

The North Star

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U.S. Division - North, Iraq



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3rd ID Spartans relieve 1st Cavalry Soldiers

By Pfc. Chrystal M. O'Neal
2HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO

New surroundings, new sounds, and a totally new environment may be enough to deter some from adapting, but according to Lt. Col. Bryan Luke, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, deputy commanding officer, Spartan Soldiers have not only adapted, they are ready to hit the ground running.

"We are ready to work; our mission here is to advise, assist and train our Iraqi counterparts," said Lt. Col. Luke. "We want to work ourselves out of the job, accomplish the mission and go home."

After being on ground for less than a week, Spartan Soldiers are already teaming up with 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, and gathering all the vital information needed to start getting the job done before 3HBCT, 1st Cav. Div., departs.

Sergeant First Class Melvin Ray Farris, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2HBCT, said



Photo by Spc. Dustin Gautney, 2HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO

Specialist Celinas Gonzalas (left), with Troop Medical Clinic, 3HBCT, 1st Cav. Div., assists Pfc. Matthew Sharrah, with evacuation platoon, 26th BSB, 2HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div., perform maintenance on tactical vehicles, Nov. 12.

that starting the relief in place transfer of authority, known as the RIPTOA process, so early has definitely proven beneficial.

"The 1st Cav. Soldiers have been very helpful. They were here for 12 months, and we've been making

it our business to soak up all the knowledge they have acquired over that period of time," said Sgt. 1st Class Farris. "Before they take off, we will be proficient; we'll have things up and

See Spartans, Page 4 —

Generator mechanics keep 25th CAB powered up

By Staff Sgt. Mike Alberts
25th CAB, 25th Inf. Div. PAO

Weighing more than 6,300 pounds, at 7-feet tall, it's one of the largest generators the 25th Combat Aviation Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, has at its disposal.

However, until Soldiers of the 209th Aviation Support Battalion, Task Force Wings, got involved, it was essentially an over-sized paper weight.

The 209th ASB generator mechanic team completed repairs to a 60-kilowatt MEP 806 Bravo Model generator, the largest generator the team has been called upon to diagnose and repair at Contingency Operating Base Speicher.

According to Chief Warrant Officer 3 Marlon Mejia, senior maintenance technician, Headquarters Support Company, 209th ASB, this particular generator has been dormant and broken since the unit arrived.

"We [inherited] this generator," said CW3 Mejia. "The prior unit had difficulty diagnosing it, and it seemed that no one could verify what was wrong. Then our mechanics began troubleshooting it," he continued. "After some time, they determined that the issue was the main generator element which is about an \$8,000 piece of equipment."

See Mechanics, Page 3 —

Medic's training pays off in combat

By Spc. Shantelle Campbell
4IBCT, 1st Inf. Div. PAO

A private from Fruitland, Idaho, was the first in her brigade to receive the Combat Medic Badge for her heroic actions since deploying to Iraq this year.

Private Brandi Hunter, a medic with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Infantry Division out of Fort Riley, Kan., was among seven Soldiers who were presented awards Nov. 13 for saving lives Oct. 11.

On that day, a 4-1 BSTB convoy was hit by an RKG-3 anti-tank grenade. As the truck filled with black smoke, Pvt. Hunter and the rest of the Soldiers in the vehicle quickly sprung into action, ensuring that everyone in the vehicle was OK and tending to wounds suffered as a result of the attack.

At first, it was a littl cloudy, said Pvt. Hunter. However, they quickly pulled the gunner out of the turret of the Mine Resistant, Ambush Protected vehicle. While the squad leader, Staff Sgt. Andre Gonzales, was asking everyone if they were OK, Pvt. Hunter said they noticed he was bleeding.



Photo by Spc. Shantelle Campbell, 4IBCT 1st. Inf. Div. PAO

Private Brandi Hunter, a Fruitland, Idaho, native and medic with HHC, 4th BSTB, 1st Inf. Div., receives the first Combat Medic Badge for actions after her convoy was hit by an anti-tank grenade.

That's when they tended to his wounds and continued. She said everything she learned in the past was running through her head.

The "Wolverine" battalion commander, Lt. Col. Eric Moore, said that he feels confident about rolling out on missions because he has Soldiers like Pvt. Hunter who know how to execute their duties to

standard.

