness of the water and compared it to the water in Baghdad," Goodman said. "The water in Baghdad has an 18 percent hardness rating; this place has 2 percent, so this is actually much cleaner than the water that's in Baghdad."



Capt. Allison Flannigan

A young boy cools off in a pool of clean water at the Mushada Water Treatment Plant March 26.

Heavy-lifting logisticians carry load

By Staff Sgt. Tony M. Lindback
3rd BCT Public Affairs

Much like an ant that can carry many times its own mass, the logistician Soldiers of the 626th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) are toting more than their weight.

The responsibility of ensuring all Rakkasan Soldiers have everything needed to perform their missions has kept the logisticians of the 626th BSB very busy in their first 150 days in Iraq. As busy as they have been, the unit has leaned forward in the foxhole and had many accomplishments.

Lt. Col. Matthew Redding, commander of the 626th, said there are two major accomplishments he attributes directly to the professionalism and willingness to succeed he sees in his Soldiers.

“The first one was our ability to conduct a relief-in-place transition without losing a single step in terms of operational momentum,” Redding said. “For us to be able to shift accounts, to be able to pick up distribution nodes and to be able to begin distribution missions without any hiccups was our first big hurdle. It was accomplished by the Soldiers in a magnificent manner.”

The second major accomplishment is in the Soldiers’ ability to keep up with the sheer volume and number of missions they support and maintain, Redding said.

There are only 800 Soldiers in the 626th, yet they currently support more than 3,200, with that number increasing significantly in the near future.

In support of those 3,200 Soldiers, the 626th has distributed more than 86,000 cases of bottled water, supported five bulk water sites producing more than 650,000 gallons of bulk water to forward patrol bases, distrib-



Staff Sgt. Tony M. Lindback

Soldiers of Company B, 626th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), learn how to use the fire-suppression system they had just integrated onto a wrecker at Camp Striker Dec. 28.

uted more than 12,000 cases of meals ready to eat and distributed 875,000 gallons of JP-8 – the lifeblood that powers most Army air and ground vehicles.

As impressive as those numbers may be, they are only a few of the statistics of the class one and class three supplies for which the 626th is responsible. The BSB also provides the class four building materials, class five ammunition, class nine parts and materials, maintenance, medical support, transportation and base defense.

Redding proudly said his Soldiers are providing support in an area comparable to the state of Delaware while absorbing the base-defense mission at Camp Striker and Camp Victory without failing to meet the needs of Soldiers even in the most remote locations.

On top of meeting the logistical needs of the Rakkasans and other Soldiers at Camp Striker, Soldiers in the 626th have been coming up with new ways to support their infantry and field artillery brothers in arms. Some of the ideas were result of the battalion los-

ing one of its own while supporting another battalion’s operation to take an area back from insurgents.

“As a result, what they did was scrounge around and came up with a fire truck concept that mounted to a wrecker which enabled a recovery crew to move to the head of a logistics patrol and suppress a fire while we employ life-saving equipment – yank doors off and so forth,” Redding said. “The fire-suppression system will allow injured Soldiers to be pulled out of a burning vehicle in time to apply life-saving measure and medically evacuate them.”

“Each and every day we’re trying to come up with something that not only helps us but something that helps the entire brigade here,” said the 626th’s Command Sgt. Maj. David Thompson.

The Soldiers have also used their ingenuity to aid the Mine-Resistant, Ambush-Protected vehicles in this environment. They have equipped the MRAPs with flexible piping to get them past low-hanging overhead wires

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IA, Red Knights uncover EFPs in cache

3rd BCT Public Affairs

The Iraqi Army and Rakkasans uncovered a substantial weapons cache during a cordon and search mission in the Qadasiyah Apartments in Mah-

mudiyah March 29.

While conducting the routine mission, Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 25th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division and Battery A, 3rd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery, 3rd Brigade

Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), came across the find.

Of particular note were 17 complete explosively-formed projectiles, 192 DSHKA rounds, Iraqi Na-

tional Police uniforms and 18 AK-style weapons. The cache also included more than 100 EFP components, a demolition charge, detonation cord, fuses and a bag of homemade explosives.

