



26 troops earn CABs after mission

TF Phantom convoy engage small-arms fire en route to IZ

Story, photo by Spc. Stephanie Homan
MNC-I PAO

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force Phantom awarded 26 Combat Action Badges April 8 at Al Faw Palace.

The recipients stood proud in front of the palace as Brig. Gen. Joseph Anderson, Multi-National Corps-Iraq chief of staff, pinned on their CABs.

They received the badges after being engaged by small-arms fire during a trip to the International Zone from Victory Base Complex Jan. 24.

Any troop in combat can receive the award if they meet the criteria, Anderson said.

"From the Army to the Navy, Korean to Australian and private to colonel, this is not a discriminatory award," he said. It was the first time Anderson awarded troops with CABs, he said.

Lt. Col. David Alegre, operations deputy chemical, biological radiological and nuclear officer, MNC-I, said he is honored to wear his CAB.

"The way the military is nowadays illustrates how operations in the field are changing," Alegre said. "Multi-service and multi-national military is a normal thing, and it's a positive change for all of us."

The coalition troops felt honored to receive the same awards as troops from a variety of countries and services, said Australian Col. Kevin Packham, chief of plans for the deputy chief of staff, Multi-National Force-Iraq.

"The (Combat Action Badge) recognizes that whatever our primary line of operation, we all have a vital part to play in the overall success of the counterinsurgency mission," Packham said.

"I believe that awarding the Combat Action Badge to qualifying members of all countries contributing to the coalition, regardless of service, positively reinforces the fact that we are one force with a common goal."

The following are TF Phantom service members who received the CAB: Australian Col. Kevin Packham, Republic of Korea Army Maj. Hee Jung; Navy Capt. Lawrence Kirwin, Capt. Martin Smith and Lt. Cmdr. John Winstead; Lt. Col. David Alegre, Lt. Col. Michael Walther, Maj. Daniel Jones, 2nd Lt. Quammie Semper, Sgt. Maj. Carl Bellard, Sgt. 1st Class Alicia Rivera, Staff Sgt. Darrin Boughton, Sgt. Virgil Brown, Sgt. Anourack Bui, Sgt. Shamika Harrell, Sgt. Armando Hernandez-Ruiz, Sgt. Tina Neal, Spc. Michael Bailey, Spc. Ronnie Kneeland, Spc. Brian Liddell, Spc. Cooper



Brig. Gen. Joseph Anderson, chief of staff, Multi-National Corps-Iraq, shakes Pvt. Shawn Kelly's hand after awarding him a Combat Action Badge. Kelly, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force Phantom, was one of 26 TF Phantom troops who received the CAB during an awards ceremony April 8 at Al Faw Palace.

Syversten, Spc. Juan Verela, Pfc. Matthew Graham, Pvt. David Jennings, Pvt. Logan Jones and Pvt. Shawn Kelly.

Support them and they will support you

Spc. Laura M. Bigenho
28th Public Affairs Detachment

Unlike some people I know, I am hardly star struck when I meet a celebrity. However, I love music and live entertainment. Toss in the words "free of charge" and it is almost guaranteed I'll be present.

Deploying to Iraq has its perks and free entertainment is one of them. I'm not talking about karaoke at the stables on Friday nights or fighting off armies of gnats throughout the day — although both have been proven to be entertaining at times. I am talking about the big name musicians, actors, comedians and professional athletes we get to meet out here. Few of our friends and family have that opportunity back home.

I will never forget the first time I interviewed a few stars. I was on my first deployment in 2005. My brigade commander took me on a mission up north to photograph celebrities meeting some of our troops. I was shocked when I saw country music singers



Bigenho

Darryl Worley and Mark Wills, actress Karri Turner and comedian Al Franken step off a helicopter wearing flak vests and kevlar. I was surprised to see so many familiar faces — even more surprised at how happy they appeared.

I have interviewed numerous celebrities since then. Each experience has been enjoyable as a fan and will be valuable to my resume as a journalist.

From award-winning musicians and actors to small lesser-known bands and comedians, they volunteer to come here and entertain in hopes of boosting morale. Their main purpose is not to gain more fans, but to ensure us they have not forgotten about the men and women who keep them free.