Combat Action badges were awarded to the six other Soldiers. After the award ceremony Pvt. Hunter remained humble saying, "award or not, it's still fulfilling."

"It's my job," she said. "That's what I'm trained to do and that's why I'm with them to do exactly what I did."

Combat Action Badge Recipients:

- Specialist Jeffrey Fugitt, military policeman with HHC, 4-1 BSTB
- Private Kasey Huff, military policeman with HHC, 4-1 BSTB
- Specialist Arabelle Isaac, a Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Specialist with HHC, 4-1 BSTB
- Private 1st Class Daniel Meyers, military policeman with

HHC, 4-1 BSTB

- Pfc. Shawn Proctor, Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Specialist with HHC, 4-1 BSTB
- Private 1st Class Meghan Raulston, Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Specialist with HHC, 4-1 BSTB

Recipient of the Combat Medic Badge:

PV2. Brandi Hunter, medic with HHC, 4-1 BSTB

Safety Thought of the Week **Unexploded Ordnance**

- *Stand clear of suspected UXOs.*
- *Report suspected UXOs to the appropriate authorities.*
- *Caution others against collecting dud rounds, bomblets, or suspected UXOs for souvenirs.*

Remember: If you didn't drop it, don't pick it up!
UXOs are an Explosive Ordnance Disposal mission only.



Continued from Mechanics, Page 1

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Mejia oversees all maintenance jobs that are generated in, and referred to, the 209th ASB. The battalion's power generation equipment repair specialists – more commonly known as “generator mechanics” -- fall under his supervision.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Mejia explained that the generator mechanics are especially critical to TF Wings' mission because much of the brigade's operational elements in Iraq run on generator power. Furthermore, most of the generators must be fully mission capable 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

“When the other units can't repair a generator at their level, it gets sent to us. Then it's our job to fix it and fix it fast,” explained CW3 Mejia. “That's exactly what our Soldiers did with this one particularly challenging sixty-kilowatt generator.”

Private first class Tammy Gallaher, a native of Chicago, and Spc. Michael Boyle, of Adair, Okla., helped diagnose and repair the large generator. Both are two of just a handful of generator mechanics with HSC, 209th ASB, and both Soldiers love their work.

Private Gallaher first enlisted in the Army in 1985 and served through 1989. For the next 17 years, she worked in the civilian travel industry for a variety of companies. Motivated by the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, she enlisted again



Photo by Staff Sgt. Mike Alberts, 25th CAB, 25th Inf. Div. PAO

Private First Class Tammy Gallaher (left) and Spc. Michael Boyle (right), both power generation equipment repair specialists, 209th ASB, 25th CAB, 25th Inf. Div., repair and service a 60-kilowatt generator at COB Speicher, Iraq, Oct. 30.

in 2006. Now 42 years old, Gallaher explained her motivation.

“I rejoined the Army mostly because I was a veteran, and I didn't like the helplessness I felt after 9/11,” said Pfc. Gallaher. “So I came back. This time, though, I decided on a job where I could use my hands and fix things.

“What I love most about this work is after we're done with a job,” said Pfc. Gallaher. “Like once we finished with the sixty-kilowatt generator, we started it up and it hummed. Now that's satisfying!”

Specialist Boyle compared his feeling of satisfaction to hitting a home run in baseball.

“When I first started this work, the sound of a generator working after it was broken was the greatest sound in

the world,” said Spc. Boyle. “I compare it to the feeling [described by] great home-run hitters. The first few home runs feel like you're on top of the world, and after those first few, it's just another hit,” he said. “But, we do get people saying, ‘thank you,’ and that's gratifying.”

As their commander, Capt. Mark Dudley, HSC, 209th ASB, finds himself frequently acknowledging the value of Pfc. Gallaher, Spc. Boyle and the rest of his generator mechanic team.

“I am immensely proud of these Soldiers,” said Capt. Dudley.

“They have one of the most visible jobs as far as maintenance is concerned,” he continued. “Our generator mechanics are one of our biggest [combat multipliers].”