Logisticians

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and rearview cameras with monitors so Soldiers can see what is on the ground behind the vehicles before lowering the rear hatch – helping them avoid dropping the hatch on a person or an improvised explosive device.

“You just hit a button and that door just plops down,” Thompson said. “That is a 500-pound door minimum. If someone was just standing there it could knock them out or kill them.”

Soldiers in the 626th have also converted the inside of an MRAP to serve as field ambulance allowing the safe evacuation of injured Soldiers with enough interior room for someone to administer medical treatment.

“They’ve applied many off-the-shelf, out-of-the-box type solutions to equipment that would normally be just a stock Army-issued vehicle to make their situation better,” Redding said.

Redding attributes his Soldiers’ desire to make such improvements to a special bond between logistics Soldiers and the Soldiers they support.

“When we push out our support, we’re issuing out to our (forward support companies),” Thompson said. “Each battalion has one of our FSCs attached to them, so these are our brothers and sisters down there as logisticians... and when it comes to the bond between them and the Soldiers they support – they’re Rakkasans. The Soldiers are very proud of that.”

With the first 150 days complete, and a battle space expansion looming,



Capt. Allison Flannigan

The 626th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) conducts night sling-load operations Nov. 23.

Redding said he is confident in his battalion’s ability to stay on top of the logistical demands of insurgent warfare.

“I think it’s very much like a marathon,” Redding said. “We started off at a very good pace. I think we’re going to find through the rest of it that the whole brigade has settled into a very steady and sustainable pace of operation.

“We have the ability to surge when needed, but we can generally predict when those surges will be and we’re preparing for the day when our battle space will expand,” he added.

“When we do increase our battle space and the number of units we support, we should be in a good logistics posture to do so and to support that mission.”

Mahmudiyah Qada residents soon to benefit from Iskandariyah vocational school programs

By Sgt. 1st Class
Kerensa Hardy
3rd BCT PAO NCOIC

More than a dozen representatives from the Mahmudiyah Qada toured the Iskandariyah Vocational School March 2, to see how local residents may benefit from it.

The Mahmudiyah Qada council chairman and education director general, an area representative, the Yusufiyah nahia chairman and nine senior sheiks from throughout the qada attended. The group toured the vocational school, adjacent the Iskandariyah Indus-

trial Complex.

Approximately 22 programs are offered through the school, said Dr. Nassir Abbas, the school director. Classes include welding, sewing, computer skills and maintenance, generator and air-conditioning repair and electrical engineering.

The vocational school opened in 1972. Almost 500 students are currently enrolled.

“We are hoping in April to have 850 and in May more than 1,000,” Abbas said.

The end goal of the school is generating em-

ployment, said Lt. Col. Robert Bobinski, deputy team leader for the embedded Provincial Reconstruction Team attached to 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

“That means sustainable employment, not part-time jobs; full-time jobs that pay money,” Bobinski said.

The short-term goal is to bring students from the Mahmudiyah Qada to the school to teach them skills. Mid-term is to provide opportunities for the students to hone skills, perhaps by on-the-job-training.

“Long-term, as demand for employees grows, we will work with the Government of Iraq to make more (vocational schools),” Bobinski said. That way, there will be a pipeline of trained employees with sustainable, marketable skills, he said.

The leaders toured halls jam-packed with students walking to class and entered classrooms filled to capacity with Iraqis learning to sew, weld and repair generators and computers among other technical skills.

They took copious notes, spoke to instructors and asked the director numerous questions about how the school could benefit the Mahmudiyah Qada.

“Whatever you learn here, you can bring back to your community and make other jobs,” Bobinski said. “There is universal honor in taking care of your family.”

Representatives from the Mahmudiyah region agreed to submit applications for 150 Sons of Iraq to begin training in April.

“We will definitely send our people here,” said Sheik Hattim Muhsin ‘Alwan al-Mehowi, from Yusufiyah. Asked which programs would be best suited for the citizens in his area, he said, “All of them.”



Sgt. 1st Class Kerensa Hardy

Dr. Nassir Abbas, director of the Iskandariyah Vocational School, speaks to Mahmudiyah Qada Education Director General Dr. Kais, Mahmudiyah Council Chairman Najim Mahdi al Dulaymi and Sheik Somar Abdul Amir Al Anbari in a women’s sewing class during a tour of the Iskandariyah Vocational School March 2.