I can honestly say I have been humbled by the entertainers I have spoken to, each of them sharing a similar goal: to let us know they care and to remind us that there are people in the States who still support us. It is such a small

yet grand message.

Another common objective I noticed is the stars want to see for themselves what is going on in Iraq. Although they acknowledge it is impossible to see everything the way we troops see, simply being here and talking to troops gives them a clearer understanding of life here.

Actor and comedian Jamie Kennedy entertained hundreds of service members here on a recent comedy tour. During his visit, he made a noteworthy statement and promise.

"Being here has already given me a different perspective of what you're doing here," he said. "Get home safe and know that I'm going to tell everybody I can to come here to entertain you and keep you smiling."

In return, we can help Kennedy keep his promise by seeing the entertainers when they come here. If we don't support the organizations who bring them — Armed Forces Entertainment and USO — we may find ourselves lacking the much-needed morale boost they give.

Chaplain's Corner

What are you seeking from God?

Chaplain Kimon Nicolaides
MNC-I Chaplain

My wife recently asked me what kind of relationship we are seeking with God. She was reading a book by Anne Graham Lotz and was convicted by what Lotz had written about people seeking God because they want Him to give them what they desire. For instance: better-paying jobs, bigger houses, girlfriends, or — in my wife's

case — completing her class assignments quickly so she can enjoy her favorite TV show and yes, moving to warmer climes. There is nothing wrong with those things, but what about God Himself?

What are you seeking from God? Most of our prayers are filled with our needs in the immediate or foreseeable future: praying for our health, strength, for good relationships with our fellow Soldiers or quick resolutions to any problems. Are we such selfish creatures? No, we are not always self-centered. We do pray for the needs of others as well, for their

healing, for their children to get into good colleges, and even for the salvation of others.

We may have forgotten to seek God just to enjoy the privilege of His gracious company. This is a very easy thing to do in the busyness of today's life, especially for Soldiers who are in combat zones, facing dangers every day on the battlefield and having to deal with family issues back home. We can only cope with so much.

Jeremiah 29:13 states, "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."

See **SEEKING**, page 3

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*Building a better future***Joint effort brings improvements, goes extra mile for local school**

Story, photo by
Spc. Stephanie Homan
MNC-1 PAO

Students in Iraqi Family Village, Baghdad, can look forward to air conditioning, drinking fountains, new windows and better electricity thanks to Task Force Vigilant, 2nd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division and members of the community.

TF Vigilant aided in the reconstruction of Newaris Primary School, which houses about 420 students daily, said 1st Lt. Randall Cornelison, TF Vigilant civil affairs officer.

"A generator for constant power, plumbing in the bathrooms, new windows, a guardhouse and a wall with a gate was our list of things to repair," Cornelison said.

TF Vigilant contracted members of the community to renovate the only school in the community, he said.

"The overall effects we were looking for were a safer environment for the kids and putting money back into the community, which is why we hired people straight out of the community to do the maintenance," said Staff Sgt Michael Virnig, TF Vigilant civil affairs NCOIC.

The project was extended so they could assess how well the repairs and additions hold up over time, he said.

"The project, which started Jan. 14 and was originally 60 days, was extended to six months so we can help

the community monitor the maintenance of the renovations and fuel for the generator," Virnig said.

TF Vigilant is proud of their efforts to help this community because education is priceless, Cornelison said. He said the wall and gate around the school was essential.

"Unfortunately there are people out there who will hurt children to make a point. Besides the generator and the

power it provides them, the wall and gate are a very (vital) addition," he said.

Cornelison said the community showed an interest in bettering itself and a move toward the greater good by adding their own touch to the school.

"The contractors went the extra mile for the kids and added drinking fountains for them in the restrooms."



Iraqi children run to class April 3 at Newaris Primary School in Iraqi Family Village, Baghdad. The school has received several improvements since members of the community and Task Force Vigilant joined to make renovations.