Know General Order #1

The Task Force Marne Commanding General, Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo, signed General Order Number One, Nov. 4. The document contains infractions that are specific to Soldiers and civilians who are assigned to TF Marne areas of operation. They are listed below.

Becoming non-deployable for reasons within control of the Soldier, such as elective surgery that prevents that Soldier from returning to theater from EML on the Soldier's scheduled movement date.

Becoming pregnant, or impregnating a Soldier, while assigned to Task Force Marne AOR, resulting in the redeployment of the pregnant Soldier.

Directly or indirectly causing a Soldier's next-of-kin to become aware of a casualty before the next-of-kin is officially notified through the casualty notification process.

Failing to report a violation of a provision of this General Order to the Soldier's chain of command, or other appropriate authority, within 24 hours of discovering the violation.



Everyone who recorded a holiday greeting can see the Thanksgiving message at www.dvidshub.net. On the right side of the screen, click the Thanksgiving Greetings tab. Next, scroll down and type your name in the search window. Once you see your video, there is an option to send an E-card. The Christmas Greetings will be placed on the Web site after Thanksgiving.

Continued from Spartans, Page 1

running.”

Right-seat riding with 3HBCT comes with other perks as well, according to Sgt. 1st Class Sandra Jobson, HHC, 26th Brigade Support Battalion, 2HBCT.

“They have been very gracious since we’ve gotten here. Not only have they brought us up to speed on work-related issues here on FOB Marez, but they’ve also showed us around, left us a lot of their extra supplies, and just made the transition here a lot easier,” said Sgt. 1st Class Jobson.

Spartan Soldiers have already been able to take responsibility for several tasks from 3HBCT. One task has been to receive and assist all incoming Soldiers at the FOB Marez Airfield.

“Every time we go to the flight line, now, the 1st Cav. Soldiers let us run it. We do the bulk of the work. They are still there to assist us if any issues come up, but for the most part, they have turned it over to us,” said Sgt. 1st

‘What are they doing?’

Understanding a kissing culture

Special to “The North Star”

I am sure that a lot of us have seen grown Arab men kiss each other on the cheek, and maybe thought that was weird.

In the Arab world, kissing on the cheek is a normal and expected gesture when greeting someone you know, or bidding farewell to someone you know going on a trip.

The kissing gesture is a show of compassion and closeness to the person. It is a show of care and bond.

Normally, when meeting someone you know, going through the greeting ritual we discussed previously, you would kiss on the cheek.

Depending where you are, you may kiss once, twice or three times alternating from cheek to cheek.

In the event of leaving somebody’s house at the end of a visit, or even

leaving on a trip for an extended period of time.

This form of kissing takes place with farewell statements and responses exchanged.

The statements may go like this:
Statement: Allah - Maak (God be with you)

Response: Allah - Yehfadak (God keep you)

Statement (in travel situations): Trouh wa Tirjaa Bil Salama (May you go and return in good health)

Response: Allah Isalmak (God protect you too)

The ultimate in a show of affection or care is to kiss someone on the forehead. This symbolizes the utmost in the kissing ritual.

I hope this gives you another insight to the culture surrounding you.

Task Force Marne Heroes of the North



Sergeant Mario Huerta, of Tacoma, Wa., is the company supply sergeant for Alpha Company, 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division. He Through his expert knowledge, strong supply discipline and detailed tracking of issues expendable and non-expendable items, he

successfully completed his sixth change of command inventory. With equipment worth in excess of \$80 million dollars, he successfully accounted for all items without requiring a financial Liability of Property Loss Statement. For his complete commitment to excellence and can do attitude, Sgt. Huerta is the most deserving choice for the Task Force Marne Hero of the North.

Previous Task Force Marne Heroes:

- Nov 14: Pfc. William Watson 4th BSTB, 4IBCT, 1st Inf. Div.
- Nov 13: Staff Sgt. Gabe Trollinger, 1/23rd Inf., 3SBCT, 1st Cav. Div.
- Nov. 12: Pfc. Jesus Hernandez, 3/82nd FA, 2HBCT, 1st Cav. Div.
- Nov. 11: Spc. Antoine Hunt, 215th BSB, 3HBCT, 1st Cav. Div.
- Nov. 11: Spc. William Freiburg, 1/14th Cav., 3SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div.