Red Knights celebrate Saint Barbara's Day

By **Pvt. Christopher McKenna**
3rd BCT Public Affairs

The Red Knight Rakkasans celebrated Saint Barbara's day at Forward Operating Base Mahmudiyah March 7 with a ceremony where 25 individuals received the Saint Barbara medal.

Twenty-one Soldiers were presented the Honorable Order of Saint Barbara medal and four individuals received the Ancient Order of Saint Barbara medal.

"We are proud to continue the tradition of Saint Barbara's Day with the Red Knights," said Lt. Col. William Zemp, commander of 3rd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

Saint Barbara is the patroness saint of those in danger from thunderstorms, fire, explosion and sudden death. In the early years of artillery, misfires, muzzle bursts and exploding weapons were not uncommon, which is why the artillery sought the protection of Saint Barbara.

"I see artillery as an awesome deliverance of ordinance on a foe," said Col. Dominic Caraccilo, commander of 3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT). "It is an honor for me to be here today, amongst artillerymen, able to present these awards."

The Order of Saint Barbara is an honorary society of the U.S. Army

field artillery. The Ancient Order of Saint Barbara is the most distinguished level, with recipients being highly capable artillerymen who stand out amongst their peers.

Amongst the recipients of the Honorable Order of Saint Barbara medal were Command Sgt. Maj. Gregory Patton, 3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT) command sergeant major, and Brig. Gen. Ali Jassim Mohamed Hassen Al-Frejee, commander of the 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division.

The medal itself has a representation of Saint Barbara on the front, and Civil War era cannon on the back. The medallion is worn with Saint Barbara facing out and the cannon facing toward the chest.

"Artillery men and units are now running full spectrum," Caraccilo said. "In a brigade combat team nowhere

does it say infantry, logistics, field artillery; it's a combat team."



Pvt. Christopher McKenna
Col. Dominic Caraccilo, commander of 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), presents Chief Warrant Officer 2 Bennett Love Jr. with the Honorable Order of Saint Barbara medal during Saint Barbara Day services at Forward Operating Base Mahmudiyah March 7.

Combat engineers execute vital, dangerous mission

By **Pvt. Christopher McKenna**
3rd BCT Public Affairs

The combat engineers of Company A, 3rd Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) have one of the most important, but dangerous, missions in all of Iraq: route clearance.

While most people try to avoid roadside explosives, it is these Soldiers' mission to ensure the threat is mitigated before it can cause harm.

The threat caused by improvised explosive devices is at an all-time low in the Southwest Baghdad area; a large part of that has to do with the team.

"We go out to clear the roads in the area of operations, making sure they are mission safe," said Staff Sgt. Mark Taylor, from Austin, Texas, 3rd Squad leader, Co. A, 3rd STB. "When we find explosives, we have the capability to blow them in place ourselves.

"It's a dangerous job, but

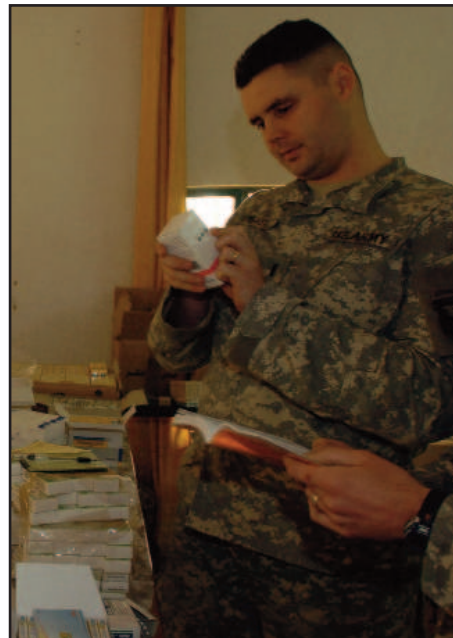
it helps knowing that you have the best vehicles ... providing you protection," Taylor said.