SEEKING, from page 2

Most of us do not knowingly or intentionally only want a relationship with God so that He can fulfill our desires, but somehow we may have stumbled into that kind of relationship because it is so easy to do so. It is so convenient to just take God for granted — call to Him when we need Him and put Him back on the shelf when we do not need Him so we can get on with our daily routine. We are all burdened and distracted by the cares of the world when we need not be, for the Lord is willing to lift them from us.

Let us consciously take stock of where we stand with

God. Let us make a decision to get to know Him better, to grow closer to Him, to grow in the knowledge of Him, and guess what? Your desires will be in line with His will.

Psalms 37:4 says, "Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart." He knows all our needs even before we know them, certainly before we articulate them before Him. Let us all seek Him because He is most worthy. He will refresh us with the living waters as we seek Him. Let us get our priorities right when we worship God. Let us truly seek Him and pray for our relationship with Him. Everything will fall into its rightful place because we will be in His will.



Petty Officer 2nd Class Cindy Argueta, Task Force Hurricane, belts the song "At Last" during the talent show.



Finalists applaud as Sgt. LaMyra McGee, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 89th Military Police Brigade, receives first place for her poem, "I've Got a Gun to My Head and I'm Prepared to Squeeze."

DFAC stage lights up 89th MP Brigade hosts talent show

Story, photos by Spc. Kimberly Millette
89th Military Police Brigade

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 89th Military Police Brigade, hosted a talent show for coalition service members and civilians April 7 at Camp Victory's Oasis Dining Facility parking lot.

Troops showcased skills including rapping, poetry reciting and playing original songs on guitar.

The talent show was organized and led by Sgt. Chris Collins, security platoon team leader, HHC, 89th MP Bde.

"I was looking for a way to help people get through the next few months and boost morale," Collins said. "I hoped the show would give Soldiers a way to showcase their talents and give creative people the chance to perform on stage."

Sgt. LaMyra McGee, also known as "Lyric," 504th Military Intelligence Brigade, won first place for the impassioned reading of her poem, "I've Got a Gun to My Head and I'm Prepared to Squeeze."

"The biggest challenge was that my poem was ded-



Spc. Travis Bishop, 3rd Signal Brigade, entertains the audience with his original song, "Who's Your Friend?"

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...quarters Company, 504th Military Intelligence
...ead and I'm Prepared to Squeeze."

...p with stars ...w for Camp Victory

...one of the Soldiers we lost since we've been
...e said. "Just that it was for him, it meant some-
...pecial."

...er unique part of the show was Spc. Kimmer
... Navajo Nation hoop dance.

...n, with the 89th MP Bde., earned second place
...ng a dance her father taught her when she was

...veaved increasing amounts of orange hoops
...her legs and arms to form animal shapes like a
...caterpillar and bird. She finished with a sphere
...ting Earth.

...ravis Bishop, 3rd Signal Brigade, placed third
...he guitar and singing his original song, "Who's
...end?" a comical twist on traditional love songs.
...s said he was very pleased with the turnout for

...rned out better than I had expected," he said.
...was a variety of talent and it felt like the audi-
...into it."

...ree winners received AAFES gift cards, phone
...d coupons.



Spc. Kimmer Horsen, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 89th Military Police Brigade, forms a sphere of hoops to represent Earth during her Navajo Nation hoop dance. Horsen took second place in the talent show.

Praise n' worship



Photo by Spc. Laura M. Bigenho

The Victory Gospel Choir sings "Anthems of Joy" during the Easter Sunrise Service at Al Faw Palace April 8. Dozens of service members and civilians of various religious denominations gathered Easter morning to take part in singing, worshipping and praising.

PAs share battlefield experiences

More than 60 medical personnel exchange ideas at conference

Maj. John Heil

Task Force 3 Public Affairs Officer

More than 60 physician assistants and medical personnel from all over Iraq gathered at Al Faw Palace April 5-7 to share notes on the challenges of battlefield medicine.

The Multi-National Corps-Iraq Physician Assistants Conference, "Healthcare in a Deployed Environment," welcomed not only PAs but other medical personnel.

The conference was a three-day think tank and educational series designed to let them hear the most current information on a range of issues.

Topics discussed during the conference were routine medical care issues, including hypertension and diabetes, and medical topics unique to the battlefield such as traumatic brain injury, extremity trauma and rapid sequence induction.

