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March 31, 2009

10th IA Division locates weapons cache in Maysan marshes



Photo by 1st Lt. Bryan Hammond

An Iraqi Soldier secures the far side of a shallow stream while Soldiers from Battery A, 5th Bn., 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, and 2nd Battalion, 41st Iraqi Army Brigade, cross the stream near Forward Operating Base Hunter during a search for weapons caches recently.

1ST LT. BRYAN S. HAMMOND
4TH BCT, 1ST CAV. DIV.



FOB HUNTER – Iraqi and American troops found a weapons cache during ‘Operation Chattahoochee,’ a cooperative effort to search Maysan Province by ground, water and air for illegal munitions recently.

The 2nd Battalion, 41st Iraqi Army Brigade, with assistance from Battery A., 5th Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, located a collection of rocket fuses, electronic timers and printed technical data for launching rockets during the op-

eration.

“This is a big find for the Iraqi Army,” said Staff Sgt. Richard Butler, a platoon sergeant with Battery A and a native of Vidor, Texas. “They (10th IA) were ahead of the game and had this stuff located before we were on site. I was impressed.”

Criminals in this area have previously launched rockets toward FOB Hunter and other nearby bases. Coalition Forces responded by conducting a full-scale operation with various modes of travel to cover as much terrain as possible.

“We have brought the rocket firing to a standstill,” said an

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MARSHES

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Iraqi Soldier. "The criminals fear us."

The search incorporated unmanned spy planes and manned Longbow Apache attack helicopters to seek out any would-be rocket firers in the area.

The troops also spent time asking local farmers for information about any unusual activity in the area and gathering valuable information for future operations.

This operation demonstrated the improving capabilities of the Iraqi Security Forces and the strides they are making in keeping their country safe while leading the way in missions.



Photo by 1st Lt. Bryan Hammond
1st Lt. Donald J. Frisco, a platoon leader with Battery A, 5th Bn., 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, paddles down Victory Canal in search of criminal smugglers during Operation Chhattahoochee, a joint operation with 2nd Battalion, 41st Iraqi Army Brigade recently.

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THE Mountain View

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 41st Fires Brigade
 343rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment
 793rd Military Police Battalion
 Division Special Troops Battalion, 10th Mtn. Div.
 Task Force 449



Liberation training instills confidence in IA troops



Photos by Spc. Terence Ewings

(Top Left) Brig. Gen. Steven Salazar, commanding general of the Joint Headquarters Army Advisory Training Team, and Lt. Gen. Hussein, training chief for the Iraqi Army, shake hands with leaders of the 4th Battalion, 38th Iraqi Army Brigade, prior to a liberation training graduation ceremony at Camp Ur near COB Adder, Iraq, Mar. 26. (Top Right) Lt. Gen. Hussein, training chief for the Iraqi Army, offers a gift to an Iraqi Army Soldier, assigned to the 4th Battalion, 38th Iraqi Army Brigade, during the liberation training graduation ceremony. (Bottom) 4th Battalion, 38th Iraqi Army Brigade, troops march during the pass and review portion of the liberation training graduation ceremony.

SPC. TERENCE EWINGS
4TH BCT, 1ST CAV. DIV.



COB ADDER – Approximately 700 troops assigned to 4th Battalion, 38th Iraqi Army Brigade completed liberation training and attended a graduation ceremony at Camp Ur near the base here March 26.

The 38th IA Bde. is one of the first units to complete the new month-long program, which was developed to teach the Iraqis how to react to small-arms ambushes and quickly engage enemy targets.

The Iraqi Soldiers were tested on their knowledge of how to react during combat operations and joint patrols as a requirement for graduation.

“This battalion has received a lot of good training within

the past month,” said Sgt. Hamid Teama, who is assigned to the 38th IA Bde. “I’m so glad to be part of this graduation.”

Brig. Gen. Steven Salazar, commanding general of the Joint Headquarters Army Advisory Training Team, and Lt. Gen. Hussein, training chief for the Iraqi Army, spoke with leaders of the 38th IA Bde. and congratulated the troops for completing the challenging training event.

Showcasing their newfound combat skills, the graduating troops demonstrated how to pull security, engage the enemy and detain suspects as the two generals observed.

“This is a significant improvement with a unit that is doing combat operations with U.S. Soldiers,” said Maj. Troy Wayman, the Iraqi Security Forces Coordinator for 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division and a native of Ainsworth, Neb. “That means when we go on joint operations the Coalition Forces are safer, which makes this country safer.”

Building education for future of Iraq

Photos by Sgt. Debralee P. Crankshaw
(Left) The ribbon is cut at a ceremony celebrating the completion of renovations at a vocational school in Karbala recently. The vocational school and an agricultural school dormitory were officially opened after the project was completed by the Karbala Provincial Reconstruction Team. **(Below)** Electrician students at the vocational school in Karbala study for an exam. The school, renovated by the Karbala Provincial Reconstruction Team, was signed over to its dean recently.