"This is my third deployment, and the mission has changed every time. This may not be the ideal choice for an assignment, but it's good to know you are helping other people re-

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Pvt. Christopher McKenna



Providing care

(Top left) Dr. Ahlam Turki, an Iraqi doctor attached to the 360th Civil Affairs Brigade public health team, checks a patient's blood pressure during a coordinated medical engagement March 15 in the town of Rushdi Mullah. (Top right) 1st Lt. Daniel Comeaux, physician's assistant for Company B, 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), prepares medication for a local Rushdi Mullah citizens. (Right) Dr. Ahlam Turki examines a patient's throat during the CME. A total of 390 patients from Rushdi Mullah and Arab Daoub were seen by medical providers from the Baghdad International Airport clinic.



Engineers

From Page 7
main safe."

The team was only recently given authority by the brigade commander to dispose of ordnance themselves.

"Since we have been able to dispose of the explosives, our platoon has found 14 explosive devices and self-detonated three of them," said Spc.

Chris Moser, from Detroit, Mich., Buffalo driver for 3rd Plt., Co A., 3rd STB. "The company itself has found over 70."

Sometimes the most difficult part of the mission can be monotony.

"Many times when we go out, we don't find anything," Taylor said. "It can get quite repetitive, but those are

the better days."

Day in and day out, the route-clearance mission will continue. There will be days when nothing will be found and days just the opposite.

Regardless of how you look at it, these Soldiers are pulling danger from the sides of the roads and making Iraq much safer.

Got news? Send your story ideas to rakkasanspao@yahoo.com

Iraqi children learn basketball during 3-day camp

By Staff Sgt. Tony M. Lindback
3rd BCT Public Affairs

Radwaniyah area children were treated to something a little out of the ordinary when U.S. Soldiers at Patrol Base Lion's Den held a basketball camp March 20-22.

Holding a basketball camp where Soldiers could teach lessons in teamwork, discipline and hard work, resulted from Staff Sgt. Christopher Dickerson and his company commander, Capt. Sean Morrow, putting their heads together.

Dickerson and Morrow wanted Company B, 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), to give back to the community and get the kids in the area together. Their idea captured the support of many company Soldiers, some of whom, like Sgt. Dwight Williams, added ideas and manpower to make

the camp a hit.

Williams, originally from Birmingham, Ala., has a brother who holds a basketball camp at home every summer. Williams said he tries to make it to the camp to help each year, but donates \$500 to sponsor five children when he can't be there.

"Being over here this time, I got to work with the Iraqi kids and I felt just like I was back at home," Williams said. "I was able to give back to the community."

Giving back to Radwaniyah has involved more than just teaching basketball. One sheikh said the security the Americans had established was the first gift to the community.

"Thanks to God, the Iraqi Army and the Coalition forces, the security is very good," said Sheikh Hameed Shalal Al-Tharib, a local leader in Radwaniyah. "That makes a good situation where our kids can play soccer, or come here and learn basketball."

Teaching the children basketball, an American game, instead of soccer - a much more common game in Iraq - had its purpose. The Soldiers wanted to share American culture, but they also wanted to get everyone on common ground, starting off as beginners. They brought in Iraqi Army Soldiers and sheikhs to give the youth figures to look to for learning.

"We wanted to bring them in and have the IA with us so they could serve as good role models," said Atlanta native, 1st Lt. Trivius Caldwell, 3rd Platoon leader for Co. B, 2-69th Armor Regt. "We wanted to teach them basic elements of

life - teamwork, discipline, hard work - things of that nature. I think we accomplished that."

Williams said he felt the Iraqi children may have had a misunderstanding of why Americans are in Iraq and the basketball camp was one way to show them what kind of people Americans really are.

"The kids really enjoyed it because they had heard about Americans," Williams said. "But there's a big difference between hearing about us and standing there with us and shaking our hands. I think they really enjoyed that more than the basketball camp - getting to interact with us."

Eighteen children showed up for the first day of the three-day camp, 27 came on the second day and there were 47 by the last day.