"Bringing us together allowed us to learn about treatment procedures, emergency medical gear and new innovations that other physician assistants have developed," said Col. William

Tozier, Task Force 3 Medical Command senior physician assistant.

"The scope and severity of many of the injuries we see in theater on a daily basis are unlike those experienced at trauma centers (in the U.S.) — even very busy ones," said Lt. Col. William Magdycz, M.D., Task Force 3 surgical consultant.

"Our providers have developed a very unique expertise. Sharing their experience with other providers helps to generalize that knowledge in theater. This can only improve the timing and quality of care for our service members," he said.

Once assigned in theater, many PAs find themselves in remote areas and without consistent communication due to limited phone and network access, Tozier said.

"This meeting allowed them to talk about topics that currently impact their practice," Tozier said. "I expect that

many will change the way they practice medicine as a result of this conference. That is what is important — not the review of old medical information, but the creation of new information and practices as a result of what they learned here."

"Our providers have developed a very unique expertise."

-Lt. Col. William Magdycz
surgical consultant, Task Force 3

This is only the second resident continuing medical education conference for PAs ever held in a combat zone. The first was held in December 2003 in Qatar.

Magdycz said he could tell that the attendees were eager to increase their specialized knowledge of the evaluation and management of wartime illnesses and injuries. He was impressed by the number of attendees.

"It takes both forward thinking and unusual commitment from commanders to release so many of their providers all at once for several days," Magdycz said. "Remember that traveling in Iraq is not without risk."

Announcements

Resource Management Conference

The MNC-I CJ8 Resource Management Conference is Tuesday at 9 a.m. in Al Faw Palace. Important information will be exchanged and is critical to any unit executing funding through MNC-I CJ8. RSVP to Tech Sgt. Deanna Fox at 822-3815 or deanna.fox@iraq.centcom.mil

Days of Remembrance

MNF-I/MNC-I Human Relations/Equal Opportunity and 16th Military Police Brigade (Airborne) present "Children In Crisis: Voices From the Holocaust," Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. in the Al Faw Palace rotunda. Guest speaker will be Col. Maciej Miskurka.

Re-up information brief

Theater Retention will be providing information on eligibility, options and bonuses Friday from 2:15–3:30 p.m. at Victory Chapel. All Soldiers are welcome.

2K Run/Walk

The MNF-I/MNC-I Human Relations/Equal Opportunity Office invites you to join its Sexual Assault Prevention Awareness 2K Run/Walk Saturday at 7 a.m. Starting point is the Al Faw Palace parking lot. Call 822-3545/3532 for more information.

Mandatory R&R briefing

All VBC tenants going home on Rest and Recuperation leave must attend an R&R Reunion and Suicide briefing prior to departing theater. Briefings are held at Victory Chapel, Bldg. 31, Mondays at 3 p.m., Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m. and Saturdays at 3 p.m.

Bodybuilding show

The first-ever officially sanctioned bodybuilding show in Baghdad will be held at Camp Liberty May 5. All are welcome. Contact Master Sgt. Woody Carter at woody.carter@us.army.mil for more information.

Women's Bible study

There is a new women's Bible study Mondays at 7 p.m. in Bldg. 24F (new chaplains building). Contact Chief Warrant Officer Dawnetta Loomis at 822-2309.

Free mail kits

The U.S. Postal Service offers a free mailing kit to anyone sending care packages or shipping items to military personnel through USPS. The kit includes priority boxes, mail labels, tape and customs forms. The kit may be ordered by calling the USPS Expedited Package Supply Center at 1-800-610-8734. There is no charge for the kit.

Vehicle violations on the rise

An inordinate number of military personnel have been stopped by the military police, the garrison command sergeant major and several other senior NCOs for violations including excessive speed, lack of dispatch, failure to wear seatbelt, no license present and other infractions. Be prepared to lose your tactical or non-tactical vehicle for at least a month if your troops are not found in compliance with all DA and MNF-I policies.