Specialist Kyle Martin, of Fairmont, W.V., was hand-picked to serve with U.S. Army Core of Engineers in Kirkuk Province due to his background and education in engineering. His duties have include advising the resident engineer officer in charge and noncommissioned officer in charge on projects estimated in excess of eight million dollars, including water treatment units and bridges.

Specialist Martin’s supervisor states that his attention to detail and ability to supervise construction projects have been a huge asset to his office. Specifically, he has provided critical oversight and expertise to ensure that contractors keep on task and schedule. His efforts are critical to the success of these projects. He truly embodies the 779th Engineer Battalion Motto “DO RIGHT, FEAR NOTHING” and is a clear choice for the Task Force Marne hero of the month.

- Nov. 10: Sgt. Baron Toms, HHC, 130th Eng. Bde.
- Nov. 9: Staff Sgt. Richard Stalvey, 2/16th Inf. 4IBCT, 1st Inf. Div.
- Nov. 8: Pfc. Sean Stolfi, 1/14th Cav., 3SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div.
- Nov. 7: Spc. Jared Waymire, 3/82nd FA, 2HBCT, 1st Cav. Div.
- Nov. 4: Sgt. Keith Cathey, 1/8th Cav., 2HBCT, 1st. Cav. Div.

REMEMBER OPSEC! Always be aware of your surroundings. Don’t discuss mission information on the bus, at the PX, or at the DFAC. You don’t know who could be listening!

REGIONAL HEADLINES

Texas police find woman, 45, living with corpse

Associated Press

BIG SANDY, Texas— A 45-year-old Texas woman has been committed for mental evaluation after authorities say she lived in an apartment for a week with her dead boyfriend's body.

The Tyler Morning Telegraph reported Big Sandy police were flagged down by a man Friday who reported a stench coming from his sister's apartment.

Once inside, police found 50-year-old William Drake dead on a couch. From the condition of the corpse, police believe he had been dead about a week.

According to police Lt. Van Burr, the woman said Drake "didn't want to leave the apartment."

Burr said Drake died of natural causes and had recently stopped his dialysis treatments. He said Drake had lived for 10 years with the woman, who had been hospitalized for mental illness before. Burr declined to reveal her name.

Big Sandy is about 100 miles east of Dallas.

Catfight!: Ga. woman, 86, charged with cat theft

Associated Press

ATLANTA— The claws are coming out in court case over a Georgia cat.

86-year-old Fauniel Kliemt has been charged with stealing a long-haired cat she said was a stray. Kliemt pleaded not guilty Tuesday to a misdemeanor charge of theft of lost or mislaid property.

The case began in 2007 ago when a neighbor gave her the cat. She had cared for the cat for about eight months when another neighbor, Kimberly Otey, approached her and said the cat belonged to her family.

A verbal fight ensued and police were called. Kliemt was charged with theft but was allowed to keep the cat and as long as she made court appearances. The case is still pending and Kliemt said she has spent more than \$6,000 in lawyer fees.

Otey said the cat, which was bought for her 4-year-old daughter, was feared dead.

Picture taken by unknown man creates UFO frenzy

United Press International

ROSE HILL, Kan.— A man who snapped a picture of a mysterious black object flying over Kansas said his picture is causing a stir among UFO enthusiasts.

The photographer, who asked to remain anonymous, said he took the picture Friday morning near Rose Hill, Kan., and the photo appeared Monday on the Canadian Web site UFO Digest,

the Wichita (Kan.) Eagle reported Tuesday.

"The object came out of the clouds really fast. It sounded kind of like a jet but much, much softer and had a whirling sound with it," the man said. "I only got off one shot because it was really close before I realized it was something different. It went back upward, much like a jet, and was gone."

Dirk Vander Ploeg, editor and publisher of UFO Digest, said the object seems to resemble a prototype for a new form of fighter jet. However, he said he has "never seen a plane that looks like that."

Jarrod Bartlett, spokesman for Boeing Integrated Defense Systems-Wichita, said flight operations staff "were not able to identify the aircraft. We do not often get calls regarding unidentified aircraft."

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3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team,
1st Cavalry Division
2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team,
1st Cavalry Division

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