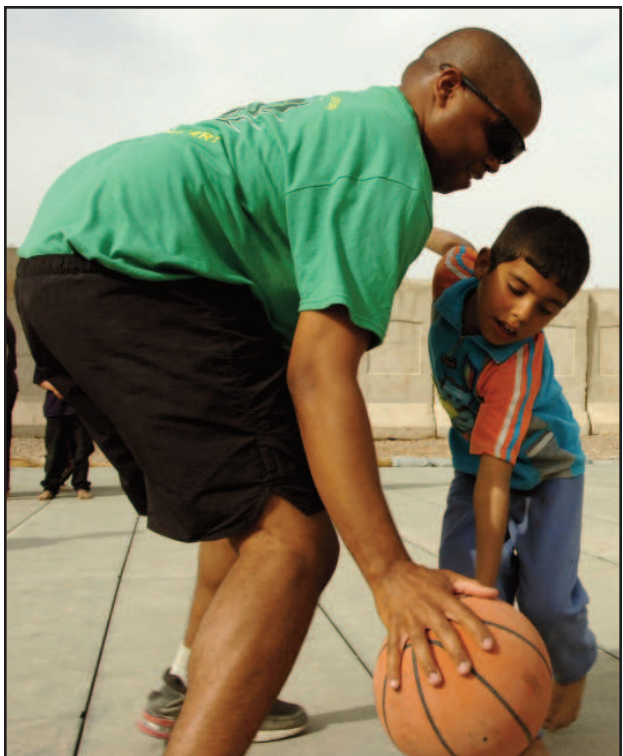
"It's just like spreading the word back home; if one kid likes it, he's going to tell a friend and then he'll tell a friend," Williams said. "We were just glad to have so many kids come out."

The children formed teams and played a championship game at the culmination of camp, allowing them to show off what they had learned. They were then treated to a cookout and given awards. Twenty-five children got one more thing, their very own Quran.

"In my brother's camp (in Birmingham) we give out Bibles," Williams said. "Here, a lot of families don't have Qurans, so we gave out Qurans ... Giving out a Quran is letting them know, 'I respect your religion, just like I respect mine.'"

Local sheikhs happily brought the Qurans in at the request of Morrow.

"It's a great thing to give the Quran to the children at the end of the basketball camp," Sheik Al-Tharib said. "We want to teach our kids about more than sports ... Since the people here are poor, it's good that each kid can now have his own Quran - something his family maybe didn't have before."



Staff Sgt. Tony M. Lindback

Spc. Cortez Cox, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), teaches a young Radwaniyah boy techniques March 21 during a three-day basketball camp at Patrol Base Lion's Den.

Leader Rakkasans build rock-climbing gym, improve morale

By Capt. Kyle Yanowski
1-187th Inf. Bn.

With a focused mind, the Soldier holds on to the grip. His feet dangle as his free hand pumps the air in triumph.

The celebration is short-lived. He swivels his head and feels the rock begin to break away under his fingertips as both he and the hand hold separate from the wall. A grin stretches across his face as he plummets to the ground below; he knows even a short-lived triumph is still a triumph. The impact is sudden, yet surprisingly soft. He rolls over and looks at the man-made climbing wall. Still smiling and three hours left before his patrol starts, he picks himself up and starts again.

When a relentless patrol cycle finally yields to personal time, the Soldiers of Company C, 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), blend imagination, a love of outdoor activities and practical application into projects to augment the Morale, Welfare and Recreational facilities on Patrol Base Gator Swamp.

Their first project was the construction of a 20-foot tall indoor rock-climbing gym.

What started out as a simple conversation between Sgt. 1st Class Dennis Gholson and his brother Spc. Jon Gholson, from North Vernon, Ind., and Staff Sgt. Timothy Vigen, from Minneapolis, quickly materialized as members of Company C began ordering the supplies necessary to recreate a stateside past time: indoor rock climbing. "My brother and I built a rock wall in Muskatatuck Park in Indiana, where we're from, and decided it would be easy enough to do the same here," Dennis said.

For five days straight, the three Soldiers went to work at night and painstakingly erected a frame 25 feet

long, 25 feet wide and 20 feet high.

Once the frame was complete, the trio installed plywood and drilled holes for more than 1,000 hand holds.

Four rock-climbing walls were finished with varying degrees of overhang and 20 routes were mapped out and marked.

The word quickly spread about a new rock-climbing gym on the patrol base. Soon, Iraqi Army troops from 3rd Company, 3rd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, were side by side with Rakkasan Soldiers scaling the plywood crags.