Area 51 events

Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
Softball Championship	Spade Competition 9 p.m.	Dodgeball Championship 7 p.m.	Darts Opener 6 p.m.	Salsa Night 8 p.m.	Mayor's Cup Photo Shoot 4:30 p.m.	Kickball 7 p.m., DJ Big Will Smooth Sunday 8 p.m.

Do you have an announcement about an event of interest to the Camp Victory community? Contact Spc. Laura M. Bigenho at laura.bigenho@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**
Open 24 Hours
- Camp Liberty Post Exchange**
8 a.m. - 10 p.m.
- Fitness Center**
Open 24 Hours
- MNC-I STB Mailroom**
9 a.m. - noon
5 - 7 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 8 a.m. - 4:30 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 - Thursday 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Friday 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- Personnel Service Support Centers**
Monday - Saturday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sunday 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
- ID Cards**
Monday - Friday 6 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
noon. Gospel Protestant
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
- Mini Chapel (Bldg. 24F)**
Sunday
9:30 a.m. Breaking of Bread
3 p.m. Church of Christ
7:30 p.m. Latter Day Saints
8 p.m. Knights of Columbus (1st & 3rd Sundays)
- Monday-Friday**
11:30 p.m. Daily Mass
- Friday**
6:30 p.m. Jewish Service

AFN Freedom Radio

- Al Asad 107.3
 - Ali Base 107.3
 - Ar Ramadi... 107.3
 - Baghdad ... 107.3
 - Balad 107.3
 - Fallujah..... 105.1
 - Kirkuk..... 107.3
 - Kirkush..... 107.3
 - Mosul 105.1
 - Q-West 93.3
 - Taji 107.3
 - Tal Afar..... 107.3
 - Taqquadum. 107.3
 - Tikrit..... 100.1
- All stations are FM*

Hurricanes douse Tigers' hopes, 47-38

Melvin's 19 leads TF-Hurricane to win in Cup semis

Staff Sgt. Jacob Boyer
28th Public Affairs Detachment

Sharod Melvin scored 19 points to lead the Task Force-Hurricane Hurricanes to a 47-38 over the 86th Signal Battalion Tigers in the Mayor's Cup basketball semifinals April 9 at the outdoor basketball court.

Melvin's 19 included five during a 9-2 run late in the first half that put the 'Canes up 20-17, a lead they would not relinquish.

In the early going, it looked as if the Tigers were going to run away with the game. Chris McKay and Ray Polk both got inside for early scores to put 86th up 4-0.

Both teams were playing aggressively inside, forcing sloppy shots, but a McKay lay-in and a tree-pointer from Cornell Evans stretched that lead to 9-4.

Down five, the Hurricanes regrouped, and it was their ballgame the rest of the way. The 20-17 lead stretched to 20-25 at the half.

"We came out a little lackadaisical," said 'Canes captain Acie Blocton, who put in six points of his own. "We took them for granted. But after that, we came out and hit them in the mouth."

The game was typified by physical play inside and wild shots from the outside, which led to a seven-minute scoring drought in the second half.

Evans hit one of three free throws at 13:12 to make it 34-25 Hurricanes, but neither team got anything going again until Claude Henderson tipped in a Melvin miss to extend the 'Cane lead. The Tigers pushed to get back into the game, cutting the TF-H lead to five, but failed to make anything happen in the final minutes.

Melvin's 19 led all scorers. Ray Polk led 86th with 17.

"We played with a lot of composure," Blocton said. "We knew if we kept our heads and didn't complain to the refs too much, we had a good chance."



Photo by Spc. Abel Trevino

Melvin Sharod, Task Force Hurricane Hurricanes, flies by Leslie Wilson, 86th Signal Battalion Tigers, and finger rolls the ball in late during the Mayor's Cup basketball semifinals April 9.

2007 Camp Victory Mayor's Cup Standings

<u>Team</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Team</u>	<u>Points</u>
89th MP Brigade	96	22nd MP Battalion	59
303rd MI Battalion	88	3rd MEDCOM	55
86th Signal Battalion	84	Marines	55
67th Signal Battalion	66	TF Hurricane	53
16th MP Brigade	60	504th MI Brigade	51
TF 38th DISCOM	60	HHC, 3rd Signal Brigade	48