SGT. DEBRALEE P. CRANKSHAW
MND - C



KARBALA – The walls look like they might crumble at any second. The classrooms are crowded wall-to-wall with students, some of whom are without a desk. These are the conditions of some schools in Iraq, but there are projects helping to remedy this situation.

Two ribbon cutting ceremonies in Karbala on March 19 signified the completion of a vocational school and agricultural school dormitory which were renovation projects of the Provincial Reconstruction Team here.

The vocational school renovations included replacing ceilings, replastering and painting walls and ceilings of four existing buildings. They also fixed sidewalks outside the structures.

The school services approximately 300 male students who study electronics, electricity, agriculture and agricultural machinery.

Renovations of the dormitory included fixing up the origi-

nal dilapidated one-story structure, building a second story and providing roof access.

The dormitory has 16 rooms. Of the students attending the school, 22 are scheduled to move in, but the dorm can house 105 students.

Both projects cost approximately \$360,000 and were completed in about six months.

The PRT is also involved in 24 projects at other schools throughout the province, building bathroom facilities. These facilities may seem to have nothing to do with education, but for Iraqi females it makes a big difference, said Lt. Col. Andamo E. Ford, Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region South District, Karbala PRT infrastructure chief and engineer.

“In Arabic culture when females get to a certain age – the age of puberty – if they don’t have good facilities to use, they won’t even bother going to school,” said the native of St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands.

Completing these projects is important to the PRT because of the potential outcome.

“(These projects) will help the young people of Iraq achieve an education or learn a trade,” said Maj. John Gerald, 413th Civil Affairs Battalion contracting officer, an Amarillo, Texas native. “This translates into a better future for Iraq because an educated population promotes civilization, cooperation and peace.”

These projects are also important to Ford because they represent an opportunity for Iraqi people to see Americans as a positive influence on their country.

“It’s real important for me to see that we, as Americans, can leave a positive legacy behind and hopefully change the mindset of some people so that they can see Americans are not bad people, that we are willing to work with everybody to provide a better quality of life for the people here,” he said.

Headline Round-up

U.S. News:

NEW YORK - The symbolism of the Freedom Tower as an American response to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks was hard to miss. The original architect designed a twisting form to imitate the Statue of Liberty, with a spire that rose to the deliberate height of 1,776 feet to recognize the year of American independence. The tower, still under construction with a projected completion date of 2013, no longer has the same architect, design or footprint on the 16-acre site. And this week, the owners of ground zero publicly parted ways with the Freedom Tower name, saying it would be more practical to market the tallest building in New York as the former north tower's name, One World Trade Center. Critics called the name drop an unpatriotic shedding of symbolism by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey

Sports:

ORLANDO - Back to playing golf, now Tiger Woods is back to winning tournaments. With those familiar back-nine runs, Woods made a 15-foot birdie putt on the 18th hole March 29 to win the Arnold Palmer Invitational for his first victory since returning from knee surgery. Woods closed with a 67 for a 5-under total 275 and a one-shot victory over Sean O'Hair, who led Woods by five shots going into the final round, and matched his largest comeback ever on the PGA Tour. It was Woods' third tournament since returning from an eight-month layoff. "It feels good to be back in contention, to feel the rush," Woods said. "It's been a while, but God, it felt good."

Entertainment:


LOS ANGELES - Movie beasts from old-time Hollywood got a makeover as heroes and extraterrestrials conquered the weekend box office. DreamWorks Animation's action comedy "Monsters vs. Aliens," which features creatures from 1950s flicks in a showdown with invading extraterrestrials, launched itself into the No. 1 spot with a \$58.2 million debut, according to studio estimates March 29. It was the biggest debut so far in 2009, topping the \$55.2 million first weekend of "Watchmen" in early March. The big opening for "Monsters vs. Aliens" boosted Hollywood revenues after a couple of down weekends. Movies overall pulled in about \$148 million, up 39 percent from the same weekend a year ago, according to box office tracker Media By Numbers.

Quote of the Day

"One's first step in wisdom is to question everything - and one's last is to come to terms with everything."
 - Georg Christoph Lichtenberg (1742 - 1799)

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For the answer to today's puzzle, go to:



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AROUND THE COMMUNITY

Fishbowl Gym

April 11

Pirate's Cove Run 5K/10K.

Registration begins @ 7 a.m.,

race begins @ w8 a.m.

T-shirts awarded to top finishers.

Freedom Chapel

Sundays

Protestant (Traditional) @ 10 a.m.

Roman Catholic Mass @ 12 p.m.

LDS service @ 2 p.m.

Eastern Orthodox @ 4 p.m.

Protestant (Contemporary) @ 12 p.m.

Mondays

A History of Christianity @ 7 p.m.

Tuesdays

God & the Military @ 6:30 p.m.

Wednesdays

Guitar Lessons @ 7 p.m.

Thursdays

Catholic Choir practice @ 5:30 p.m.

Fridays

Catholic hour @ 6:30 p.m.