"It is very difficult," said Iraqi Army Pvt. Awwal Haider, a burly Iraqi Army squad leader. "I

can lift weights very easy, but this? It is difficult and fun!"

The rock-climbing wall has become part of the daily routine on Gator Swamp, and shows no sign of growing old for Soldiers, according to Capt. Ryan Barnett, Company C commander. "Through ingenuity and hard

work, Crusher Soldiers continue to dream up ways of alternative exercise, and implement them in between patrol cycles," he said.

"Climbing is a way of life, just like being in the Army, and should we ever have to leave 'The Swamp,' we'll find a way to take the gym with us," said Staff Sgt. Nathaniel Greene, patrol base mayor. "We can take the lessons of climbing on the inside wall and apply them to the fight outside of the wire.

"No matter how many times you fall off of a route ... get back on and try again. Eventually, you're going to the finish successfully."



Sgt. 1st Class Dennis Gholson
Staff Sgt. Timothy Vigen, from Minneapolis, Company C, 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), gets a workout on the rock-climbing gym he built with two other soldiers at Patrol Base Gator Swamp.

Rakkasan, Falcon Soldiers commemorate Women's History Month with luncheon

By Capt. Allison Flannigan
3rd BCT PAO

Rakkasan and Falcon Soldiers celebrated Women's History Month with speeches, poems and music at the Camp Striker dining facility March 5.

The "women in the military"-themed event was hosted by the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and the 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division.

Performances included the reading of two poems, a speech about women's military history, singing of Fleetwood Mac's "Landslide," and a slideshow featuring photos of famous women throughout history and Falcon and Rakkasan Soldiers serving in Iraq.

Guest speaker Maj. Elizabeth Grossart, a medical provider with Company C, 626th Brigade Support Battalion, spoke about Dr. Mary Edwards Walker, a woman who inspired Grossart's military career. Her speech

told the fascinating story of a unique woman in military history.

In 1855, Walker graduated medical school. She was refused an appointment as an Army surgeon because of her gender.

After seven years of persistence, she was finally granted a job as a battlefield surgeon but was recognized only as a volunteer and worked without pay.

Walker treated wounded Union Soldiers on the battlefield during the Civil War, was held as a spy and beaten in a Confederate prison. After she completed her Army service in 1864, Walker went on to work in a Clarksville, Tenn., orphanage.

In 1866, President Andrew Johnson awarded her the Medal of Honor in tribute to her service to her country. To date, she is the only female recipient of the nation's highest military honor.

"She had the courage to pursue the

even more difficult task of being a Soldier," said Grossart, from New Lenox, Ill. "You have chosen to do the same. I am proud of you and your work here. You ladies motivate me; I'm proud to be counted among you.

"I'd like to think that each one of us has an obligation to carry a little piece of Mary Edwards Walker's spirit because it is this spirit that enables us to serve with courage as females in the Army," Grossart said.

Grossart ended her speech with a quote attributed to Dr. Walker, "Let the generations know that women in uniform also guaranteed their freedom."

Spc. Keisha Fisher, a medic with Co. C, 626th BSB, 3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT), was moved by the speech.

"It was really humbling to come in here and for somebody to say, 'you're awesome for doing this,'" said the Fayetteville, Ark., native.

What does duty mean to you?

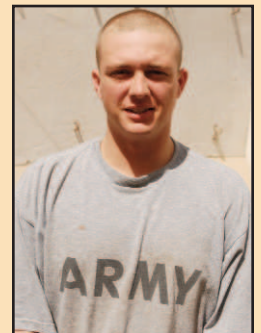


"The word duty means serving my country and doing what I'm supposed to be doing without having to be told to do it."

Staff Sgt. Elocious Frazier
CompanyB,
2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment

"Duty is the ability to do what you're told, and do it well."

Spc. Jason Ward
CompanyB,
2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment



"Duty can mean various things. Duty is mainly protecting one's country, one's livelihood and one's family."

Spc. Daniel Oster-Hernandez
CompanyB,
2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment



"I think I would say that duty is serving something other than yourself. Not always because you want to, but because it's the right thing to do."

Capt. Sean Morrow
CompanyB,
2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment

